



EASTERN NIGERIA

# PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

**EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS**

**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**SECOND SESSION (1960-61)**

FIRST MEETING

*15th March, 25th April to 4th May, 1960*



## EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

### FIRST-CLASS CHIEFS (TRADITIONAL RULERS)

Chief the hon. Francis O. Joseph Allagoa, the Amanyanabo of Nembe.  
 Chief the hon. Ededem Archibong V, the Obong of Calabar.  
 Chief the hon. Douglas Jaja, the Amanyanabo of Opopo.  
 Chief the hon. Kanu Oji, the Eze Aro of Arochuku.  
 Chief the hon. Nnani Ojiako, the Obi of Oguta.  
 Chief the hon. James Okosi II, the Obi of Onitsha.  
 Chief the hon. Prince Eugene William Dappa Pepple, the Amanyanabo of Bonny.

### FIRST-CLASS CHIEFS (PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Province</i>
Chief the hon. N. U. Ofem ... ..	Abakaliki.
Chief the hon. S. A. Essien ... ..	Annang.
Chief the hon. Ika Ika Oqua II ... ..	Calabar.
Chief the hon. Sampson I. Adoki ... ..	Degema.
Chief the hon. Ako Okwoli II ... ..	Enugu.
Chief the hon. J. U. Okudare ... ..	Ogoja.
Chief the hon. N. N. Anyika ... ..	Onitsha.
Chief the hon. Johnson Osuji Njemanze, M.B.E. ... ..	Owerri.
Chief the hon. J. Mpi ... ..	Port Harcourt.
Chief the hon. J. N. Wachuku ... ..	Umuahia.
Chief the hon. Eket Inyang-Udo ... ..	Uyo.
Chief the hon. Zumoh Efeke V ... ..	Yenagoa.

### SECOND-CLASS CHIEFS (DIVISIONAL REPRESENTATIVES)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Division</i>
Chief the hon. Stephen Wabara ... ..	Aba.
Chief the hon. John Udo Eboong ... ..	Abak.
Chief the hon. Ogba Ekirigwe ... ..	Abakaliki.
Chief the hon. Nwancho Atuma ... ..	Abakaliki.
Chief the hon. Akam Iteshi ... ..	Abakaliki.
Chief the hon. Jonas Akpaka Anigor... ..	Abakaliki.
Chief the hon. Ude Umanta ... ..	Afikpo.
Chief the hon. Chima Nkwor... ..	Afikpo.
Chief the hon. E. Ashirim-Unosi ... ..	Ahoada.
Chief the hon. Richard Amachree Ukwu ... ..	Ahoada.
Chief the hon. Daniel Ekekwetere Onuaguluchi ... ..	Awgu.
Chief the hon. Angus Ilonze ... ..	Awka.
Chief the hon. Michael Eze ... ..	Awka.
Chief the hon. James Emeasiobum Ikeogu ... ..	Bende.
Chief the hon. James Johnson Ogbulafor ... ..	Bende.
Chief the hon. Ike Okoroafor ... ..	Bende.
Chief the hon. Gordon Ascot Ikibah ... ..	Brass.
Chief the hon. Ginah Iponi ... ..	Degema.
Chief the hon. Akpabio Udo Ukpa ... ..	Eket.
Rev. and Chief the hon. Effiong Utit, M.B.E. ... ..	Enyong.

SECOND-CLASS CHIEFS—*continued*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Division</i>
Chief the hon. Akpan Enang ... ..	Ikot Ekpene.
Chief the hon. Raymond O. Orem ... ..	Ikom.
Chief the hon. Ugwu Ezugwu Ukuma ... ..	Nsukka.
Chief the hon. Emmanuel Eze ... ..	Nsukka.
Chief the hon. Raymond Iyida ... ..	Nsukka.
Chief the hon. Paul U. Obodoeze ... ..	Nsukka.
Chief the hon. Egbe Araghe Egbara ... ..	Obubra.
Chief the hon. Joseph D. Agba ... ..	Obudu.
Chief the hon. Otu Lawrence Odu ... ..	Ogoja.
Chief the hon. Sampson B. Maeba ... ..	Ogoni.
Chief the hon. Richard Jones Onyeneho ... ..	Okigwi.
Chief the hon. Festus Brown Nduka ... ..	Okigwi.
Chief the hon. Michael Ogbuka Kanu ... ..	Okigwi.
Chief the hon. Josiah N. Orizu ... ..	Onitsha.
Chief the hon. Silas Okaa Ezenwa ... ..	Onitsha.
Chief the hon. Joseph Onwudiwe ... ..	Onitsha.
Chief the hon. R. Oraelosi ... ..	Onitsha.
Chief the hon. Ntuen Ibok, M.B.E. ... ..	Opobo.
Chief the hon. Gregory Agbasiere ... ..	Orlu.
Chief the hon. Francis Nwizu Ezerioha ... ..	Orlu.
Chief the hon. James Nwosu ... ..	Orlu.
Chief the hon. S. E. Onukogu ... ..	Owerri.
Chief the hon. G. O. Ihenacho, M.B.E. ... ..	Owerri.
Chief the hon. H. I. Akwitti ... ..	Owerri.
Chief the hon. John N. Nwansi ... ..	Owerri.
Chief the hon. William A. Obassy ... ..	Owerri.
Chief the hon. Joseph Wobo ... ..	Port Harcourt.
Chief the hon. Edward Nnaji ... ..	Udi.
Chief the hon. Michael O. Okongwu ... ..	Udi.
Chief the hon. Vincent O. Agana ... ..	Udi.
Chief the hon. Udo Equere ... ..	Uyo.
Chief the hon. Paul Bassey Okon ... ..	Uyo.

SPECIAL MEMBERS

The hon. (Mrs) Margaret Ekpo.  
 The hon. (Mrs) Janet Mokelu.  
 The hon. C. E. Amobi.  
 Alhaji Chief the hon. Umoru Yushau.  
 Chief the hon. M. I. Asinobi.

EASTERN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

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

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

PREMIER—Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.  
 MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS—Hon. I. U. Akpabio.  
 MINISTER OF FINANCE—Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.  
 MINISTER OF TOWN PLANNING—Hon. E. Emole.  
 MINISTER OF WORKS—Hon. P. O. Ururuka.  
 MINISTER OF STATE CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR INFORMATION AND WELFARE—  
 Hon. B. C. Okwu.  
 MINISTER OF COMMERCE—Hon. J. U. Nwodo.  
 MINISTER OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT—Hon. P. O. Nwoga.  
 MINISTER OF EDUCATION—Hon. G. E. Okeke.

## MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL—*continued*

MINISTER OF HEALTH—Hon. E. P. Okoya.

MINISTER OF STATE CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR ESTABLISHMENT AND CHIEFTAINCY  
MATTERS—Hon. O. U. Affiah.

MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Hon. M. O. Ajegbo.

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE—Hon. P. N. Okeke.

### PROVINCIAL COMMISSIONERS

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

### OFFICE OF THE PREMIER AND MINISTRIES OF GOVERNMENT

#### Premier's Office:—

Premier: Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.

Minister of State: Hon. O. U. Affiah.

Parliamentary Secretaries: Hon. J. O. Umolu;

Chief the hon. S. E. Onukogu.

#### Ministry of Internal Affairs:—

Minister: Hon. I. U. Akpabio.

Minister of State: Hon. B. C. Okwu.

Parliamentary Secretaries: Hon. S. O. Masi; Hon. R. O. Ukuta, M.B.E.

#### Ministry of Finance:—

Minister: Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. J. E. Eyo.

#### Ministry of Town Planning:—

Minister: Hon. E. Emole.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. O. Aligwekwe.

#### Ministry of Works:—

Minister: Hon. P. O. Ururuka.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. O. Nnamani.

#### Ministry of Commerce:—

Minister: Hon. J. U. Nwodo.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. K. Kiri.

#### Ministry of Local Government:—

Minister: Hon. P. O. Nwoga.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. P. U. Amaefunah.

#### Ministry of Education:—

Minister: Hon. G. E. Okeke.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. D. S. A. Agim.

#### Ministry of Health:—

Minister: Hon. E. P. Okoya.

Parliamentary Secretary: Hon. M. U. Obayi.

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

**Ministry of Justice:—**

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

**Ministry of Agriculture:—**

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

**COMMITTEES**

**Committee of Selection**

Acting Premier and Minister of Internal Affairs ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Chief J. N. Wachuku.
Minister of Town Planning.	Chief Eket Inyang-Udo.
Minister of Information.	Chief J. Mpi.
	Chief C. E. Amobi.

**Standing Orders Committee**

Mr President ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E.
Deputy President.	Chief S. C. Nkwor.
Minister of Town Planning.	Chief A. U. Ukpa.

**House Committee**

Minister of Internal Affairs ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Chief S. A. Essien.
Chief Angus Ilonze.	Chief J. E. Ikeogu.
Chief J. Mpi.	Chief Emmanuel Eze.

**Public Petitions Committee**

Minister of Information ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Rev. and Chief Effiong Utit, M.B.E.
Chief R. J. Onyeneho.	Chief Joseph D. Agba.
Chief F. N. Ezerioha.	Chief G. A. Ikibah.
Chief N. N. Anyika.	

**Committee of Privileges**

Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Chief F. N. Ogudoro.
Chief Edward Nnaji.	Chief Akpan Enang.
Chief D. Onuaguluchi.	Chief Ogba Ekirigwe.
Chief Kanu Oji.	Chief Sampson B. Maeba.
	Mrs J. N. Mokelu.

**Statutory Corporations Committee**

Minister of Commerce ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Chief Silas Ezenwa.
Chief N. U. Ofem.	Chief Gregory Agbasiere.
Chief J. U. U. Ebong.	Chief E. Ashirim-Unosi.
Chief W. Obassi.	

**Public Accounts Committee**

Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E. ( <i>Chairman</i> ).	Mr C. E. Amobi.
Chief J. N. Wachuku.	Chief Eket Inyang-Udo.
	Mrs Margaret Ekpo.

**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS**

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

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

Tuesday, 15th March, 1960

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

PRAYERS

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

*Sitting suspended at 10.05 a.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 10.15 a.m.*

GOVERNOR'S SPEECH

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

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

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

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

THE CABINET

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

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

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

THE LEGISLATURE

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

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

#### PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

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

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

#### THE PUBLIC SERVICE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

#### UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF COMMERCE

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF FINANCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### TOWN PLANNING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

#### MINISTRY OF WORKS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

His Excellency then retired from the Chamber.



**ADJOURNMENT**

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

I beg to move, that this House do now adjourn—the House of Chiefs until the 25th of April, 1960, and the House of Assembly until later today.

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

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

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

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Monday, 25th April, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President *in the Chair*)

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The following Members took and subscribed the Oath required by Law:—

- Hon. Basil Charles Okwu (Minister of State, Information and Welfare).  
Chief the hon. James Nwosu.  
Chief the hon. Michael Ogbuka Kanu.  
Chief the hon. Festus Brown Nduka.  
Chief the hon. Richard Jones Onyeneho.  
Chief the hon. Ude Umanta.  
Chief the hon. Solomon Chima Nkwor.  
Chief Stephen Wabara.

ANNOUNCEMENT

**Death of Chief the hon. J. T. Princewill Amachree, the Amanyanabo of Kalabari.**

**The President:** Chiefs and hon. Members: As you are aware we have recently lost by death one of our most venerable Chiefs—Chief the hon. J. T. Princewill Amachree, the Amanyanabo of Kalabari. Chief Amachree died at his home in Buguma on Sunday 20th March, 1960 following a short illness.

The following message was conveyed to the family of the deceased by the Clerk of the House on behalf of this House.

“District Officer Degema Grateful you convey to the family of late Chief Princewill Amachree Amanyanabo of Kalabari and Member House of Chiefs the deep sense of loss of Members both Houses of the Legislature. Members are touched by this early loss of one of their most outstanding colleagues. They pray for God’s consolation and guidance for members of deceased’s family.

ERONINI *Eastclerk*”

I will ask the House to rise and observe two minutes silence in honour of the deceased.

(The House observed two minutes silence)

**The President:** May he rest in peace.

PAPERS

Presented

The Draft Estimates of the Eastern Region (including Memorandum) 1960–61.

**The President:** Hon. Members, during the adjournment a number of Papers were received by the Clerk and distributed to Members. A list of these Papers will be entered upon the Votes and Proceedings for today. They are:

- (1) The Audited Statement of the Voluntary Agencies Building (Loans) Fund, 1958–59.
- (2) Investment Possibilities in the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria (Official Document No. 11 of 1960).
- (3) Revised Development Programme, 1958–62 (Official Document No. 13 of 1960).

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

GOVERNOR’S SPEECH

DEBATE ON THE ADDRESS

**The Parliamentary Secretary (Premier’s Office) (Chief S. E. Onukogu):** I rise to move:

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

Mr President, one will agree without any shadow of doubt—

- (a) That this is a very eventful year in that the Eastern House of Chiefs was established during the first month of the year.
- (b) That our noble son the God given nationalist was made the first President of the Nigerian Senate.
- (c) That the date of Nigeria Independence is just at the door.

- (d) That one of our capable sons, a Christian Minister, was also elevated to the status of Premier.
- (e) That the Public Service Commission, which was previously headed by expatriates, is now being headed by a Nigerian, and
- (f) That the establishment and opening of the University of Nigeria founded by Dr Azikiwe, is taking place this year, plus other industries and amenities too numerous to mention at this short space of time.

All these happenings this year 1960, will go a long way to make history in the Eastern Government under the Premiership of Dr M. I. Okpara.

*Education.*—Considering the standard of education, the number of Primary and Secondary schools in the Region, when the N.C.N.C. Government was not in power, and comparing what the condition is today one would agree that a good achievement has been made especially when we have got a complete free junior primary schools all over the Eastern Region and about one thousand scholarships of various kinds awarded to our children here in Nigeria and Overseas in one calendar year.

With the steady increase of secondary and teacher training colleges, coupled with the establishment of the University of Nigeria one will readily agree with me that this Region is educationally forging ahead.

We have watched with interest and appreciation the Government's activities. The improved and increased farm crops exported from this Region, will not only better the economic conditions of the peasant farmers but will also improve the lot of the Easterners as a whole.

We very much appreciate the systematic progress which this Government has made on extension, improvement and building of roads and bridges in the rural areas of this Region, the establishment and expansion of hospitals. These are indications that this Government is really democratic and the only Government which has the interest of the common man.

Page 16, paragraph 1, of His Excellency's Speech from the Throne clarified and assured us that the injection of Chiefs and traditional rulers to Councils is in progress. This is what we asked Government to do for us, and it is so done. We are extremely happy for the way Government handled and continues to handle Chiefs' matters.

Before I conclude, I like this House to know that I am one of those at the head of Eastern Chiefs affairs. I like this House to realise that it is only the Eastern Government which created and established this House for us. No individual or group of individuals, no party or group of parties, persuaded, induced or compelled the Government to make this House a reality.

I take this unique opportunity again to thank that noble and stalwart nationalist (Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe), his able successor, the square peg in a square hole and the members of his Cabinet. I have to add on behalf of this hon. House that the Eastern Chiefs are well aware of these facts and as fathers, we shall do our duty. There is no need to lay much emphasis but to assure the hon. Premier of the cordial co-operation of the Eastern Chiefs.

Finally, those of us here who have read His Excellency's Speech will agree that it did not only adequately cover the progress made and the progress to be made in the Region, but, that it was a masterpiece. I am sure I am expressing the opinion of the Members of this House if I say that it has come to us as a great shock to learn that this able and loyal servant who has contributed in no small measure to the progress of this Region is about to leave us. Members must have received the invitation of the hon. the Premier and members of his Cabinet to a send-off party arranged in honour of this noble friend of the Region. We all wish him luck wherever he goes.

**Mrs J. Mokelu** (Special Member): I beg to second.

*Question proposed.*

*And pursuant to Standing Order 29 (2) the debate stood adjourned.*

*Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, 27th of April, 1960.*

**MESSAGES FROM THE EASTERN HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** Tomorrow.

**(1) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The 1960-61 Eastern Region appropriation Law, 1960," and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

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

**(2) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The Audit (Amendment) Law, 1960," as amended, and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

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

**(3) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The Interpretation Ordinance (Amendment) Law, 1960," and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** Today.

**(4) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The Eastern Region Local Government Law, 1960," as amended, and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

**(5) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The Finance (Amendment) Law, 1960," and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

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

**(6) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The Recognition of Chiefs Law, 1960," as amended, and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** Tomorrow.

**(7) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Law, 1960," and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** Today.

**(8) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

"The High Court (Amendment) Law, 1960," and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** Today.

**(9) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

“The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Law, 1960”, and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** Today.

**(10) The Clerk of the House:** The Eastern House of Assembly has passed a Bill entitled:

“The Loans Law, 1960”, and asks for the agreement of the Eastern House of Chiefs thereto.

**The President:** Second Reading, what day?

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

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**(1) The 1960–61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill.**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

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

I am deeply conscious that this is the first occasion on which the hon. Chiefs of the Eastern Region have assembled in legislative conclave to debate the Budget proposals of this Government and the Appropriation and Finance Bills embodying them.

Elsewhere, I have stated that Development is the key-note of my Budget in this year of our Independence because it is only the progress which we achieve through development that will make our Independence a reality. In spite of fresh recurrent commitments which

we are obliged to shoulder, the Government's main aim, both last year and this, has been to keep up the momentum of our Development Programme. In 1959–60 it was possible to do this without recourse to new fiscal measures. But in 1960–61 we have adopted certain measures in order to provide an adequate and continuing contribution to the Capital Budget which is the instrument of our development policy.

I will illustrate this by reference to the Estimates of the outturn of the financial year 1959–60 and the requirements for 1960–61 which are all contained in the printed draft Estimates just adopted by the House of Assembly and now submitted to this House for its approval.

In 1959–60 Government budgeted for recurrent revenue totalling £14,010,000 and recurrent expenditure totalling £12,940,000. From the surplus of £1,070,000 we proposed to transfer £850,000 to the Capital Development Fund leaving an overall surplus of £220,000.

During the year we had to pass Supplementary Estimates amounting to £852,000 largely owing to the cost of implementing an interim pay award of 10 per cent as from the 1st of September, 1959 and the cost of freeing Standard II in Primary Schools with effect from the 1960 school year. As against this it became apparent towards the end of the financial year that under-expenditure on a number of Heads would, as in previous years, cause the outturn for the year to fall below the total authorised by the original and the supplementary estimates. Although it will be some time yet before the accounts for the year can be closed I estimate the outturn at £13,210,000. On the revenue side I estimate that we shall actually have realised a total of £14,480,000, which is £470,000 more than originally approved. Thus, we have been able to finish the financial year with an estimated surplus of £1,270,000 or an overall surplus of £420,000 after transferring £850,000 to the Capital Development Fund in pursuance of our policy of building up resources for development. As far as I can at present estimate, the balance standing in the Consolidated Revenue Fund stood at £6,310,000 on the 31st of March, 1960.

[DR IMOKE]

As I have already stated, the satisfactory result for 1959-60 was achieved without recourse to new fiscal measures. The fact is that during the past year this Government enjoyed, for the first time, the full benefit of the recommendations of the Fiscal Commission with regard to the division of tax and other revenues collected by Federal agencies. I have had occasion to point out that this circumstance provided an enhancement of current revenue which will not recur unless and until the Fiscal Commission arrangements are again reviewed and revised in our favour as indeed this Government considers they ought to be. Looking further ahead I do not consider that our revenues can be expected to increase year by year at the rate indicated by the special circumstances of the past twelve months.

For 1960-61 the outlook is broadly as follows. Revenue from this Region's statutory share of Federal taxes appears to be unusually buoyant and the estimate that was given us in March indicated that it would increase from £9,220,000 in 1959-60 to £10,596,000 in 1960-61. Our own Regional revenues, mainly income tax and produce purchase tax, are expected to yield £5,662,000 at the rates in force during the past year. This would give us a total revenue of £16,258,000.

The estimates of expenditure in 1960-61, after very careful pruning, come out to £15,965,000. This is £3,025,000 more than the approved total for 1959-60 but the House will recall that we now have to meet the cost of the Mbanefo pay award which, as finally accepted with certain modifications, comes to no less than £1,500,000 in a full year. In addition the Grants-in-Aid for the current year, including the Education grants enhanced by the cost of freeing Standard II in Primary Schools and the grants to Local Government Bodies, will call for an additional £1,740,000 of which about £915,000 is due to the incidence of the pay award. The House will realise, therefore, that if these major items are taken into account the increase permitted in all other Heads of the Estimates was only £700,000 over the level originally approved for 1959-60. This represents an increase of 10 per cent in all other services including personal emoluments, and I submit that this can indeed be described as prudent budgeting by the Ministries and Departments concerned.

The surplus of revenue over expenditure on the basis of the Estimates which I have just summarised would be £293,000. This Government has, however, set its heart on a continuing effort to promote economic development and it felt that a further contribution to the Capital Development Fund of not less than £500,000 must somehow be found. Such a sum could, of course, be provided partly from the revenue surplus and partly by drawing down the existing revenue balance which stood, as I have already said, at £6,310,000 on the 31st of March, 1960. Government decided, however, that some further contribution should be asked of the people of this Region and to that end it has adopted certain new fiscal measures the result of which will be to increase the yield of Regional revenues by £321,000 and hence to raise the estimated surplus from £293,000 to £614,000. Thus we are able, after transferring £500,000 to the Capital Development Fund, to show an over-all surplus of £114,000.

I need not describe the new fiscal measures in detail as they are already known to the House and to the public. The adjustment in current rates of Regional income tax will bring in an additional £118,000 in a full year; and the reimposition of a small sales tax on motor spirit at the rate of 3d a gallon and on diesel oil at the rate of 4d a gallon, will produce £203,000.

I wish to conclude with a reference to the Development Programme although I shall refrain from giving an extended account of it in view of the fact that a White Paper has just been published as Official Document No. 13 of 1960 which sets out the alterations and additions which have been made to the Programme since it was first formulated. The four-year Programme extending from 1958 to 1962 now totals £15,960,000. During the two years which have already elapsed, it has taken some time for work on the various projects to gather momentum. In 1958-59 £1,880,000 was spent. For last year, my estimate is £4,320,000 although the final figures are not yet available. In 1960-61 we have provided for £6,770,000 in the Capital Budget.

The financial resources available to Government for carrying out this Programme have, since a year ago, been channelled through the Capital Development Fund established by the

Funds and Accounts Law of 1959. Taking the three years 1959-62 as set out in Head 800 of the Capital Estimates, the Capital Development Fund is expected to have received £12,368,000, excluding the self-balancing Renewals Funds, and if to this total is added the finance amounting to £1,880,000 which was provided to meet capital expenditure in 1958-59 before the Capital Development Fund was set up, the total of financial resources which have or will be mobilised for implementing the Development Programme comes to £14,248,000. I refer hon. Members to the White Paper for the full details. Thus, there remains a gap in the financing of the Programme, but Government does not consider that this at present seriously threatens its eventual execution.

I have presented the main features of this Government's financial policy for the coming year, but I have deliberately refrained from repetitious detail. I shall listen with deep respect to the views of the hon. Chiefs here assembled and I commend my "Independence Budget" to them in the hope and belief that it will meet with the approval of this House in its first Session of this memorable year.

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

*Question proposed.*

*And pursuant to Standing Order 77 (2), the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed on Monday, the 2nd of May, 1960.*

## (2) The Audit (Amendment) Bill

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I rise to move that the Bill entitled "A Bill for a Law to amend the Audit Law, 1955" be now read a Second time.

Section 225 of the Nigeria (Constitution) Order in Council provides that there shall be a Director of Audit for the Eastern Region and that he shall be paid such salary as may be prescribed by any law enacted by the Regional Legislature.

The law before the House specifies that the Director of Audit of the Eastern Region shall be paid not less than £2,400 which is what he is paid at present in accordance with the Approved Estimates.

The principal law contains some drafting errors which section 9 of the Bill now before this House seeks to correct.

The Bill is within the ambit of the Constitution Orders since it provides that the proper audited accounts and reports are laid before the Table of this House.

The Bill is therefore non-contentious and should receive general support in this House.

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

**Chief J. Mpi (Port Harcourt Province):** I rise to support the Bill. There is no harm in it. The only point I would like to make is that this post of Director of Audit should be affected also by Nigerianisation as in all other Departments. It will not be a question of trying to reach it but reaching properly. Otherwise, there is nothing harmful in the Bill and I support it wholeheartedly.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time.*

*Question: That the Bill be now committed deemed to have been negatived—Bill accordingly read the Third time and passed.*

## (3) The Interpretation Ordinance (Amendment) Bill

*Order for Second reading read.*

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move the Second reading of the Bill entitled "A Bill for a Law to amend the Interpretation Ordinance (Cap. 94)".

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

"Governor in Council" is defined in section 3 of the Interpretation Ordinance to mean "a Governor of a Region acting with the advice of the Executive Council of the Region, but

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not necessarily in accordance with that advice nor necessarily in such Council assembled”.

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

Clause 2 of the Bill amends the definition of the Governor in Council.

“Governor in Council” now means the Executive Council of the Eastern Region.

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

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

The Interpretation Ordinance provides, under section 47, for the manner in which an order made by the Governor can be signified. But it has not provision for the signification of an order made by the Governor in Council. Clause 5 closes this gap and provides that an order made by the Governor in Council can be signified under the hand of the Secretary to the Executive Council of the Eastern Region or a Minister charged with responsibility for the matter in question.

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

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V (Yenagoa Province)** I rise to support this Bill. I think that there is nothing wrong with the Bill. What I want to know from the Minister, at any rate, is that now that “Governor in Council” is interpreted to be Executive Council, it applies that the “Governor in Council” should not come in, so that anywhere at all that we have “Executive Council” it means the Governor, so the Governor means the Executive Council.

What I mean to say is that the word Governor should not remain in any Bill or in any paper, so that the word should be changed to “Executive Council”.

**Chief J. Mpi (Port Harcourt Province):** I am in support of the Bill. The only thing is that the word “Interpretation” should be properly interpreted. What I mean is that Laws are so many that the man in the rural area will not understand them. Whenever something like this happens the Minister should go nearer the people in the rural area and interpret it properly so that there will be no trouble.

**The Minister of Town Planning:** The two points raised are quite appreciated. The first one is about the “Governor in Council”. All that the Bill seeks to do is to bring the position of the Governor in this law in keeping with our Constitution. “Governor in Council” means the Executive Council; we want to bring the law to that stage where our Constitution has reached. This law has been drafted many years ago and we have grown constitutionally between that time and now. It is only fair that the Interpretation Ordinance should be brought up to that level too. The second point is a very simple one. The Minister does not interpret laws. He is not allowed to interpret any law. Laws are interpreted by the Courts. So that is the answer.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 2 agreed to.*

*Clause 3.*

**Chief Egbe Araghe Egbara (Obubra Division):** The Eastern Region Local Government Association at its meeting held at Aba in the latter part of last year felt a bit confused about the powers delegated to the Local Government Commissioners by Ministers, because they tended to rob Local Government Bodies of their functions and tended to show



that Local Government, which means government of the people by themselves, is no more to be interpreted in that way. Many Councils have been trying one way or the other to see whether the Government will change its attitude towards this end. Clause 3 of the Bill reads:

“Subject to this section, where a written law empowers a Minister of the Eastern Region to exercise a power or perform a duty, that Minister may depute (a) a person by name, or (b) the person for the time being holding the office designated by him, to exercise that power or perform that duty on behalf of the Minister . . .”

The delegated power there is so large that it affects all Local Government Bodies in the Eastern Region. Though I am not disputing the fact that powers should be delegated, I feel that there should be a limit to such powers. In any case, I beg to support the Bill with these observations.

*Clause 3 agreed to.*

*Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

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

#### (4) The Finance (Amendment) Bill

*Order for Second Reading read.*

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

The first important feature of the proposed amendment is to introduce flat rates of tax for people whose incomes are under £100 per annum. The rate will be £1 7s 6d for incomes under £60; £1 10s 0d for incomes ranging between £60 and £70; £1 15s 0d for incomes ranging between £70 and £80; £2 0s 0d for incomes ranging between £80 and £90 and £2 5s for incomes ranging between £90 and £100. A significant feature of this change is that for people whose income is below £100

there is a reduction of tax for unmarried persons. This is in keeping with public opinion which considers that the married man is generally better-off financially than the single man and that the application of differential rates according to domestic circumstances for these lower income groups is inappropriate in the circumstances of our present social structure.

As a result of these adjusted flat rates, the tax payable by married persons with three or more children has been slightly increased. These changes are reflected in the First Schedule to the Bill.

The second important proposal is the re-introduction of Purchase Tax on petrol at 3d per gallon and on auto-gas oil at 4d per gallon, as reflected in the Fourth Schedule to the Bill.

The other amendments to the Finance Law have the following aims: section 3 provides for an improvement of the basis upon which income is assessed; section 6 exempts from taxation, dividends accruing from pioneer companies which are themselves exempted from Federal tax; section 7 limits the field upon which exemption from Entertainment Tax has hitherto been claimed; and sections 9 to 11 correct certain minor irregularities in the Principal Law.

All the proposals contained in the Bill are expected to yield £321,000 in a full year and hon. Members will agree that it is necessary that we should find this additional money in order to provide for an adequate continuing contribution to the Development Programme.

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

**Chief J. Mpi (Port Harcourt Province):** I support the Bill but I have a point to make. The Minister made mention of a married man being better-off than an unmarried man. I do not think this is altogether correct. Every decent-minded person in this House will agree with me that it is not entirely true. If we accept it exactly as the Minister puts it, I think that will just stop many people from marrying. Really a married man with children is bearing more burden than an unmarried man. But on the other hand, however, there is a case where

[CHIEF MPI]

we may say that a married man is better-off than an unmarried man; but not in all cases. I go further and say that the rate of petrol as it goes now is too high but I know the Government is just finding a way to create further revenue to keep up the Government of the Eastern Region. However, we are here to remind them that we are suffering a lot, that petrol is now costing too much. They should find a way to cut it down. Although I have not come to the second point, yet, I think the Minister knows that there are some people who tour Provinces, some Divisions and some Clans but yet when we come to car allowances everybody is rated the same thing. However, I know that there are sufficient wise men in the Cabinet who will consider these points.

**Chief Johnson Osuji Njemanze, M.B.E.** (Owerri Province): I rise to support this Bill, but I have some comments to make. I do not understand the statement from our Minister of Finance that an unmarried person is more responsible than a married person. I should like to ask the hon. Minister whether he thinks these unmarried youngmen do support their parents or relatives which may be responsible for their greater financial burden. They do not. They spend their money uselessly of which we are aware. I therefore press that the opinion that an unmarried man is more responsible than a married man should be reconsidered. I do not think it is the public opinion and I am sure that 95 per cent of the Members in this House will agree with me (*An hon. Member: They are all married*).

Coming to the question of petrol, I support the rise. The Region wants money and it must be got from somewhere; but surely not from married men who have wives, children and relatives to care for and to educate. The unmarried man is not educating anybody but only financing the hotel keepers.

**Chief J. N. Wachuku** (Umuahia Province): This is one of the best Bills the Government has ever introduced. Those who come from rural areas know that the unmarried men are the poorest classes of people. This Bill is a great relief to them because they have to pay their own tax. They go from place to place, working for this and working for that, for their living. Unlike in the civilised world, when you go to the rural areas you will find that the Govern-

ment has done the best thing. So I congratulate the Government.

Another point is the question of increase in the price of petrol. It is a burden to the people in rural areas because it reflects on the cost of the sale of produce. The freight for conveying produce from Aba to Port Harcourt, or from Aba to Onitsha, shall increase but produce price is the same—not increased; and the middleman shifts this freight increase to the producers in the rural areas. This does not affect the people in the higher classes. For instance, immediately this increase is effective motor transport owners formerly charging 3s will demand 4s. It is the lower class man who has to pay it, because the motor owners have to recover the cost of the increase. The Government should as well try to increase the price of palm oil. When we talk of these things we must think of the people in the rural areas whose only source of revenue is the palm produce, and when these things are increased it automatically affects them. We have just heard of the sales tax. That also falls very heavily on the shoulders of producers in the rural areas, and I think something should be done as a relief particularly in the increase of freight for conveying their produce.

**Mr C. E. Amobi** (Special Member): I rise to support this Bill *in toto*. I am really surprised that the hon. Chiefs seem to criticise the difference between married and unmarried men. Any unmarried person, I am sure, cannot be prepared to be a Member of the House of Chiefs, because he may be looked upon as a hooligan. In our native custom marriage is something like a trade. If you marry and have children you will try to train your children so that during your old age your children will look after you. But a man who wants to fly about like butterfly in the street can never know himself and when he dies his burial is not recognised. There is responsibility in marriage. Any married person can be looked upon as a responsible citizen and therefore something responsible should be got from him.

Coming to the tax from those earning from £60 to £70 up to £100, I have to thank the hon. Minister of Finance for the fine arrangement because this group of income has always brought some sort of friction between the tax assessment clerks and the tax-payers, i.e., the lower income rate payers. At times we find it very difficult to assess a person of average

income. Coming to these bachelors, some of them make money and some do not. But how can you know the richer? You cannot, except they are earning salaries. Only then will you be able to say correctly that B is richer than A because he earns £6 10s a month while A earns only £5 a month. It is only then that assessment will be easy for the tax assessment clerks and this will prevent corruption because it is in this group that the assessment clerks practise corruption.

Somebody who may be qualified to pay £1 10s may be assessed to pay £1 7s 6d and some people may not even like to pay that £1 7s 6d but would prefer to give 10s bribe to the Tax Assessment Clerk so that he may not be assessed at all. I think the hon. Minister of Finance must be congratulated for his effort to exterminate all these bad practices.

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo** (Special Member): I rise to support this Bill presented by the hon. Minister of Finance and, to ally myself with the last speaker, concerning what he said on the low income group. I would like the Minister of Finance to make a little pamphlet and interpret all these things to those who cannot read and to ask the Information Service to circulate it all over the Region so that the poor people may not be blackmailed by the Tax Assessment Clerks.

Secondly, I want to state that there is a lot of trouble in the Tax Assessment Board. I would like some of the members who may be sent there to be men and women of good character who have "short" throats instead of "long" ones. This is my only observation and with these two remarks I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief N. U. Ofem** (Abakaliki Province): I rise to support the Bill. I should like to say that in the rural areas the unmarried men have nothing to do. They simply roam about and they are irresponsible.

On the question of increase in the price of petrol and gas, I think increase in the price of palm produce should simultaneously be made. The increase in the price of petrol will cause the cost of transportation to be proportionately increased. The rural people who

depend on the sale of palm produce will therefore be adversely affected. I hope that the authorities concerned will consider the advisability of increasing the price of palm produce.

**Chief Gregory Agbasiere** (Orlu Division): A lot has already been said on this question of unmarried people. There was a time when I was an unmarried man and I remember that I got more money than people who were married. It is unfair that married people should pay higher taxes than unmarried people. After all, married people have wives and children to cater for. I think Government is merely helping unmarried people to be irresponsible and to lead an immoral life if they are not taxed sufficiently. If the tax of unmarried people is raised, they will hasten to marry and will be more prudent in the use of their money. I would like to see that Government takes early steps to see that the necessary amendments are made before the end of this financial year, otherwise we Chiefs in this House will not support the Government in this matter.

**Chief Prince Eugene William Dappa Pepple** (The Amanyanabo of Bonny): I have to thank the hon. Minister of Finance for presenting this Bill. Hon. Members here have been expressing their views on the various points in connection with married and unmarried people.

**The President:** Will the hon. Member please speak a bit louder for all to hear.

**Chief Pepple:** Thank you. I have a different view about it. My view is that the unmarried persons have higher savings in that they have only themselves to maintain. They have no children, no wives, and no liabilities. I think that where reduction is necessary is in the married group. I discover that the rate of increase in the various income groups is not uniform. Between £90-£100 the increase is 5s while between £100-£110 the increase is about 15s. I think the rate of increase should have been proportionate. I would like to say that those in the rural areas have little or nothing to do and that they are very poor. I would like the Government to provide jobs for these people in the rural areas so that it will be possible for them to have the money from which they can pay tax.

[CHIEF PEPPLÉ]

With these few remarks I support the Bill.

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V** (Yenagoa Province): I rise to support the Bill. I have nothing to quarrel about the detailed rates apart from the married and unmarried people, because in our community the word "unmarried" is an apology and an abusive term to people who are not married except the man is not up to the age of marriage. And therefore if the Government has reduced the tax of the unmarried people to the same level of married group it is a disgrace to those people. Then the question is how to collect the tax and the system of assessment when the rates of taxes are prepared. In our rural areas the tax collection and assessment are very defective because a person earning £100 per annum for example tips the assessment clerk with some money and he assesses him on an income of £40, £30 or £60 as the case may be. Then there are some people whose age is just up to 50 or 60 years or something of the sort, and having money, buildings and so forth; whenever the assessment clerk comes they simply give him something like £20 and so forth, then they leave them. They say he is not well, he is sick, he cannot pay tax. And that is the case, thereby reducing the revenue. Therefore Government should take a serious view about this, because all the money that will go into the Government coffers goes into the pockets of those assessment clerks. This is equally true of the Forest Guards. A person who is now sixty years, having money, plots in the townships, is exempted from taxation and a poor man in my area and some other rural areas not only Ijaw, pays tax.

Secondly, on the question of assessment, some people evade it and are not counted, and when the time for payment comes you find that up to ten or more persons do not pay tax. That is why at my place Amassoma in Brass Division we told the court clerks and judges and made an arrangement that whenever anybody comes to court he must produce his tax receipt and without tax ticket that person must be arrested and sent to jail or fined £5 or more because he is one of the people who evade tax. So that we get some funds for the Government.

Thirdly, about petrol increase, people in the urban areas are not suffering what we suffer in the rural areas. When petrol was costing about

3s 6d in this area we were buying it at 5s 6d at Amasoma my home town. But now, because petrol has increased, before I left Amasoma I bought petrol at 7s a gallon which cost me so much to travel from my place to Port Harcourt. I am sure Government will consider those in the rural areas as I said previously that those in the rural areas are in hell and those in the urban areas in heaven. Government should consider first those who are in hell before those who are in heaven.

**Chief S. A. Essien** (Annang Province): I rise to support the Bill and in doing that I like to point out that in my area the unmarried men are not looked upon as being important in the community. When the tax was higher for the unmarried men that made many unmarried men in my area to try and marry. Believe me, if we take the census now my area will have almost the largest figure of coupled people. But when this new law is extended to the people in the Rivers area some stubborn unmarried men will not think of getting married. The Government might reconsider its policy of taxing the married and unmarried groups next year and with these few remarks, I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief N. N. Anyika** (Onitsha Province): I am going to say something about married and unmarried groups, because if I do not say anything at all my mind will be worrying me. In the community, the unmarried group will not allow you to say anything. If you go to the hotel, unmarried persons there will pay about 5s to buy a bottle of beer. If you go out to work you are paid 5s a day the same thing as the unmarried, so they get much money and when we hold a meeting in the town your wife will not listen to you! What I suffer, the unmarried group will not suffer the same thing because as I am here I am thinking about my children. I have to think of feeding them, but the unmarried man has money to go and deceive my wife to desert me. So I am appealing to Government to reconsider this because Government will not be criticised blindly.

Another point is the increase of petrol price. I do not want to say anything about that. The things that we people in the rural areas want to claim are the amenities, development, and tarring of the roads.

I support the Bill.

**Chief J. N. Nwansi** (Owerri Division): As a tax collector in my area, I wish Government to clarify the reason why flat rate is not mentioned in this column: Under £50, £1 7s 6d, for married and unmarried. That is Part I. And in Part II the same thing for married and unmarried. In our area when we collect tax, unmarried person pays £1 10s; married without child pays £1 7s 6d; married, with one child pays £1 5s; married with more than three children pays £1 2s 6d. It is not mentioned here. I wish to know whether this order about flat rate is not Regional or whether it is a Divisional concern. I support the Bill but have that question to ask as a tax collector.

**Chief R. O. Orem** (Ikom Division): I rise to support the Bill with a few remarks. I was a tax collector and a member of the Tax Assessment Board for so many years, up to last year. I remember in our own area in Ikom where I come from when we were assessing people, we had one person who had only one wife and two chairs in his house. He was crying very bitterly that he had nothing at all. We went to his house and found only two chairs for himself and his wife and it was hard for him to produce a bottle of palm wine. We decided that he should pay less tax. What happened? The man who married only one wife, when we went there again after about one week and two days, we took away £400 from his house: the man with only two chairs and one wife! Imagine that. And then a person who is married and has got many children, say, five children or even ten children pays more tax? That means you are encouraging the other people not to pay tax. According to the second to the last speaker, it is true some of the young men in the towns run about and spoil married women and buy more drinks. I see no reason why Government should have mercy on them. These people have the money to marry but will not marry. Government should do something to make them marry and bring up children who will help us to pay tax. A married man suffers a lot. The unmarried people are the people Government should see that they pay more tax because they have more money while the married men have nothing.

There is another thing that I am going to mention. Somebody that I trained in the school, fed him and clothed him, got three

wives while I had two by that time, because every woman followed him. So to marry a wife is not because you have money but because of love. We want money to run the Government and without money we cannot run the Government. Government should go into the matter deeply. If you want to change the Law, that is quite all right, but it is not for an unmarried man to pay less tax than a married man.

About petrol, the increase in the price of petrol is going to punish everybody. I say so because the price of petrol is increased by 3d. The lorry owners are going to tax passengers in order to get this money. I beg Government to consider this matter; if the increase was 1d it would have been quite all right, but 3d is rather too much. The lorry owners will tax the people and I am therefore appealing to the Government to do something about this.

**The Minister of Finance:** May I first of all thank all the hon. Chiefs who have contributed very effectively to this debate. It appears that a wrong impression has gained grounds in the House and that is that some people feel that the amendment has now made unmarried people to pay less tax than married people in general. As a matter of fact, there is nothing like that at all. If you look at page 6 of the Bill you will find that all that is done there is to make everybody under £100 to pay a flat rate of tax. The flat rate varies from £1 7s 6d for those below the £60 range to £2 5s for those between £90 and £100. That will remove other grounds for misunderstanding. In Part III of the tax schedule you will notice that unmarried men are placed there to pay higher than married men. In the past single men were paying so much higher that the burden was trying to drive away from this Region young men from overseas with degrees. When they come back to hear of the heavy taxation imposed on those who are not married they run away to the Federal Government or to the Western Region to look for jobs. Last year, that is before the current year, Government decided to amend that section of the law to reduce the burden a bit. What I am trying to say is that after the income of £99 as soon as it rises up to £100, if you are single you pay more tax than a person who is married and a person who is married with children. In the lower income

[DR IMOKE]

group that is from £1 to £100, Government believe that in the rural areas where most of these people live and where the tradition is that as soon as you can afford to marry you must do so and those who are not married are regarded as nothing in society, it is obvious that those who are not married are definitely people who cannot afford to marry and that is why we suppose that unmarried people are really poorer than those who are married. The dowry in most parts of the Region, even though we passed a law here making it to be £30, is from £100 to £200 in most places. We feel that before one can afford £100 or £200 for a wife definitely he must be a rich man and that is why we have decided that those who are not married are definitely poorer people and their burden of taxation must be reduced. I hope that I have made it plain that at no point in the tax Schedule are single men made to pay less taxes than married men.

Many Members have also spoken on the question of tax on petrol and diesel oil. Some say that it is the right thing for the Government to do and others are apprehensive that the burden shall be passed on to the ordinary man. The tax is considerably small, 3d on petrol and 4d on diesel oil, and it will be unfair for anybody to increase the passengers' fare by, say, 1s to 2s. That is cheating the public. The public should be educated to know that the increase is too small to be passed on to the road users. Petrol is used mainly by you and me. Those of us who are driving cars are those who can afford to pay this little amount into the Government coffers to enable us to get through our development. I do not think it will be a very heavy burden on us. Government has considered it very carefully, otherwise we would have put tax on salt if we wanted it but we thought it would be a burden on our women-folk; therefore we decided to put it on petrol. Those who can afford to pay should pay. I think it is quite fair for the Government to do this.

I do not intend to reply to every Member's contribution one by one. I have touched on the two main points which Members have spoken on and I think the explanation is clear and that everybody will support the Bill.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time.*

*Question: That the Bill be committed deemed to have been negatived—Bill accordingly read the Third time and passed.*

*Sitting suspended at 12.05 p.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

### (5) The Native Courts (Interim Provisions) Bill

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move the Second Reading of a Bill for a Law to amend the provisions of the Native Courts Ordinance and of the Customary Courts Law, 1956, relating to the hearing of appeals and to the control of Native Courts.

Subsection (3) of section 31 of the Native Courts Ordinance provides that "any person aggrieved by any order or decision of a President, made or given upon appeal from a District Officer or from a Native Court or a Native Court of Appeal may within thirty days from the date of such order or decision appeal to the Governor". This law was enacted in 1934 and is no longer in keeping with the constitutional position of the Governor.

Secondly, with the establishment of Customary Courts in all parts of the Region, Native Courts will disappear. Appeals will go from District Courts to County Courts, Magistrates Courts, High Courts and the Federal Supreme Court.

In the interim period, that is to say, before Customary Courts are established throughout the Region Native Courts will continue to function and appeals from Native Courts will continue to go through the channels prescribed by Native Courts Ordinance.

The main object of this Bill is to enable the Chief Justice or a Judge of the High Court to hear such appeals from Native Courts as would have lain to the Governor.

Opportunity has been taken to make some consequential amendments and to repeal sections of the Ordinance that deal with the powers of the Governor or the Governor in Council over Native Courts.

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

**Chief J. Mpi** (Port Harcourt Province): I rise to support this Bill. I am very happy that the Government has taken action in amending this Law. All the time that this Law was made, many people have appealed to the Governor from the Native Courts, but there were no results. People waste their money and get lawyers sometimes and put up their cases to the Governor; for years they do not hear anything. I am very happy and wish to congratulate the Government for taking action now to amend the Law.

**Chief J. N. Wachuku** (Umuahia Province): This is one of the things in which I am interested—the Bill amending the Native Court Ordinance. There is no harm about that. But the question of obtaining plans before a case goes to the Native Court is where I do concern myself. A poor man from the rural area who has a dispute with his brother about a palm tree, you will require him to make a plan of that land although the dispute is about a palm tree. The court will not hear him; they will ask “Who is the owner of the land where the palm tree grows?” In that case the court will require him to produce the plan of the land. This is a matter which Government should have given a fore-thought, if possible circulate the information to District Councils and request their views. It is one of those things I have noticed when I was in the civil service. A matter of this nature is a thing that the Government should circulate to the District Officers to obtain their views. How are you going to do it? It is only good for those in the townships. I know in my place how the number of cases of this nature are settled. Sometimes you may go to Court and you are referred to the village. I think the best thing we should do about the production of plan is to get people trained to make a simple draft or plan. If we do not want to appeal to the Magistrates Court or High Court, we submit the plan.

I have seen several times when a case was heard by a District Officer, on review, he would draw out, volume I, the second stage, and say much about it, and enter it into his judgment book. He will say: this tree forms the boundary in the north, this tree forms the boundary in the east, this tree forms the

boundary in west, and this tree forms the boundary in the south. The Judge will say: you remember the District Officer went on that land and you described this tree as the boundary, why did not this appear in your plan? It is the lawyer that will explain that. If you want everybody to produce a plan before he hears a case in the court, that is what I am totally against. I am appealing to the Government to reconsider it. Remember a widow who lost her husband, a relative of her husband comes out and says “this is my land”. The woman has no money even to fight out the case, how much more to pay a surveyor. If you bring a surveyor you have got to keep on feeding him with his request. How do you think that this money would be forthcoming? I am suggesting to the Government that this is a matter that requires a careful consideration, otherwise the people in the rural areas will suffer. If you follow the lawyers they can suggest anything, they do not mind. It is one of the matters that people should think about. You may say: I come from such and such a place. Go there and see what trouble people are making about the small pieces of land there. I am against the production of plan before going to court. It will be a hard thing for people in the rural areas. The Government should reconsider its decision about that.

I beg to support.

**Alhaji Chief Umoru Yushau** (Special Member): I rise to support this Bill. There is only one thing that I want to say about the Bill. I want the Government to consider the membership of Customary Courts so as to appoint an Hausa man because, always in the Native Courts if a case comes up between an Hausa and an Hausa it is difficult to give judgment. It is good to have an Hausa man in the Customary Courts to show them our custom. I appeal to the Government to consider this matter. In places like Onitsha, Umuahia and Calabar it is necessary to have an Hausa man in the Court.

**Mr C. E. Amobi** (Special Member): I rise to support this Bill. I know some of the hon. Members may not like it but one thing I want to bring to the notice of everybody here is that we are heading towards Independence. People in their speeches seem to mention rural areas as if to say they are the champions of the rural

[MR AMOBI]  
 areas. With Independence on our doorsteps the Government is trying to transform some of the rural areas into what we call townships today. We do not hope that we shall remain what we were a hundred years ago; we do not wish to remain what we were fifty years ago. That is why all the politicians were fighting all this time and I stand again to congratulate our Eastern Regional Government for their wise decisions and for their broad outlook of things. It appears they are looking forward to what will happen five years or ten years to come. Compare with the other Regions. You know we have the Western Region, we have the Northern Region. They are all trying to forge ahead. We cannot keep on speaking, and seeking the applause of the people in the gallery. We are trying to come out more and more to transform the rural areas into second-class townships, so that the people in the rural areas will be taught some decency. I quite agree to this Bill because in the old Native Courts there is no justice at all. The justice there is obtained only by the highest bidder. With the new arrangement anybody who is aggrieved will be able to transfer his case to any place of his choice. Thus bribery and corruption could be wiped off our Native Courts.

**Chief Francis O. Joseph Allagoa** (The Amanyanabo of Nembe): I rise to support this Bill. My experience in Native Courts is that a case continues to recur from day to day because there is no record, no real record to show that the case has been adjudicated; and no plan to show that a person's land boundaries are here or there. You go to the Court and plead that this case has been tried before. But what of the plan? In my area what occurs every day is this question of land cases. This man will come along and say "This is my land. It is just my land". But there is no plan to show where exactly the land is and what the boundaries are. So I support the Bill *in toto*.

**Chief Eket Inyang-Udo** (Uyo Province): I rise to support the Bill. The Native Court has been more or less called, in civilised world, the old family hall of New York, where you get a land case, you go to court, you come back, you have your coat on but you come out there without your shirt on. Some hon. Members say that the question of survey is out of order, but I say it is the proper thing to do. Now that Nigeria shall become independent every land

owner should have his land surveyed and registered. I wish to see that Law in the Eastern Region; that will make money for the Government. Every District Council, or County Council as we call it, has what we call land settlement. The Government of the Eastern Region should see that the Land Settlement shall be recognised by the Court and fix a fee of say £15 for anybody to engage a Land Settlement Officer to survey his land. I know that surveyors charge much and sometimes if you have a case which you do not quite understand a Surveyor may come and tell you that he wants £300 from you—just for what may not be worth up to £25.

Another point is that I would like to see the coming into operation of these customary courts. Every day we hear of customary courts but we do not see them. In the whole Province from where I come there is no customary court and the judges in the Native Courts are the worst type of people. If you do not have money you will never win a land case. They will make bargains. I will take this opportunity to point out that the Native Court is the heart of the people and should be properly looked into. Now, if you go before the court for a land case and you have no plan, there is no real case because every court in the world will ask: where is your plan. If there is a land case in Lagos the first thing is to run to the land registry where you will see the plan. It is not so in the Eastern Region. I am strongly supporting this Bill and I am suggesting that whenever one has a land case one must have a survey plan. I also recommend that all our landed property should be registered.

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V** (Yenagoa Province): I think this is a Bill which mainly concerns those who come from rural areas, because I know there is no native court in Enugu, and those who wear shoes know where they pinch them. I am one of them and I want to tell exactly what is called a native court. A native court is a court which is completely corrupt and is a place where a pure man will not pass through. The change from native court to customary court is a mere change of name. The evils of the native court are still there. Therefore, though I will support the Bill, I wish to make some observations.

First of all, the constitution of native courts—how the judges are to be appointed... (An



*hon. Member: That is the business of Government*) I am sorry. A Native Court as at present constituted is a difficult thing. I find it in section 5— Appeals from the District Officers to the Residents. Is there any Resident in the Region? I want the Minister to explain this to me, because there is no Resident at present. In my area appeal cases have been lying for about five years; nobody to review them. Only last month the District Officer tried over 150 cases which have been accumulating for a long time because we are short of District Officers. So that Government should take time about this Bill. District Officers at this time are not interested in judicial matters. They are there for elections and some other administrative matters, so that the native court judges will give whatever judgement they like—when you have the money you win the case. I wish to give you some examples in the Western Region. When you go to the court and your people in the corner raise, say five fingers, that indicates to the judges that they will be given £5; when they raise ten fingers that means £10 and so on. So that the highest bidder is the person to win the case. That obtains also in the Eastern Region. The courts are still the same thing.

Nowadays we are appointing civilised and educated men to be native court judges. You will remember somebody in the House who was getting £800 resigned to become a Member of the customary court. Why should a man leave £800 to take £80 per annum? That shows that something is going on there. So you will see that we are suffering in the rural areas and Government should see about it. District Officers refuse to go there. Whenever they go there they will find one way or the other to run away. For example, one Mr Carson, now Provincial Secretary, who has been working very well with us, is now applying to go away.

Again the appointment of these judges should not be left to the Minister of Justice alone. He does not know who is who. The appointment must be recommended or made by the people themselves.

**Chief Francis Nwizu Ezerioha** (Orlu Division): We have not come here to revoke

the Bill. Therefore come to the topic they called us for.

**Chief Efeke:** On the amendment from native court to customary court what I am after is how the cases will go from one court to another. That is very important.

I support the Bill.

**Chief Douglas Jaja** (The Amanyanabo of Opobo): It is a shame to see hon. Chiefs trying to impeach members of the customary courts. I regret hearing the hon. Chief Efeke mention that members of the native courts receive bribes. I am defending my own native court in Opobo town. My chiefs in the native court do not receive bribes. We are here to debate on a point and to put things right and not to abuse our fellow chiefs outside who are not Members of this House. It will bring bad blood between outside chiefs and ourselves. So in supporting the Bill I have to remark that hon. Members must respect their status and that we are not here to impeach others but to help the Government to carry out the good administration of the Region.

In supporting the Bill, there is not much to quarrel about. We have to congratulate the Minister that produced it. We have been longing to transfer our cases to the Magistrates Courts and so on, but we have not that opportunity. Now we have the chance to do all that we require and I think it is better to congratulate the Ministry and not to make unnecessary remarks.

Another thing I have to add is that it is better, if you have a portion of land, to survey it in case of any trouble in future. This is a sort of advice and a way out to the saying "what you have you hold".

I support the Bill.

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I must first of all thank the hon. Members who have spoken in support of the Bill. But I must draw attention to the fact that the essence of this Bill is to make interim arrangement for the hearing of appeals by the Chief Justice.

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[MR EMOLE]

That is the object of this Bill. The other points mentioned are quite good but they are not included in this Bill. That is just what I want to explain. But that does not mean that the points made by the hon. Members are not good. I think they are quite good and as I said before they have been noted. I hope the object of this Bill should be given the general acceptance which it deserves.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1-9 agreed to.*

*First and Second Schedules agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

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

**(6) The High Court (Amendment) Bill**

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** The main object of this Bill, as stated in the "Objects and Reasons" is to amend the Law in order to bring it in line with the Nigeria (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1954 to 1960, (hereinafter called the "Constitution Orders"). The High Court Law came into force in January 1956. Changes that have taken place as a result of our constitutional advance have made some sections of the Law out of date.

The High Court of Justice of each Region is now established by virtue of subsection (1) of section 142A of the Constitution Orders. It has become necessary, therefore to alter, in Clause 2 of the Bill, the title of the High Court Law from "A Law for the Establishment of a High Court of Justice of the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria" to "A Law relating to the High Court of Justice for

the Eastern Region of the Federation of Nigeria".

Subsection (2) of section 142A of the Constitution Orders provides that the High Court of a Region shall consist of the Chief Justice of the Region, who shall be the President of the Court, and six other judges or such greater number as may be prescribed by or under any Law enacted by the Legislature of the Region, Clause 6 empowers the Governor in Council, if it becomes necessary, to prescribe a greater number of Judges than the statutory minimum.

Paragraph (a) of subsection 5 of section 142A of the Constitution Orders prescribes the qualifications for a Judge of the High Court. As the Constitution Orders prevail over a Regional Law, Clause 7 of the Bill repeals section 5 of the Law which deals with qualifications for the appointment of a Judge.

Clause 8 deals with the qualifications for acting Judges and Clause 9 with the precedence of Judges.

Clauses 11 and 13 repeal subsection (1) of section 37 and subsection (5) of section 40 of the Law which define "Regional matter" as "Regional matter" is now defined in Clause 3.

Clause 12 amends section 39 of the High Court Law by removing the provision that on an appeal against an acquittal or dismissal "the Court may order that the decision of the Magistrate be set aside and convict the accused person of the offence of which he might lawfully have been convicted upon the evidence and sentence him accordingly". It has liberalised the Law and improved the drafting.

Clause 14 makes provision for the representation of the Crown or a Ministry in a criminal matter or in a civil action and Clause 16 deals with the constitution of the High Court Rules Committee.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 17 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

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

### (7) The Magistrates Courts (Amendment) Bill

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I rise to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

As stated in the "Objects and Reasons" the object of this Bill is to bring the Magistrates Courts Law, 1955, in line with the Nigeria (Constitution) Orders in Council, 1954 to 1960 (hereinafter referred to as the "Constitution Orders").

Power to make appointments to the posts of Chief Magistrates and Magistrates now vests in the Governor acting on the recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission. This provision in section 180 E of the Constitution Orders makes subsection (1) of section 6 of the Magistrates Courts Law which provides that "it shall be lawful for the Governor on the recommendation of the Chief Justice" to appoint Chief Magistrates and Magistrates obsolete. Clause 3 amends the Law.

Clause 10 provides that an appeal shall lie as of right to the High Court in any criminal case where a person is sentenced to imprisonment by a Magistrate's Court even for a day. It removes the disqualification in the Law that where a person has pleaded guilty to an offence he forfeits the right of appeal.

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

**Chief J. Mpi (Port Harcourt Province):** I am very happy that this change is coming to

be what it is now. This will help the Government to be able to appoint those people who are honest, who love their jobs; who are interested in their jobs and not only appointing them but make them go forward. There are certain people who do not care to do their jobs. Those people, though they are even now being appointed, should be told to go back to their people and come and help us to plant yams and coco-yams. I say this because all along, people are being denied justice for one reason or the other. So that in appointing this type of people, according to what I was told here that authority will now be vested in the Government to appoint, the Government should appoint good men, men of integrity who will defend the poor even where they are unable to retain barristers. I am very happy for the steps taken by the Government and I hope it will help very much in the future. Also I thank the Minister who is introducing this amendment before the House. I do not see anything bad in this Bill. It is a very good Bill and I support it.

**Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E. (Owerri Province):** I am sure this Bill will be highly appreciated by the majority of this Region. I am sorry our Premier is not here, but I think some of his able Ministers who contributed to the introduction of this Bill will also give their full support to considering as Magistrates people who are absolutely God-fearing not people who when they are appointed, only go there to make money. And also they should appoint men of experience, men who know the feelings of people, who are able to close their eyes as far as money is concerned and give good and real justice; and not people who just arrived from England after completing their two years study, and immediately they come here they find themselves in lack of practice. They want money and when they get there, what do you expect? We are appealing to the Minister to help by appointing able men, men of experience, men of integrity, God-fearing men.

I beg to support.

**Chief M. I. Asinobi (Special Member):** I rise to support the Bill. I want people who value honour, good name and who know what shame is. We want such people in our

[CHIEF ASINOBI]

Customary Courts. If we get people who do not value these things everything will be the same as before. So that I do not think the situation will be better if we do not appoint the people who value the importance of good name.

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo** (Special Member): I have to thank the Minister who prepared this Bill but I have two observations to make.

As we are anxious to get as much money from our Local Councils, I would like the Minister to make it a point to inform the Magistrates that when the Local Government Councils summon tax defaulters or market stallage defaulters, they should give the cases priority. Take for instance a case in the Aba Urban District Council of which I am a member, there is trouble in the collection of market stallages. When you put these people to court, the court will keep on adjourning and adjourning for months and months and we cannot enforce the law without the judgment of the court.

Secondly, I want to align myself with a few of the Chiefs who have just said something about appointment of Magistrates. It was a shameful thing for us in the outside world that a person who was convicted at Port Harcourt was not imprisoned, but, somebody else was paid money to go and serve the sentence. I want the Minister of Justice to find a way—either by a copy of the photograph—when the man is convicted his photograph should be in the court and one sent to the prison; so that if anybody does not want to serve the punishment he deserves, there will be conflicting photographs. It is my humble view that as we are going into an Independent Nigeria, we should maintain the dignity of our Laws.

**Chief Francis Nwizu Ezerioha** (Orlu Division): I rise to support the Bill because the people who drafted it and brought it before us are Nigerians. The question of the appointment is not in their hands but in the hands of the Chief Justice.

The question of bribery and corruption in the appointment of Magistrates does not arise. I thought that when this Bill was brought to us this morning we should have supported it and

not waste our time. I do not think I have anything to criticise; when I see a bad thing I must criticise; therefore, it is only a waste of time to talk unfairly too much.

**Chief Egbe Araghe Egbara** (Obubra Division): In one clause in this Bill it is stated that—

“An appeal, under that section 148, from decisions in criminal proceedings does not operate as a stay of execution but the Magistrate or the High Court may order a stay of execution either—

- (a) unconditionally, or
- (b) upon the performance of such conditions as may be imposed by rules of court made under this Law or the High Court Law, 1955.”

It is not only operative in criminal cases. If really we are serious and we want to reduce the number of these land cases, there is no reason why when a court, be it a Magistrate's Court or a High Court, has given an order for a stay of execution to some party in a land case, that such and such must not be done, this order should not be followed closely by the Police. This will give way to the offending party to continue to offend the rightful owner of that property. So that it would have been better for the Government to have tried one way or the other to see that certain rules are made empowering Magistrates or Judges to see that when an order is made it is carried out.

With this remark I beg to support the Bill.

**The Minister of Town Planning:** I thank the hon. Members who spoke for their general acceptance of this Bill. The points raised have been noted and I will pass them to the appropriate quarters. The object of this Bill—if I may draw your attention to that again—is merely to bring this particular law in line with our constitutional advancement. Formerly, the Magistrates and Chief Magistrates were appointed by the Chief Justice, but, now it is the Judicial Service Commission that does it, and this Bill is brought just to keep in line with that Constitutional Order in Council and nothing else. All the points raised by hon. Members are very interesting and I have noted them.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 13 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

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

### (8) The Loans Bill

*Order for Second Reading read*

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

I rise to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to enable this Government to borrow the sum of £1 million direct from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

This amount is the agreed share of the Eastern Region in the £3 million Exchequer Loan and is shown under Sub-head 5 of Head 800 at Page E 121 of the Capital Estimates as a receipt into the Capital Development Fund.

Normally, we should obtain this loan through the Federal Government, but as a special concession the Secretary of State and the Federal Government have agreed that in this particular case this Government and that of the Northern Region may legislate to borrow direct from Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom.

To enable this to be done the Federal Government is enacting an ordinance to authorise the Northern Region and ourselves to enter into this direct obligation.

This Bill does not empower this Government to raise any other direct loan. Future borrowings will be made through the Federal Government and in accordance with the Constitution.

Hon. Members are aware that the Revised Development Programme has been published as Official Document No. 13 of 1960. It is desirable that this Bill should be passed to ensure that part of the finance required for the Development Programme is obtained this year. I have no doubt therefore, that hon. Members will support it.

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

**Chief Egbe Araghe Egbara** (Obubra Division): I rise to support this Bill and in doing so I have in mind some of the speeches made by the Members of both this House and the other House. Inasmuch as the Government and the Ministers have rightly considered that this loan will not make us somehow to be regarded as slaves to the British masters and inasmuch as we feel that already we have agreed to remain in the British Commonwealth as brothers and sisters, I really feel that there is nothing dangerous in trying to get the loan from our British brothers. With this few remarks I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V** (Yenagoa Province) I rise to support this Bill and in supporting it I must say that the loan which Government have asked for is not sufficient. At present we are short of money and without money we can do nothing. The poor man in the street is even asking for a loan of about £2,000 from the E.R.D.C. and he has not enough security, how much more a Government. I say that the loan which the Government is now asking for is not enough. It should be something like £5 million so that in ten years time we can do something. Now the Region has not enough money. The Government should find more money and find it by one way or the other. But to ask for loan from the British Government is not correct. Going to ask for money from the British Government will not help us because it will make us slaves to the British. If you divorced a wife and she came to ask for money to buy her clothes from you what would you think of that woman? If we borrow money from the British Government, they will tie us down economically although we are free politically. I am supporting the Minister of Information that we are not prepared to keep ourselves in the Commonwealth. I am supporting him for what he has said both in

[**CHIEF ZUMOH EFEKE V**]  
and outside this House. Mind you the people are too much after their colour. You have heard what is happening in South Africa.

**Chief F. N. Ezerioha** (Orlu Division)  
Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (2).  
We are talking about loan.

**Chief Efeke:** Yes, I am talking about loan now. Egypt is receiving some £2 million from Russia and some people say that they are Communists and asked why the people should be getting something from them. I would rather support that than the question of getting money from the British Government.

You heard what the Prime Minister of Russia said in India when he visited there that he had not gone there to give loan in order to control the political powers of that country. So you had better apply. Where is your application, in the first case?

Furthermore, we all want to get loan, but we must have to use the money to the advantage of everyone. If you go to the rural areas, you will see that the people there suffer a great deal. Many of them have no drinking water. We ought to do something to help those of our people who are actually suffering. We must think of our people who are actually suffering. We must think of our people who are not employed. I think Government ought to do something to provide our people jobs in the rural areas and thus avoid unemployed young men from flooding the townships.

I support the Bill.

**Chief R. J. Onyeneho** (Okigwi Division): I rise to support the Bill. In fact, Government has borrowed very little from England; I would like this Government to borrow more from England because they got much from here. Remember now you are using your money to develop the area. They tapped much wealth from this side of the country, so we must look for money from their own area.

My contribution is that I want that when this loan is obtained, development should be scattered here and there and not necessarily confined to one place only. We should be very happy if the money, when obtained, is used to bring some amenities to Okigwi. With these contributions, I support the Bill.

**Chief Otu Lawrence Odu** (Ogoja Division): I rise to support the Bill. In doing so, I would like to say that when we get the money it should be made clear that the money shall not be used in the development of one area. It should be scattered everywhere in the interest of all. Take for example, Ogoja, the old important seat of Government, is now being neglected. I am appealing to the Government that everything should be done to use part of this money, when obtained, to develop Ogoja. Look at the roads of Ogoja and see how bad they are. I would like to repeat that whenever this loan is obtained, Government should try to use some to develop Ogoja.

**Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E.** (Owerri Province): I rise to support the Bill. I thank our Government and the Minister of Finance for trying to get this loan from our ex-masters and now our good friends. I have to say that this loan is wanted to carry out capital works and I am sure we will get it. I am calling the attention of our Ministers and our able Premier to see that attention is given to Owerri. We need capital works, particularly the tarring of Owerri-Umunna and Owerri-Umuahia roads. Something should be done, on receipt of this money, to effect capital development. They made no mistake in approaching our masters. I am sure they will try to get the money and the British Government will be ever ready to help us financially to develop our country.

**Chief S. B. Maeba** (Ogoni Division): I rise to support the Bill. In doing so, I am appealing to the Government to come and help Ogoni. I come from Ogoni Division and, as you know, Ogoni is a young and backward area. In our area we have so many of our young children who have passed their standard six but have nothing to do. As there is no Secondary School they cannot easily have further education. We are appealing to the Government to build a Secondary School in this area to help the very many people who now have no place to send their children for secondary education.

We have only one road from Ukuhu to the Waterside. We need roads, and good ones too, to enable people to travel out. If the roads are dangerous, no one would attempt to travel and without travelling, understanding is always very little.

**Rev. and Chief Effiong Utit, M.B.E.,** (Enyong Division): I rise to support the Bill. I approve of the Government's decision to get a loan from the British Government. There is nothing bad in our trying to get some money from them as they are now leaving us.

I am also appealing to the Government to remember Enyong Division when the money is obtained. It is still backward and by all means, we need some amenities. This Government will try to borrow money in order to effect broad development whenever there is a chance for doing so. They should try, but in doing so, and when the money is obtained, amenities should be distributed equally without special regard to one particular area.

**The Minister of Finance:** May I thank hon. Members who have contributed towards this debate. May I take this opportunity to explain that the Capital Development Programme has already been drawn up by Government and many of the projects in it have started being implemented, and the hon. Members who are asking for a special consideration for their own areas will do well to look at this Programme and will probably be satisfied that provision is made for every part of the Region. It is this Government's policy to distribute amenities fairly throughout the Region and so there should be no fear that this loan which is being raised would be used to develop only one section of the Region. Some Members have said that we should go out to other parts of the world to raise loans and that we should not raise loans with strings attached. I want to explain that the Federal Government is the agent that is responsible for raising loans for the whole Federation and the Federal Government has been doing its best by going to America and other parts of the world, to the International Bank and so forth, to find some money for the development of this Federation. It is very difficult to find this money. The money market is very tight and it is not at all easy. What we are requesting now—a million pounds—is only a share of three million pounds that the United Kingdom Government is prepared to loan to Nigeria as a whole and I think we are extremely lucky to get a million out of this three million pounds. I do not agree with the analogy by Chief the

hon. Efeke of getting independence being similar to a man divorcing his wife. One may divorce his wife because he feels probably she has done something very bad. It may be she does not obey you. It may be she fights you always. It may be she does not supply you with food when you return from work and so forth. When you divorce a wife you regard her company with you no more necessary, and regard her also as unwanted person. But in this case we are parting with the British Government or British people as friends. We do not want to part as enemies. It is wrong to give the impression that one of the reasons why we should go outside to borrow money and not from the British Government is because we have divorced them as we divorce a wife. As I explained before, the Development Programme has been revised. It was prepared last year to last from 1958 to 1962 and it has been revised. With the revision before us, the Official Document No. 13 referred to, we still have a gap of over a million pounds of the necessary money to find and if we have this gap to fill, we still have to go outside to borrow or perhaps to raise the loan locally by the Federal Government trying to raise loan in the way they did when they had to ask you to subscribe certain amount to the Government in form of loan. That sort of system will soon be embarked upon by the Federal Government and whatever is raised by this method could be used to help us close this gap, but we still press the Federal Government to do their best to go out into the world and see whether they could receive more money. At the same time we have to be very careful. We do not want to raise loans to the extent that we will find that our revenue will not be able to pay back. We have to be mindful about that. The servicing of the loan has to be considered. If we go out and raise say twenty million pounds and we are given only ten or fifteen years to pay back we have to calculate what we would get from our revenue from year to year. Can we afford to service this loan by paying back the principal and the interest within the given period? All these have to be taken into consideration, but the main thing is that the money market is very tight and it is not easy to get loan from the outside.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Bill accordingly read a Second time.*

*Eastern House of Chiefs Debates*

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[Loans Bill—3R]

25 APRIL 1960

[H.E. the Governor—Send-off]

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*Question: That the Bill be committed deemed to have been negatived—Bill accordingly read the Third time and passed.*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 o'clock a.m. tomorrow.

I take this opportunity to remind hon. Chiefs that there is going to be a send-off

ceremony at the Stadium at 4.30 p.m. today for His Excellency the Governor. All Members are requested to be there a little bit earlier, say by 4.20 p.m. if possible.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned, accordingly, at two o'clock p.m.*



EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Tuesday, 26th April, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE

The following Members took and subscribed the Oath required by Law:—

Chief the hon. Daniel Onyeogaziri Njoku.

Chief the hon. Fred Nwaezindu Ogodoro.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

(1) The Eastern Region Local Government Bill

Order for Second Reading read.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I rise to move, that the Bill be now read a Second time.

The existing Local Government Law came into operation on the 1st of July, 1955; since then the Law has been very extensively amended. This has resulted in the Law becoming a very confusing document for those who have to consult it regularly in the course of their business. Consequently there has been a general and understandable request from Members of the House of Assembly and other users of the Law for a new issue of the Law embodying all the amendments.

But instead of issuing a reprint of the old Law the opportunity was taken to draft a new Bill which not only embodies all the amendments to the existing Law but also enables me to carry out the policy imposed upon me by Chapter VI of Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1957 by which all Urban District and District Councils are to become Urban County and County Councils. This opportunity has been taken also to revise the drafting of some sections of the existing Law to make it more readable. A few new matters have been introduced. The result of all this is a rather large forbidding-looking document. But it is not so formidable as it looks. There is very little difference

between this Bill and the old Law. It does not propose a new Local Government organisation or considerable departures from established practice. Its purpose is generally to tidy up what had become very untidy legislation, to make the substance clearer where necessary and to facilitate the work of those who have to know the Law and carry it out. I wish, therefore, to emphasise the point that there is very little that is new in this Bill when it is compared with the existing Law. This Bill is as it were the latest model, having a number of improvements, a few new features but basically the same as before. Apart from changing the nomenclature of Councils the few new matters which I have included in this Bill are as follows:—

*Clause 7* makes it easier for me to amend Council Instruments for different purposes instead of going to the extent of revoking an Instrument and issuing a completely fresh one.

*Clause 14 (2)* lays down the penalty for the person convicted for an offence of refusing to attend as a witness or neglecting to make an answer to or to produce a book which he is required to make or to produce at an inquiry held under *Clause 13*. There was no penalty for committing this offence and it is clear that there should be such a penalty.

*Clause 20 (c)*—Disqualification for office was conditioned by an unspecified term of imprisonment. This is now changed to a term of imprisonment exceeding six months which brings disqualification into line with that laid down for Regional Assemblies.

*Clause 60 (5)*—A curious and embarrassing situation can arise under the present Law when a disqualified councillor refuses to relinquish his seat. He can only be removed as a result of court proceedings instituted by an elector. My experience is that no elector wants to give up time and money to contest the matter in court. But as it is clearly wrong that any disqualified councillor should retain his seat in defiance of the Law, I consider that the Minister of Local Government should also have the power to institute such court proceedings.

*Clause 65 (2)*—This makes it possible for an appeal to be made to the Federal Supreme

[MR NWOGA]

Court against the decision of the High Court given on an election petition. Under the existing Law the High Court's decision is final. I consider that there should be a right of appeal from this decision.

*Clause 78* makes the provision for contracts more flexible. There are a number of fix-priced commodities which can be readily purchased locally in the Region and it seems to me that a Council should be allowed to purchase limited quantities of them without going through Tenders Board. This already happens in the case of medical supplies and I now wish to extend the concession to other stores. At the same time I am afraid I must introduce provision to enable me to deal with the continued evasion of the Tenders Board procedure by Councils whereby contracts are split and awarded in series so that each is less than £50 and therefore does not need to be advertised and does not require approval. The point to note about this is that the expenditure incurred in splitting contracts in this way will be contrary to the Law and would therefore be subject to disallowance and surcharge. Provision is also included to enable me to amend the Tenders Board Regulations so that a Council may with my approval employ the selective tendering procedure. This concession will be reserved for those contracts which can only be undertaken by large firms having plant, qualified staff and financial resources.

*Clause 90* makes it possible for me to publish adoptive bye-laws for specific matters which Councils may by resolution adopt and having adopted them they become operative in the areas concerned. This will save a great deal of the time and trouble which the present procedure involves, whereby each Council has to make its own bye-laws which are separately examined in the Ministry and separately published, often after they have been heavily amended on legal advice.

*Clause 119*—The existing financial provisions are again repeated but I am now empowered to restrict the powers to Councils regarding the transfer of funds and the augmentation of votes. In the past, many Councils have not used these powers wisely

or with discrimination and the result has been excessive reductions in Council's reserve funds.

These are the new matters which I have introduced. As I have said previously, this Bill contains considerable changes in the construction and working of sections without altering the sense that they have in the present law and I hope that hon. Members will agree that it is a much more convenient document. There is also one more point.

There has been a good deal of talk up and down the Region about the control of Councils which I exercise. Some say that controls should be relaxed, others want even more controls. I do not intend to enter into a long discussion on this subject, but I would like to say that it is and must be the policy of Government in due course to relax controls and grant a greater measure of autonomy to those Councils which by their preformance demonstrate that they merit it. And on this matter I am the person to determine the quality of the performance. I am not yet prepared to give any general concessions but I shall be prepared to relax controls for any particular Council which I felt would be able to undertake efficient and beneficial administration without these controls being necessary. The relaxation of controls is therefore a challenge to Councils to earn such a concession.

I trust that this Bill is warmly welcomed by hon. Members since its sole object is to improve our Local Government system and to be a greater convenience to those whose day-to-day work is Local Government.

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

**Chief J. Mpi** (Port Harcourt Province): I rise to support the Bill. In doing so I will first of all thank the Minister of Local Government for all that he has said. To me this is an indication that he is taking time to go through old documents and to survey the activities of the Councils. There is one thing I would like to point out. Of course he has made mention of that point. It is the question of relaxation. You see, when a boy is in the school he will continue to be a schoolboy, using the chance

given to him to go out and do certain jobs and thereby gain experience. Much has been said about Councils. Of course, I believe that in every twelve there is a Judas but not one Judas will make us condemn the remaining eleven. There are good Councils in the Eastern Region and there are others which are just trying. But I would like to say that the introduction of one Law after the other could make the people confused. However, so far it has the support of the Minister of Local Government and his Department, to begin to think in terms of how to give some Councils chance to try out themselves, I think that is a very good system. So I hope that this being so, it is going to be a matter of competition. Councils now will begin to try one way or the other to be able to please the Minister so that such concessions may be allowed them.

**Chief J. N. Wachuku** (Umuahia Province): I think I have got to go deeper than the Minister did. I remember that before the Ministerial system of Government was formed the District Officers had a lot of powers.

They were in charge of Prisons, Police, Posts and Telegraphs, and Judicial Departments. With the introduction of Local Government in this part of the world it appears that some of their jobs have been removed from them. We must all remember that before a Council is considered competent, such recommendation always comes from a District Officer. I do not believe that all, about eighty Local Government Councils in the whole Eastern Region, are irresponsible. I am quite convinced that not all of them are bad. It must be remembered again that self-government will be meaningless without a single Council standing by itself.

On the question of the appointment of the Tenders Board, I would like to say that it is a useful machinery of Government and the idea of creating it is good. But it is on the composition of the Tenders Board that I raise my doubts. The only way to help the Councils is not to drain their pockets. So I am suggesting that the Tenders Board should consist of the District Officer, as Chairman, District Engineer, and a nominee of a Council, as members. For instance, in Owerri Province if Oguta Council is sending out a member to a Tenders Board, this person will be able to watch and

advise on the suitability of individuals on whom some work has been entrusted. It is my view that the person who is to be sent as a nominee of a Council cannot displace the two other members of the Tenders Board. I say this because the District Officer will have no pay and also the District Engineer will have no allowance and the only expenses to be incurred will be the 15s allowance to be paid to the nominee of the Council concerned. On the other hand, if the present members of the Tenders Board—some of whom are undesirable—are to remain, then Government will have to spend £2 2s on each member plus transport allowance, which allowance no councillor in the Eastern Region is getting.

Another point I would like to raise is the question of the Justice of the Peace. I would like Secretaries and Secretary/Treasurers of Councils to be made Justices of the Peace in the various areas. I also suggest that they should be appointed also as Commissioners of Oath. I do not see the reason why a man should travel so many miles in order to swear his age. What is the idea about it? It can be done in the Local Council area concerned.

If we really want Local Government Councils to survive, we must not encourage disloyalty to the Councils. How on earth can we say that the District Officer should write a confidential report on the Secretary/Treasurers, persons whom he has never known. Also the District Officer does not know the difficulties of the Councils. At any rate, I would suggest that such a report should be countersigned by the Chairman of the Local Government Staff Committee under whom the Secretary/Treasurer is working.

Another point I would like to make is on the question of Examiners of Accounts. We really want efficient hands as Examiners of Accounts. Each Province should have two Examiners of Accounts. That is the only assistance it wants. Local Government Commissioners cannot do everything.

These Examiners of Accounts can act as guides to enable Local Government Councils to discharge their financial duties efficiently as well as act as custodian of their funds. They will also prevent Secretaries and Treasurers from misrepresenting facts. I have seen

[CHIEF WACHUKU]

where a Secretary's increment was deferred and the Secretary concerned hid it in his safe. This is so because any incoming correspondence must pass through the Secretary and he can do whatever he likes with it. In this particular incident which I have seen, the Secretary after his increment was deferred, went on transfer to another station. While at this station a letter stating that his increment was deferred arrived and he hid it. I therefore suggest that financial memoranda should be produced as a guide. Councils should have Financial Instructions just as the Government also has General Orders, Financial Instructions and Colonial Regulations.

I would suggest that an expert be invited to define the relationship between Local Government councils and the Ministry of Local Government. There had in the past been a lot of responsibility being shifted to local Government bodies. Formerly the District Officer was responsible for constructing bridges and roads, now councils raise rates and they are expected to maintain these roads with the rates. It is from these roads that produce is evacuated. So that that responsibility which the Regional Government is shifting to Local Government Councils when they know we have no funds, should be removed. We are simply working for the benefit of everybody.

Again, the Staff of the Local Government Councils are badly paid. The salary is disgraceful. You will tell us that there is no money but if we get handsome grants from Government, these people could be paid. There are instances where a "Rate-Clerk" was recommended to be upgraded and the Government said that there was no money; a few weeks after he was absorbed in the Internal Revenue. His salary was doubled, he had no other qualification than what he had before. It is not good shifting the whole responsibility to Local Government Councils. If we want something to be done, and we demand it, you say the Council is not competent to maintain its roads but you cannot know how many labourers are on that road. Therefore, I think more grants should be given to Local Government bodies than what I have seen here. It should be doubled or even tripled, otherwise we shall be forced to leave the whole area to grow weeds. That is where the whole trouble

lies. We have taken over greater part of Administrative Officers' jobs and we should be given grants to cover them, and not to do them without money.

With these remarks, I support the Bill.

**Mr C. E. Amobi** (Special Member): I rise to support the East Regional Local Government Bill. The Local Government Bill which the Minister has laboured for many days and many nights to put into a standard form, is a work worthy of congratulation because I happened to be a Member of the Local Government Service Board and at times one found it difficult to get the bye-laws when dealing with some issues because they were never complete. At times, we found it difficult to get what we wanted from the Laws because we could never get a correct thing. At times, the amendments are typed and sent to us. Sometimes they are not placed in the real place, sometimes they are forgotten. But now I want to bring to the minds of the Members of this House what we are now doing. That is the amendment of the Law which the Government has laboured to bring to the standard form. This makes the work of the Councils, Local Government Commissioners and everybody attached to District Councils or Local Councils easy; because during the election time, at times there might be some disagreement in the method of nomination or in the method of election. One had to go from one office to the other to get the correct law, but now I think the Government should be congratulated. They must earn that congratulation for having laboured. And those of us who have been privileged to go through this Bill will see that a good amount of work has been done and it is now quite obvious that matters relating to Local Government Laws will be simple and easy for everybody. Well, coming down to the question of change of name, that is, Urban County, (that the Government should change the names of the Councils to Urban County Councils or District County Councils), I do not think there is anything bad in that. After all, it is only a question of change of name, for the powers of the Councils remain the same. Government should not be criticised on this.

Another point I would like to touch is allowance to Councils to enable them perform

their duty. Government has laboured so very well to say that it should be a sort of competition to all District Councils. Some Members here are members of various District Councils. If any District or County Council should prove itself worthy, the Ministry of Local Government will have to give more powers to such Council. That is coming to what the first speaker was labouring to prove. I cannot agree that all powers should be given to District Councils because I know what is happening in some of the Councils especially where you have a greedy Chairman or a greedy Secretary remaining in one Council; you know that that Council can never be all right. That is the experience I have gained as a member of the Local Government Service Board. At times, you see where justice is "murdered" so that Government should be congratulated that any Council which proves itself worthy should be given more powers. I think that is well understood.

Another point is Tenders Board. Government should be congratulated for sticking to Tenders Board. What I am saying is that before Government should appoint members of the Board they should be very careful to see that the members of the Board are not "Local Jews" because the Tenders Board is very tempting. The members must be men of very high integrity, because the contractors themselves keep on tempting and corrupting them. Government will do well to see that members of the Tenders Board should be men of quality. I have to give an explanation of this. In some areas where District Councils are allowed to do some work, for instance an ordinary culvert, corruption features so prominently that a culvert which measures about 6 feet by about 3 feet or 2 feet deep will cost about £300. This is absurd. And that is why many things are never done well and in time because some people feel that the Council is a place for making money. Instead of using £300 to repair about 10 culverts at the average of £30 each—£20 can even repair a culvert of about 6 feet long and about 3 feet or 2 feet wide; after all about 15 or 10 bags of cement can do it—considerably more is squandered. Some Councils have stones in their areas of authority; they have their labourers but they will not gather the stones. Instead, they choose to put to tender everything—sand,

stones, etc. Eventually, the cost will soar to above £300 and then there is complaint that Government is not helping us. Government has given every Council the opportunity to develop its area, and everybody should endeavour to perform his own share of the work. If Councils will be more vigilant Government is prepared to help them by giving them more latitude. Therefore, I am saying that in appointing members of the Tenders Board, Government should be careful to appoint people of quality.

Another thing that I disagree with—unless I did not get the Minister of Local Government all right when he said that Councils should be given more chance to make their own bye-laws—if I got him all right there . . .

**The Minister of Local Government:** I think I better explain. What we are talking about is the adoption of bye-laws. We want to make model bye-laws which Councils can by resolution adopt. For instance, if we want to make market bye-laws, we will make what will be regarded as our model.

**The President:** It will be better for the Minister to make notes when Members speak, so that he could reply to them afterwards.

**Mr Amobi:** I am not going to speak further on this question because Government, according to the Minister is going to make a model, but when making that model, Government should see to it that the "son of the soil business" should not be considered in any Council. Such bye-laws should be considered to be binding on all Councils in the Region. No consideration should be given to "sons of the soil" because some of the Councils are still retaining officers from other places in their area or town. I think it is quite necessary also that the staff of the Council should be transferred. No member of the staff of a Council should remain in one Council area for, at most, more than three years; they should be transferred. I said at most three years but Government could consider whether to make it two years or one year and six months.

Another thing I would like to say is that Government should give more powers to Local Government Commissioners. Most of

[MR AMOBI]

the Councils would not like what we used to call in the past "D.O.s" and now called Local Government Commissioners to see their books. I am asking the Government to see to it that all Local Government Commissioners are given more powers. This is because some of the staff of the Councils are doing a lot of things in their Councils, except where experts check them. For instance, in the Onitsha Urban District Council, they asked for a grant for conservancy service. Some of the councillors felt that it is unnecessary to budget about £17,000 for conservancy alone whereas in the very town they have two contractors already doing the same work and the Council is just to be a third party in the conservancy service. Yet they want to spend about £17,000, where, in fact, the conservancy service is not done properly. In such cases, such work should be given entirely to contractors. This is because contractors are fighting to get the job; but, if you leave it in the hands of the Council, they will not do it well. Where a Council will not do the work of conservancy for the whole township for £17,000, that Council is not worthy of its name. In this particular case, I feel that such work should be handed over to contractors because there are people who are ready to take up the work; then the Council will have to do other jobs.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief G. Agbasiere** (Orlu Division): I am standing now to repeat what I have said many times about paying some money to local councillors. The hon. Ministers will bear me witness for the many times I have asked Government to do something for these people. The Local Councils are the foundations of local government work: District Councils, County Councils, etc. etc. I am asking Government to pay these local councillors. The Minister of Local Government said that these local councillors are too many and that there is no money to pay them. He really told me that but I am still asking Government to give them something. I am not talking of divisional councillors; they are given powers to award contracts and powers for many other things. I am talking about these local councillors. How many of us will

agree to do some job or business, do it for three or four years without payment? (*Hon. Members: Nobody will do that*). Government should please do something for these people. The Government only remembered them this year when they said that the local councillors will elect the people for Provincial Assemblies. This is only one "door". There are some local councillors who will not try to go to meetings because they are not paid. There is no instrument recognising them and yet, Government calls them: "our own local councillors". How can Government call them "our own local councillors" without giving them anything? If the Government wants to abolish Local Councils, let Government abolish them and tell the councillors to go home; but if Government is still calling them "our own local councillors" Government should give them some powers and also give them some money. Pay them, at least 5s or 10s so as to make them feel that they are contributing to the work of Local Government.

**Chief N. N. Anyika** (Onitsha Province): I rise to support the Bill, but I have a few points to make. I heard the Minister saying that if a disqualified councillor refuses to vacate his seat, that action would be taken in the court. I do not know whether that is a mistake, or if I have misunderstood him. If he goes to the court, action will be pending and perhaps the case will not be tried in time. So, I think that when somebody is reported or is disqualified, a letter should be written to the Ministry of Local Government to investigate if he is really disqualified; if so, the Minister should write a letter to that man to vacate the seat. He will not argue with the Council but if the matter is taken to court he will be discharged at once. For many years I was a councillor and for all those years I was the Chairman of the Council. What obtained during the time was that if anybody committed an offence he would be asked to explain himself and a letter would be written by the Local Government Commissioner to the Minister of Local Government in a confidential manner against that person. Now I see that this sort of report is made without asking the person to explain himself. I do not support this idea. In the 1940s when Mr Robert was the Resident in my Province he used to ask anybody who

committed an offence to explain himself before writing anything against him. If you are in a Council and a report is made against you I will not support that it should be made a case which should go to court because if the report is sent to the Minister of Local Government it will be discussed in the Cabinet. I know somebody who was taken to court for an alleged offence but for many years the case was not tried and when it was at last tried he was discharged.

Another point is about tax. There should be a method by which tax should be reduced.

Another point is on the construction of roads. Councils must not give out contracts which are not yet approved by the Minister. It is appreciated that many roads are now being opened in the rural areas. At the same time I will point out that many contracts which were recommended by many Councils were turned down last year. It is not good to refuse the recommendations made by the Councils. These roads are very important in the rural areas.

I want to stress very strongly that I do not like the method of writing these confidential reports. Let anybody who is affected explain himself before any report is made against him.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E.** (Owerri Province): I rise in support of the Bill. I also want to take this opportunity to thank our hon. Minister of Local Government for the able manner in which he presented the Bill. We are talking about Councils and councillors. Somebody had remarked that Secretary/Treasurers of Councils who were known by that name for long are in some places now called or redesignated another thing. These people are responsible for the misuse of public money. There is a frequent complaint about these Secretary/Treasurers of Councils. Usually a Local Government Commissioner in charge of a Division issues an instruction in a circular letter but often these Secretaries never circulate these circular instructions. The reason is that most of the instructions are against them. When a Secretary/Treasurer receives an instruction which is against him, he will not circulate it. On several occasions the Secretary/Treasurers will issue letters which they signed themselves without the knowledge of the councillors

but often they are matters which concern them and which should be brought to the knowledge of the Council. I am calling on the Minister of Local Government to take note of this.

As regards money, it will be a good thing if the power of control to any extent is given to the District Officers. I know I have hurt the feelings of so many chiefs. If you consider it very well, you will agree with me that it is very necessary for District Officers to check the Treasuries and see how money is being regularly used.

I am also in support of the acceptance of Traditional Rulers into the Councils because where there is a strong Ruler or Head of Clan in the Council, those people who are in the habit of corrupting the affairs of the Council will not be bold enough to do anything bad in the presence of the Traditional Ruler. I am, therefore, asking the Minister of Local Government to go on and implement the new law without further delay.

Many hon. Chiefs have made some statements about Tenders Board. I think this is a matter for the Minister of Local Government. Some Councils are good and some, I am sorry to say, are very useless and dishonest. This is so because of the system of 50/50 basis arrangement with the result that if a bridge is put up—of course, with inferior materials to correspond with agreed 50/50 amount remaining—what happens very often is that the bridge collapses in less than three months. If the Commissioner or the District Officer is allowed to do something about it, he will have to select good characters to form the board and then when a contractor is selected to do any work there will be no fear and things will be better.

Some of the Chiefs have commented on the position of the Clerks of the Councils or Secretaries/Treasurers. It is very necessary to effect transfer of Secretaries of Councils every two years or every eighteen months. They should no longer "sit-tight".

**Chief A. U. Ukpa** (Eket Division): I rise to support the Bill and in doing so, I have to express my gratitude to the hon. Minister and his Ministry for the pains taken to present before us this new Bill called the Local Government Bill, 1960. This is a Bill to suit the year of Independence.

## [CHIEF UKPA]

To begin with, allowances, no matter how little, should be given to Local Councils to encourage them. Many councillors in my Division and, I think, some elsewhere do not attend Council meetings regularly because they have no means of transport. I have been round Eket Division to see some of the chiefs in their Local Councils but the general complaint is that they have no means to attend Local Council meetings. In this connection, I am submitting that the Ministry should take into consideration this difficulty and try and see that allowances are given to councillors to help them meet the cost of transport and other expenses to Council meetings.

It should be the duty of the Ministry to see that Secretaries and Treasurers take active part in the collection of rates as their duty. Most Secretaries depend entirely on grants. Before they have the first or second quarter grant you see that most of the Councils depend on overdrafts because Secretaries and Treasurers do not worry the Council to do collection of rates. In my Council in Eket Division, from my own experience as a councillor and Chairman, Secretaries do not take great pains in the collection of rates. In my Council up to 31st March, 1960 we had not collected up to two-thirds of the rates estimated for the year. What does the Secretary do? He moves every day round the District Council area and such only obstructs the work of the Council. In that connection, I would like to say that Secretaries should not be allowed to remain in a Council for more than two years.

The hon. Minister had said that powers will be given to Councils on merit but I would suggest that Councils should be given notification to that effect. Councils should be made aware that more autonomy will be given them depending on their performances; that is, that if this is not done, this will not happen and if this is done, this will happen, subject to due consideration being given. I am opposed to the idea of giving general powers to all Councils. I think it will be a good thing if it is left to the Minister to give powers according to merit rather than making it a general issue without distinction.

In regard to the staff of Councils, you will observe that several Secretaries or Secretary/Treasurers always do not comply with the law.

They very often go out without even taking permission from the Chairman of the Council to stay away from the station for up to three days. I am to submit that the Commissioner should be made to see that such order is carried out and where it is reported that a Secretary goes out without the permission of the Chairman, the Ministry should take appropriate action in order to check this act which disturbs the smooth running of every Council.

In my Council, the Secretary would be away for a week when I was the Chairman and I would be running about chasing him; minutes are never prepared in time—nothing is done. I hope the Local Government Commissioner is coming over there on the 20th and he will see for himself.

Some of the staff in my Council have stayed for a period of nine years and a series of correspondence have been submitted to the Ministry requesting their transfer. You will go to their office one day and if you did not give notification you will be surprised, not to see the members of the staff. You may live one mile away from the office and you may go there two or three times without seeing anybody and when such a report is made to the Ministry you cannot hear anything and as such the members of the staff do not co-operate with the Councillors. The annual Report by Local Government Commissioners tend to make Councillors, Secretaries or Treasurers not to carry out the instructions of Council in that they will just try to co-operate with the Local Government Commissioner who will submit a report to the Ministry without consulting the Council and as such Secretaries are not prepared to implement some of the decisions by the Council in that the Council will have no say in the Annual Report that the Local Government Commissioner would make at the end of the year. I would suggest to the hon. Minister that an avenue should be provided apart from the report of the Local Government Commissioner that the Council should also give their annual report on their Executive Officers.

*Tenders Board*—I did not very much agree with the Divisional Tenders Board in that it tends to create jobs for the jobless. When you engage men who are jobless to be members of the Tenders Board there is a tendency for



them to earn a living and as such men who should be given contract and who should do the work are not given the opportunity. Instead work is given to those who are normally not eligible. Take for example, at T.T.C. Ndoneyo in Eket Division tender was given by the then Eket Council to one Mr Minima. I can assure you that it was the last two months that the District Council had to complete the tender that was given out in 1955. Over £2,000 has been paid remaining about £110, but last February we had to spend £500 in addition to complete the work, because the tender was given to someone who ought not to be given, probably because he had undergone certain conditions.

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V** (Yenagoa Province): I am supporting this Bill, and I do not want to say anything contrary to it apart from what the previous speakers have contributed. The only point I want to raise is that there is delay in approving Local Council bye-laws and District Council bye-laws in the Ministry. I remember about three years ago I took the pains with other Councillors, not only Councillors, but some prominent people in the area to prepare bye-laws, and sent these bye-laws through the District Officer to the Ministry for approval but up till this time nothing has been heard. So many reminders have been sent out but yet nothing has been done by the Ministry. So I am only suggesting to the Minister to see that he takes appropriate action whenever bye-laws of an area are sent to him for approval. If he is not prepared to approve them, let him give the reasons for that, and the people will be satisfied, rather than delaying everything and keeping the people waiting for the approval of the bye-laws indefinitely. Because of that, so many bye-laws which we want to enforce are not acceptable by the courts. The courts cannot give judgments on the strength of the bye-laws because they have not received the approval of the Minister. The Minister should take immediate action about such bye-laws.

The second thing is about Local Council allowances. Somebody has said something about it and I do support him. As I have said previously, except Local Councillors are paid there will be no District Councils. The District Councillors, as I have said before, are doing nothing practically. They go there only to get some money from employment

of staff and the award of scholarships. Before you send a boy to college on scholarship, except they receive £10 to £20 they cannot approve it. Some of them are teachers. These people are money-minded because they want to buy good things and go to the University through this foul means. If you do not give the money you cannot get anything. Let me give you an example. A poor man trains a boy in the school; he passes his Standard Six. To get him through the Standard Six level is a problem because money is scarce in rural areas. He tries with all his wives going from place to place; the father will tap palm wine and so forth only to train the boy. The poor man will try and train his boy to pass Standard Six, and after that there will be no college to go to. I hope that the Minister of Education will take note. We have no college. Only one for the whole province. Go to Onitsha—filled up; Warri the nearest place—filled up; Port Harcourt—filled up. Of course before you send him to Port Harcourt you have to send money for feeding. If there were a college nearby this poor man could send his son there without much expenses. If Colleges were within our place, say one at Nembe, one at Obi and one at Yenagoa then the poor man could send his boy there. Finally the boy is left in the street without a job. So the boy applies to be a U.P.E. teacher; the reply will be that an appointment board will meet. From there they will bring together all the applicants and it is only those who paid them something that will be finally selected. After all, what is the salary of that teacher—£6. We require Government's special assistance to stop this. The Local Councillors are doing the work of clearing the road and so forth. In my place we have formed nine Ministries. We call it Mock-parliament in order to carry on the work. Now the work is going on well. But the Chiefs in the rural areas are not known as the Councillors. They cannot come to us as Chiefs. When a thing happens people go to the Councillors and not to the Chiefs. The Councillors make the laws. Such things are not good. Finally, Mr President, all I am saying is that Local Councillors should receive something that will help them to do more work. If the District Councillors are receiving 10s per day for sitting, let that amount be divided into two and enough should be given to the Local Councillors so that they could work hand-in-hand with the District Councillors.

[CHIEF EFEKE]

The second point is about Chiefs. I support Chief Johnson Osuji Njemanze that Chiefs should be injected into the Councils, both Local and District. Except Government use force and enforce this law, there will still be difficulty because many councillors in some areas are not prepared to see the Chiefs. Government should take immediate action on this and inject all the Chiefs from classes 1 to 5 into the Councils so that they will work with the elected members.

Another thing is that the Government should give power to the Local Councils to levy rates for local use through the District Council, and the councillors. (*Hon. Member: That is already in operation.*) That is not in operation in our area. We have put it on paper and sent to the Minister of Local Government who has not approved. I am calling on the Minister of Local Government to see that the Local Councils are given power to levy rates to do some Local Council work. These rates should not exceed three shillings per person.

I support the Bill.

**Chief Francis O. Joseph Allagoa** (The Amanyanabo of Nembe): I rise to support the Bill and to express my gratitude to the Minister and his Ministry for the able manner in which this Bill has been put forward. I support my friend, Chief Njemanze, M.B.E., that the natural rulers and Chiefs of the area, those who are in-charge of the clan, those who have been recognised by the Government, should be Presidents of Councils and those who are not First-class Chiefs but recognised as Chiefs should be injected into the Councils as *ex officio* members.

I would like here to make a remark. We should be checked a bit about coming here to say this or that. When a man makes a statement because he is privileged here, he should be checked because other people will be affected. We are responsible men and we should speak as such. Members should be advised and lectured on how to speak in this hon. House and to speak honourably too.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief Douglas Jaja** (The Amanyanabo of Opobo): I rise to support the Bill and before I go further, I have to support what the last

speaker said. Really, we have to give some benefit of doubt to some of our hon. Members. I mentioned some names yesterday. We have not understood parliamentary procedure here in this hon. House and I think that if we go wrong you (the President) are there to check us and should ask us to sit down. You have the prerogative. But if we are allowed to speak at random in this House, people in the galleries will think us mean. I feel we are not mean; we are hon. Members. I think we should compel ourselves to speak only to the point and sit down.

To support the Bill, I have to add that some of the Presidents of Councils have meagre salaries or may I call it allowances. Some of them are on equal allowance with the Chairmen of their Councils and some Council Chairmen have no respect for the President because of the equality in salary. I feel that the Government will consider the salary of the Presidents and some of the members of the Councils. Really, some hon. Members remarked that some members of Councils received some back-door money as I understand it properly. But it must be so. It may be that the allowances are so small that they are somewhat induced by one way or the other. If the allowances are considered, I think they will work efficiently. Some of the councillors are not efficient because they have meagre salary, and I am appealing to the Minister to reconsider the allowances of the councillors.

I have not much to add about this Law. I may term this Law as a live-wire to all Councils. The Minister said that any Council that works efficiently will be accorded its merit according to our understanding. It is for us now to work hard, to run and to run faster than other Councils. It is a challenge which we must accept. For us to say that we should have that privilege which we have been asking for, it is not possible unless we work hard for it. Equal right to every Council is very unfair. Some councillors go to bed to sleep and some go to work. You cannot give equal share to each for unequal efforts; in this respect the Minister is quite justified. If you act properly your record will show that you are working very hard for the interest of the public and for your personal gain. Then the Minister will consider you and give you that which you deserve. In that respect, I quite agree with the Minister.

Lastly, I have to congratulate the Minister. Really, if the Minister of Local Government had never done anything worthy of praise, I think I may urge this House to give a very hearty congratulation to the Minister for composing such an honourable Bill as this.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** I would like first of all to thank all the hon. Chiefs who have expressed thanks to the Ministry of Local Government and I would like also to thank all for the able way they have made contributions to the debate on the floor of this House. One thing I would like to assure the hon. Members is that the Government does appreciate the importance of Local Government Councils because of their important role in the community.

Everywhere I have been, I have tried to impress on the Local Councils the necessity of living up to expectations, knowing clearly well that Local Councils are closely associated with the Regional Government and that whatever they do reflects on the Government. I say this because if there is anything which hon. Members feel we should do for the Councils and which we have not done, I would like them to realise that it is not due to lack of goodwill on the part of Government; it may be due to various circumstances, and on this background let me take up the points raised by hon. Members in the course of their speeches.

First of all, the question of control. Some do say that Government should relax their control on the Councils, i.e., that we should give them freedom to do whatever they like. I do not for one moment believe that that is what they intend to say. Chief Wachuku said that in this year of independence it is a shame to notice that there is no Council entirely free from Government control. There is nothing to suggest that every activity of the Council is restricted. But judging from the points being made by Members here, what are the evils we notice in Councils? Some speak of bribery; some speak of deliberate attempts by individuals and contractors to take away Council money. On the face of these allegations do you not feel that it would be unwise for Government to say "all right, carry on" to Councils? Where do we exercise control on Councils? Take employment. I suppose you will say that we do not allow Councils to employ as

many people as they would like. You would like Government to say "all right, you can go on and spend money as you like". But if you had the opportunity to be in the Ministry of Local Government and watch the sort of demands that are made, the sort of recommendations that are made, the people they would like us to employ for them, and then open your ears to hear the stories of things that happen in some Councils, I believe you will agree with me that the time has not come for Councils to be free from all controls. But as I have indicated, we are prepared to make some experiments with some Councils.

Another point which almost everybody seems to criticise is the question of Local Government Tenders Board. I think hon. Members will appreciate the idea behind the establishment of Local Government Tenders Board. There has never been a smoke without fire. We know the motives behind it. It is an attempt to see that things are done very well. It is rather unfortunate that the sort of people we would like to have in the Councils are not always there—sometimes they are thrown out during election. So that there is no permanency of membership in the Councils. We have our reasons for doing certain things. You know that in the past the Councils were awarding their own contracts, but experience showed that all was not well. In order to make the people of this Region benefit from the money they contribute Government has to see that money is spent wisely. So that it is in the best interest of the people that we introduced this Local Government Tenders Board. Some spoke of the composition of the membership. I quite agree that every one of them may not be good; but Government strives to select people that are good. The fact that some of them have been found wanting is no justification for condemnation of the system as it exists at present. Certainly I do not think that they have been very wrong. We have to give them the chance, and if Government finds in the long run that the system is not working well, the hand that has made can unmake. But at present I do not think, as a Member has suggested, that they are undesirable.

You will agree too that until quite recently the members of the Board came from far distances. For instance, in Owerri, the Tenders Board was composed of people from Orlu and from Okigwi, and they had to travel

[MR NWOGA]

all the way to Owerri. That is quite different from somebody from Nbawsi attending Council in Okpuala Ngwa. The allowance was paid in consideration of the length of distance they had to travel and the importance attached to the work that they do. Everyone is striving towards the eradication of bribery in the Region. If the members are not doing their work well they are to blame, not the people that have put them there, because we expect that when anybody is appointed he should do his work honestly.

Allowance to local councillors is the request that usually confronts me everywhere I go. I do realise that everybody is interested to see that these people are paid something. Government is also interested. It is not the lack of goodwill but the lack of the means to do it. For instance, how many local councillors are there in the Region? There are about 23,000 local councillors in the Region, and if you work the arithmetic you will find out how much money is involved if we are to pay each, say, 5s a month; you will shudder at the amount of money involved. Even my predecessor has tried to induce Government to pay these local councillors, but each time when the amount of money involved is known we do not know what to do. There are only two ways you can pay local councillors, either Government makes grants or the District Councils raise rates and you know the reaction of our people when rates are to be raised in order to pay local councillors. Government knows what its responsibilities are, what its commitments are. We feel that we should give preference to social services. So you will help us to educate our people. In the Ministry we are trying to evolve a system to know whether we can decentralise local councils. I think that borders on community spirit which should be encouraged among our people.

Injection of Traditional Members into Councils—I think it will be a welcome news to all our chiefs to know that Government has already taken decision that all our Second-class chiefs should be injected into Councils. All that remains now is the question of administrative work involved in it. We are just trying to know what can be done under certain

circumstances. Our Chiefs have that privilege and the District Officers have been written to, to submit the names. We have got the names but there are certain matters that have to be sorted out. For instance, the question of rotation. You know it is already a policy of Government that the proportion of traditional members in the Councils should not exceed a twenty per cent limit. But then there are places where they may not be up to the twenty per cent limit and there are places where they are too much above the twenty per cent limit. It is for Government to take decision on that and as soon as this is sorted out there is no doubt that the chiefs will all be injected into Councils. Nobody can fight them against it. Some say that some councillors do not want them to come in, but it is not a question of whether they are willing, whether they want it or not. It is what the Government wants. All along, this Government has been championing the cause of chiefs and traditional rulers and I do not see why they should not be injected into the councils. There seems to be delay because we wanted to know who are our proper traditional members and who are our chiefs. You see, sometime ago, a councillor could get up and get others to recognise him as a traditional member in the Council; but all that brought confusion. Now that everything has been tidied up and we have known who are our chiefs there will be no more difficulty about injecting them into Councils.

There are many points that have been raised here and I do not intend to go into all of them; as I have told you already, this Bill is simply to tidy up the existing law. All the amendments therein made the Law look really very untidy. Now that we have brought everything together and made some improvements in construction and brought in only very few matters I do not see why everybody should not support it. And for the other points that were raised here, if the chiefs are in difficulty I can always get in touch with them and they can come at any time for us to solve them. If they have problems that are connected with any bad aspect of Local Government they can be sure that we will all combine to solve them.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clauses 1 to 228 agreed to.*

*First to Sixth Schedules agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

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

*Sitting suspended at 11.50 a.m.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

## (2) The Recognition of Chiefs Bill

*Order for Second Reading read.*

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** I rise to move that the Bill be now read a Second time.

The objects and reasons for this Bill have been set out in the Bill itself. The circumstances surrounding chieftaincies in this Region are such that a Law such as the one now proposed is absolutely necessary for the sake of stability and peaceful progress of this Region. Chiefs have an important part to play in the maintenance of law and order in their respective communities, in community development efforts and, not least, in the running of Local Government Councils which form a vital link in our Regional administration. In order that the Chiefs recognised may be able to play these roles constructively and well, they must be saved the harrassings of pretenders, rivals or even mischief-mongers.

Even more important than the personal security of the Chiefs themselves is the over-all welfare of the communities concerned. There can be no welfare, no peace and no stability in the different communities if their loyalties are divided or if they are not certain where such loyalties should lie, and above all, if they incessantly dissipate their efforts and funds in expensive litigation between the rival chiefs whom they may be led or misled to support.

This Bill commends itself to this hon. House and I hope it will receive an easy passage. It has passed through the lower House (the House of Assembly) and I am confident that the hon. Chiefs to whom this Bill particularly belongs will heartily welcome and bless it.

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

**Chief Michael Eze** (Awka Division): I rise to support this Bill and to congratulate the Minister and everyone concerned with this matter. Before the British Government came to Africa, there were certain people governing their towns or Divisions. I know what we called the Government of that age. Some people called the Obi or Eze of their Division as the Chief. When the British Government came to Nigeria they changed the name from Obi or Eze or anything of the sort to Chief. In those olden days the Obi or Eze of each Clan or Division was really respected by his subjects. They were the fabric of administration at the time. They tried murder cases and took decisions on matters in their days and nobody objected to them because they had the full power of their people. In this connection, I see good reason to support the Bill completely. And secondly, some people went to overseas and qualified as lawyers there. They do not in any way know what is the native law and custom because they jumped from the colleges and went to England and studied their law. In that case they cannot know anything about native law and custom and cannot deal with chieftaincy matters. In my area, an unmarried man cannot take part in the case between husband and wife because he does not know anything about marriage. As well, not everybody can deal with all the matters pertaining to *Ozo* title in my town. That is our custom and with these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief N. U. Ofem** (Abakaliki Province): I rise to support this Bill. In doing so, I have to thank the hon. Minister responsible for Chieftaincy and Establishment matters. Owing to varieties of languages and customs in the Eastern Region it was not a simple job for the Minister to know all the customs in the Region, but owing to the co-operation of the staff in his office and the people in the Region it was

[CHIEF OFEM]

possible for the Minister to use all the powers at his disposal to establish the Eastern Region House of Chiefs. Now, to everything there must be some support. In order that the Minister might support the Chieftaincy operation, this Law was enacted, which I support whole-heartedly. As the last speaker has said there are many men in this Region who are not at all connected with Chieftaincy, and who are trying in one way or the other to usurp these posts from the natural rulers. So this Law will prevent it and any thinking man in this Region will not fail to support it.

**Chief Silas Okaa Ezenwa** (Onitsha Division): I rise to support the Bill. In doing so, I must first of all congratulate the Eastern Government for achieving greater results than other Regional Governments with the limited resources we have. My thanks also go to the Premier and all his Ministers who have thought out this Bill. Before I go further, I must draw the attention of Chiefs in this House not to allow the outside world to feel that some of our Chiefs are intoxicated over their recognition as Chiefs in their area by speaking at random when they come to the House.

At the same time, I have to congratulate the Minister in charge of Chieftaincies for having made the law because some of the Members of the Opposition wanted to find a way to make trouble out of it in different areas. I remember on the 19th of January, some self-made Chiefs met the Leader of the Opposition at Aba and if you remember, during the debate last time when the House of Assembly was sitting, the Leader of the Opposition started to insult the Chiefs in this House. He went as far as to refer to other Divisions where he does not belong to and continued to say what he did not know. Not only that, the Chiefs were not in the same House to defend themselves; so the members of the Opposition had that opportunity to say all sorts of things.

**Mrs M. Ekpo** (Special Member): I rise to congratulate the Minister in charge of Chieftaincy. What I want to say is this: the Leader of Opposition and all the Opposition in this House, as I heard over the radio and read in the newspapers, were weeping outside and asking: why should the Government recognise the Chiefs? I want to make it clear that when the

Imperialists came out to Nigeria as traders, they went along the bank of Nigeria: Lagos, Calabar, Onitsha and so on, and just because they wanted a portion of land to start their business, they gave the name: "Chief" to some of the men. What is the meaning of "Chief"? Is "Chief" a Nigerian word? It is an English word. So that when they got some of these people and called them Chiefs, they were given the portion of land they wanted and the men from that time, about the 17th and 18th centuries, became Chiefs. And so, if the Imperialists could come here and instal our people Chiefs, how much more the Eastern Government, which is the Government of the people, for the people and by the people. So, I endorse this Bill whole-heartedly. I am speaking on behalf of all the women of the Eastern Region. If the Eastern Region Government had not introduced the House of Chiefs, where could the women have aired their views? Nowhere! There is no provision for us in the House of Assembly. So I whole-heartedly support this Bill.

**Chief J. U. U. Ebong** (Abak Division): I rise to support this Bill. I also congratulate the Minister who introduced this Bill to this House. The Bill is such that will prevent many more cases, particularly, in my own Division going to court. I remember when the District Officer in my Division was going round to take the names of clan heads for selection to this House, there were many cases of people showing themselves as clan heads, and, in fact, if the Government had not got the last say, there would have been many cases in the Magistrate's Courts. So, in my opinion, this Bill will prevent such people.

**Chief G. O. Ihenacho, M.B.E.** (Owerri Division): I rise to support this Bill.

I would like to draw attention to Clause 5 of the Bill. From my experience of our people, I think that clause is a bit dangerous. It is a two-edged sword, in that it seems to me that it would give loophole for trouble makers, unless it is qualified further than it is at the moment. We have a lot of people who will like to create trouble; I am speaking from experience. In my own constituency where I come from, there was no opposition when I was nominated, but I do know there are other places where there have been some trouble and I think this

clause may offer opportunity for that "dead" dispute to be resurrected. So, I would like (a) and (b) in that clause to be more explicit and qualified than at the moment. Apart from that, I have no other point to quarrel with and I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief R. Oraelosi** (Onitsha Division): This Bill, I think, is what everybody would like to speak on because Chiefs are interested. In my own view I think we are well protected and I should think that where there is a dispute the Minister should go through the matter and see who is responsible. The indigenous people of the area must know who is good to be their Chief. The dispute must be cleared by the recommendation of anybody appointed to investigate it.

The next point is the question of Chiefs who were not properly recognised in their areas. If there is such a thing, the Government should intervene by appointing an inquiry instead of protecting them by law. I think that this is the only method by which the mushroom Chiefs in the region will be stopped from making trouble. It is important for Chiefs to know themselves so that they will be dignified. On this point I think a Chief must be a person who is able to control his people. I praise the Minister responsible for Local Government and I support the Bill.

**Chief Prince E. William D. Pepple** (The Amanyanabo of Bonny): I have to thank you, Mr President, for recognising me. I rise to support this Bill, and in doing so I have to extend my gratitude to the Minister in charge of Chieftaincy for presenting this honourable Bill in such an excellent manner. This is a Bill which this hon. House should accept *in toto*. I know what chieftaincy dispute is. Chieftaincy is an institution which is very well known in my area. I have to say also that in my area, as far as I am concerned, chieftaincy is one of the highest things we must preserve. I think that it is one of the things which are hereditary in the whole country. I will tell this House that it is out of malice or jealousy that certain people go about saying that there is no chieftaincy institution in the Eastern Region. In my area Chiefs had gone to England several years ago to seek the welfare of this country. We have such people like King Jaja of Opobo and several others who

went to England in 1854 when nobody thought of going there for the good of this country and the people of Nigeria. This Bill was presented by the Minister in such a manner that we must thank him very greatly. We are very happy about this and we feel that we must thank him for it. It is unfortunate that this Bill does not clarify what entitles one to recognition as a chief. I have to say that in my area we have different types of Chiefs. Some of the First-class Chiefs who are recognised by the Eastern Government would not even be called a chief in my area. There are some rulers in my area who have more authorities than these people but they are not here now. I do not know whether this Bill will be extended to enable such people in my area to be recognised. There is another aspect of this Bill which makes me to love the Minister responsible for chieftaincy all the more. This aspect is the fact that chieftaincy disputes have been removed from the courts. You know what it is to go to the courts to be tossed about by lawyers. We are made to go to the courts by certain disgruntled people in the community. This can be illustrated from the case of the late Amanyanabo of Kalabari. The disgruntled people in his area dragged him to court and he was tossed about although his people were with him. The result was that the Chief died of hard thoughts and the worries of these disgruntled people.

I have to extend my gratitude to the hon. Minister in charge of chieftaincy for removing this grave matter from the courts.

**Chief O. L. Odu** (Ogoja Division): Four or five years ago, nobody heard of any dispute about chieftaincy. However, when this question of House of Chiefs came up, so many people left their jobs and came to struggle for recognition as a Chief. In my own town, this "chief business" is a fearful thing and one may not be even bold enough to stand and hear something about a Chief. For the past seventeen years we have been living in our several areas either as Chiefs or as individuals without any dispute or struggle to lead but today, because of the creation of House of Chiefs, we hear of disputes here and there.

I entirely support the Government in its view that the many questions of chieftaincy should *not* be taken to the courts for determination. It should not be supposed but must be

[CHIEF ODU]

accepted as a reality that "chieftaincy is a sacred institution" which had been existing in conformity with time-honoured, generally accepted, traditional principles.

I therefore support the Bill.

**Chief J. J. Ogbulafor** (Bende Division): I rise to support this Bill which I consider the most important Bill ever introduced in this hon. House. I am so happy about this and want to seize this opportunity to express my gratitude to our able Minister and the Premier who decided and endeavoured and achieved the successful creation of the House of Chiefs. In this sense, I would like the President to allow hon. Members the opportunity to contribute their views on this very vital issue, which will at all times help the Region.

I have two observations to make: one, I am appealing to the Minister that now that chieftaincy is recognised as an institution in this Region, with many Chiefs and even women as Chiefs, he should take note that anything connected with these people should be done with respect as they are treated in their own divisions. As an example, in a case of loan, or anything at all, the chief will be contacted to make recommendations. With this, I think the House of Chiefs will be one of the best Houses in the whole Federation of Nigeria.

Secondly, I have to thank our former Premier and the present Premier for all they have been doing.

**Chief J. D. Agba** (Obudu Division): I rise to support the Bill tabled in this hon. House. I have to thank the Minister and, in passing, I would like to congratulate the Government that has been able to appoint such an energetic Minister to shoulder such an intricate subject as chieftaincy. I have also to thank the Minister again for his patience to go through all this trouble. It is said that after thunder comes rain.

Yesterday, we thought that chieftaincy or House of Chiefs having been established in the West and in the North would be smooth-sailing here in the Eastern Region and appear, if possible, like a velvet; but behold, there are a lot of tumult and disputes everywhere about chieftaincy in the Eastern Region. I might

add that it is observed in the would-be law where it is being envisaged that in any place where there is any dispute, anybody who does not accept the decision of Government as final would be penalised. I believe that Government means to say that it will not be the "final say" but that it will step on the basic level and make sure that there is no trouble. Another fear about this penalty is that it will debar several people from expressing their honest views and rights.

I would, in this connection, appeal to Government to see to it that the effort made to create this House and follow successfully the graduation of First and Second-class Chiefs, will be followed up all through. It should act as a father in the question of recognition of Chiefs by treating the problem in the same way as it has treated the previous ones.

As a matter of fact, the several disputes have arisen because so many have felt that there is some remuneration to be gained, being a new thing; and only because of this, several people have resigned their appointments. If any person ever thought so, he made a very serious mistake; his aim is entirely defeated. To be a Chief is to be a father who should look into the affairs of his people and, as such, he is vested with great responsibility. I hope that we shall continue to maintain that dignity which has been Chiefs' in the past. If we are really to make our Government what it should be, I suppose we should really make things what they are supposed to be and allow such evil actions die away, perpetually too. I am thanking still the Government for being able to appoint the proper persons, for seeing into the chieftaincy problems and for bringing it to its present position. I still join in prayers to wish the Ministry concerned more success. The problem of chieftaincy which had brought fears into my mind much more than I expected at first has been driven away because of the present plans. I will sincerely appeal to Members or fellow Chiefs that they give their co-operation also. The First-class Chiefs and the Second-class Chiefs should give their co-operation to see that the other classes of Chiefs in other areas are given their fair chances. That is, those who are supposed and capable to be Third-class Chiefs should get it not by any other means but by merit. I suppose I speak on behalf of my fellow hon. Chiefs who are in this hon. House that we shall give the hon. the



Minister in charge of this matter our hearty and full co-operation so that the other Chiefs whose turn it is to be recognised are given their proper chances and are brought to their appropriate level without any dispute. Without making further references on this I say that I thank the hon. the Minister and I sincerely support the Bill.

**Mrs Janet Moku** (Special Member): I rise to support the Bill. Women's gratitude shall know no end because by this act of the Government, and our father of nationalism, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, his Ministers, the present Premier and the Executive Council women will not forget that they are elevated to a very high position. We will always express gratitude to the people who have contributed towards remembering the women of the Region because no nation would rise above its womanhood. We here pledge our support to the Government. We shall do more to convince them that they are right in appointing us to be here. According to our tradition, there was never a time a woman looks up or behind to chieftaincy or kingship position. We know that it is not our lot according to our tradition, but now the Government has made us to come to help our men so that we may work together.

Another thing of importance that I like in this is that Government honours all the Chiefs by protecting their interests in finding a way to stop frequent disputes and/or litigations on chieftaincy—this man testing the validity of Government's recognition of that man as a Chief. The Government has tied the hands of the enemies, and so by that they honour our hon. Chiefs, Natural Rulers and Special Members and I thank them for that. By that they have shown the faith they have that the Chiefs whom they appointed are men who could be trusted. I know that these Chiefs will work hard. We the women Members and Special Members shall co-operate with the Chiefs and do all in our power to see that our Government achieves its end. I support the Bill.

**Chief Eket Inyang-Udo** (Uyo Province): I rise to support the Bill. Why I am supporting the Bill is because chieftaincy matter is very important in the Eastern Region. The Opposition Leader in the other House is trying to cry down chieftaincy in the Eastern Region because

he has failed with the Action Group to set up any Chief. They came into my area and asked my people to remove me as the Obong of Okon, and the people said that though they were Action Group they rejected that because the Obong once installed is installed for his life time. Mr Ikoku cannot be installed a Chief because he does not belong to the chieftaincy institution house. Several Ibibio Chiefs have been exiled from the Qua Iboe River to the former Gold Coast and Sape and they died out there. Therefore, I will ask the Government to recognise the House of Chiefs like the House of Lords in England; for instance, when a British Lord is sentenced, the moment he is released from the prison he walks into the House of Lords.

There is the hon. Akpabio. His father was a great Chief. It is useless to come to this House and make a noise about Chiefs. I did not buy my Chieftaincy. It was my people who called me and said: "look, you are the real man". I thank the Government, the Minister and the Governor who made this foundation and kept the real man on the seat and that is the Minister for Chieftaincy. He is a youngster. He understands the feelings of the people. He knows what we want. If a Chief is sentenced to six months imprisonment or fined £100 when he comes out, he is eligible to go back to the House. Lord Kingston, when he was the Chairman of the White Line Stars, was sentenced to prison. He came out and walked into the House of Lords. That is on British History. Suppose one of our Chiefs is attacked on the way and to defend himself, he uses his stick. He is found guilty and sentenced; he comes out. I think he should not be debarred from going back to the House.

With these remarks, I support the Bill.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** In rising to wind up the debate on this important Bill, I realise with joy that my task is a simple and short one. This is merely to thank all Members who have spoken and those of them who were still angling to speak for the goodwill they have expressed on this Bill. I am very happy that our two lady Members appreciate their appointments by the Government into this hon. House and I want to assure them that the Government of the Eastern Region will continue with this policy, the policy of seeing to it that the women of this Region matched abreast with the men.

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[MR AFFIAH]

I have got to clear one fear which was expressed by one of the speakers, Chief the hon. Ihenacho. He was trying to criticise the provision in the law which deals with withdrawal of recognition. I think this is really a necessary clause. You will agree with me that though eggs are eggs, certain eggs might be rotten. There comes a time when a Chief might behave out of the way, might do something which is not expected of him; you would not expect this Government to keep on recognising a Chief who has gone to prison because he has stolen. Will you? (*Hon. Members: No!*). So I think this is a very necessary clause to make it possible for Government to withdraw recognition from any Chief who does not behave up to expectation. I want to assure this House that withdrawal of recognition from any Chief will only be contemplated when Government has proved beyond any reasonable doubt that the person to be so treated has been guilty of such offence which should definitely remove him from Chieftaincy which is an honourable institution.

One Chief asked whether this Bill is restricted only to Chiefs who are Members of this House, that is Chiefs who are First-class Chiefs, Second-class Chiefs and those Special Members who are Members of this House; to this question, I say, no. This Bill is in connection with all the Chiefs in this Region. Those that have already been recognised and those to be recognised, including the Third and Fourth-class Chiefs, who will be recognised shortly as soon as we finish with the Second-class Chieftaincy disputes. I am very happy that almost everybody who has spoken has actually expressed appreciation for removing Chieftaincy matters from court. We feel that it is absolutely necessary that our Chiefs should be protected from trouble mongers. They should be sufficiently protected so that they may have time to attend to their arduous tasks as the lot of a Chief is not little; it is much indeed. He has got to see to the peace, order and good Government of his own area which is a heavy responsibility and in order to have time to attend to this responsibility, a Chief must definitely enjoy peace of mind. Certain Members have talked about noise making by certain Members of the Action Group. That has been the case and you should not be surprised. It is a fact that in some parts of this Region, some Opposition Members were

in the habit of going round installing illegal Chiefs for political reasons and this Government is not to blame if in the final analysis, some of these illegal Chiefs are not recognised. It is the Opposition Members who are to be blamed.

Finally, I must say again that throughout my many years of parliamentary experience, I have never seen any Bill so applauded by Members of any House. It has been accepted unanimously by the Chiefs and I am very happy.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

*Bill immediately considered in Committee.*

(In the Committee)

*Clause 1.*

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V (Yenagoa Province):** I have got an amendment to make (*Hon. Members: Please sit down*). This Bill is important, although certain Members now want to handle it in a different way. Some of them, I believe, just come here for the sake of being a Chief. There is no definition of who is a Chief. You will only find that the Bill provides for the recognition of persons as Chiefs within the Eastern Region. That is one. There is another very important thing . . .

**The Chairman:** Any hon. Chief or Member is in order to make an amendment to a clause which is not yet passed, but that amendment must be handed to the Chairman in writing. There must be some notice.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies):** If I may answer to that, it is true that in this Bill there is no definition of the word "Chief", but as a matter of fact, there is provision in the Nigeria Constitution which defines what a Chief is and we feel that that covers it.

*Clause 1 agreed to.*

*Clauses 2 to 12 agreed to.*

*Bill to be reported.*

(The President resumed the Chair)

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

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

**ADJOURNMENT DEBATES**

**(1) Radio Sets in the Catering Rest House**

**Chief J. Mpi (Port Harcourt Province):** I only want to make a small remark about where we live. At a time as this, in the history of our country, when provincial elections are going on in the areas where we come from, we are eager to know what is happening in our homes. In the Catering Rest Houses where we lodge, there is nothing like radio, and we do not know what is happening. That is all the remark I have to make.

**(2) Circulation of Bills to Members of the House of Chiefs**

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo (Special Member):** I want to make one observation and that is that the Bills which were passed by the House of Assembly and which were to be sent to the House of Chiefs did not get to our hands until yesterday morning when we all packed a bundle of them. You could see what happened during the debate here. Some of the Members were not able to read so as to defend the Finance Bill. They went the other way round thinking that the Government had asked the unmarried men to pay less tax than the married men. It is just because the Bills were not sent to us in time. So I should like to make this suggestion that next time Bills like that should be sent to us at least a week before we arrive in Enugu so that we may be able to read and understand, so that

when we come to the floor of the House we may debate intelligently and not innocently.

**The Minister of Finance (Dr S. E. Imoke):** I just want to explain that the procedure is that these Bills are published in the *Gazette*, except on rare occasions when they are submitted to the House through a Certificate of Urgency, and the fact that this Bill has passed through the lower House (the House of Assembly) implies enough time for it to appear in the *Gazette* and for Members of this House to have seen it in the *Gazette*.

**The President:** Hon. Members of the House are to be on the alert, whenever they receive their copies of the *Gazettes*, to run through and see what Bills are there so that they may prepare themselves for the debate. The notices in the *Gazettes* concern all the Members of the two Houses of the Eastern Regional Legislature.

Chiefs and hon. Members, before I put the Question I have got to announce to you that for a few weeks, say six weeks, from today we shall miss our able and amiable Clerk of this House, not by resignation—far be it from us and from him—nor by death, but he is going overseas on official duty, so as to collect more materials for the decoration of this hon. House. Although from this evening, when we have heard this announcement, we have begun to feel his absence very much, yet—the bud may have a bitter taste but sweet will be the flower—on his return we shall rejoice the more. So on your behalf, I wish him safe voyage either by land, by water or by air until he returns to us in good health both in body and in spirit.

The second announcement is that when the House adjourns Chiefs and hon. Members of this House should please retire to the Committee Room where we shall confer for a few minutes in our own interest.

*Question put and agreed to.*

*Adjourned, accordingly, at fifteen minutes to two o'clock p.m.*

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Wednesday, 27th April, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

ORDER OF THE DAY

Governor's Speech (Debate on the Address)

(THIRD ALLOTTED DAY)

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question—(25th April):—

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

**The President:** Chiefs and hon. Members, before proposing the question may I draw your attention to the following:—

I understand that it is the intention that the debate on the Motion for an Address of thanks to His Excellency the Governor should be concluded on the 29th of April if it does not fold up earlier in order to allow the resumption of the debate on the Appropriation Bill on Monday, 2nd of May.

To give every Member a chance to contribute to the debate in the three days, I would request hon. Members to be as brief as possible in their speeches and to avoid repeating themselves or going over grounds already traversed by previous speakers. I can hardly over-emphasise the need for hon. Members to use language befitting their position and the dignity of this hon. House when they make their speeches and thus set a high standard of debate from the beginning for other Legislatures in the country to emulate.

I might draw Members' attention to Standing Order 30 (12) which reads as follows:—

"Except when the House is in Committee, no Member shall speak more than once on

any proposition before the House except in explanation if the Member then addressing the House chooses to give way, or to a point of order or, in the case of the mover of a substantive motion, in reply, but any Member may second a Motion or amendment without prejudice to his right to speak at a later period of the debate if he do so formerly by saying 'I beg to second'. For the purpose of this paragraph a 'Substantive Motion' does not include any motion for the adjournment."

Question again proposed.

**Chief J. Mpi** (Port Harcourt Province): I am very happy to speak on this Motion. In doing so, I should like to say a word or two in respect of the personalities mentioned by the hon. mover of the Motion. He made mention of that great, honest man of integrity in the person of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe; a man who with his colleagues, one of whom is the President of this House, started the move which has now brought freedom to our people. I am very happy that he and his colleagues are still alive to see the progress that has been made in all spheres.

I now come to another personality—His Excellency the Governor of the Eastern Region. His Speech from the Throne is a masterpiece. People used to say that the Eastern Region is a place full of confusion. Since His Excellency set foot on this soil things have changed, and I believe that those who had this opinion would now change it. Often, we the people of this world always indulge in revolution forgetting that the repercussion is always on those who cause it.

I was one of those who were present, in the gallery, when the Governor was welcomed in this hon. House. In his Speech he appealed that we should co-operate with the Government, i.e., the Party in power that runs the Government, and also that we should protect the minority. Since he made this Speech, I have noticed that the Region has become very calm, and there has been no trouble for the past three or more years that he has been in this Region. It is now therefore clear that the people of the Eastern Region are not trouble-makers.

[CHIEF J. MPI]

From the Governor's Speech you will see that the man is a father. He examined the portfolios held by the Ministers one by one. Never have I seen the Speech of a Governor cover about twenty pages, explaining both the progress made and the progress to be made. His Speech also showed that the finances of the Region are sound.

Now I go a bit further. May I say that whoever will be our future Governor, be he a white or a black man, will enjoy our goodwill. I say this because, if our out-going Governor had not been a good man, he would not have been transferred to the Bahamas, but would have been repatriated home. We wish him success in his new station.

With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief J. N. Wachuku** (Umuahia Province): It is a great pleasure to be here to make my observations on the Speech from the Throne. I happened to know His Excellency the Governor when he was at Nnewi as an Assistant District Officer. I was then in the Resident's Office, Onitsha. It appears to me that the Colonial Office knew that there was trouble in this Region hence they sent a man who was well-informed about the Region, and since he came here there has been peace and harmony. Now that he is going away, he is carrying away with him the good wishes of the people of this Region. During his tenure of office, the Governor toured extensively in the Region and was therefore well acquainted with our difficulties. We wish him the best of luck at his new station.

With this, I support the Motion.

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V** (Yenagoa Province): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks for the Most Gracious Speech of His Excellency the Governor. The speech is objective, realistic and comprehensive—it covers all aspects of things in this Region. I do not think I have to say anything further with regard to the departure of the Governor as previous speakers have spoken at length about this. He came to this Region when there was plenty of trouble, but he is leaving the Region in a calm atmosphere.

I would like also to say a word about Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. I knew him since

1940 when he was in Lagos. I also know people like Dr Olorun Nimbe, etc., who were then his colleagues. Dr Azikiwe is a man of high integrity.

I do not want to prolong my speech because the previous speakers have almost covered what I wanted to say. But I have something to say about some of the remarks made in the Speech from the Throne. First of all, I will like to say something about who should be appointed the next Governor. I am suggesting that the next Governor should be an African, because we are coming to the eve of Independence. I am sure we have, at least, people of integrity like—I am sorry to mention names—Sir Francis Ibiam, the Wilcoxs; the Mbanefos; W. Green, and other Africans to administer the Government as the present Governor did.

I want also to make one important remark about the revenue and the financial position of this Region. There is a lot of smuggling and tax evasion in this Region. You know this is an evil that is crippling the revenue of this Region. However poor a person is, he must owe it as a duty to contribute his share towards the Region's revenue and I am suggesting to the Minister of Finance to tighten up the assessment and the collection of tax in the Region. He should also see that smuggling is stopped; he should deal severely with smugglers because they are taking away a great part of our revenue to some wrong places. I want the Government to do its best about this matter.

I want to say something about films. I am calling on the Government to ban films which depict Africans as a low race. These films give the outside world wrong impressions about Africans.

I would also like to say something on the present education system; the system is very bad and I am sure the Minister of Education will see to it that the system is amended and improved. I want the Minister also to amend the present age limit of fourteen years for boys and girls as qualification for entry into secondary schools. Instead, let the age limit be sixteen years. Provided that a boy or a girl is able to pass his or her entrance examination, and provided he or she has people to sponsor him

[CHIEF EFEKE]

or her, I do not see why the individual should be restricted at all.

**The President:** May the hon. Member confine himself to the Speech under discussion ?

**Chief Efeke:** My speech is based on the contents of the Speech from the Throne and therefore I am quite in order. If what I am saying is not in the Speech, then you can call me to order.

I then come to the Economic Development of the Region. I am sure this matter too is contained in the Speech from the Throne. The Economic Development Programme should be wisely prepared and industries established in the rural areas in order to provide employment for the people in the rural areas. Government should avoid bringing or encouraging industries of luxury which will not help the Region.

With these remarks, I support the Motion.

**Mrs Janet Mokelu** (Special Member): I rise to support the Motion on the Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I shall still continue to show appreciation and gratitude of the women of this Region to Government, for appointing two women, Mrs Margaret Ekpo and myself, as Special Members of the House of Chiefs. By this act, Government has shown appreciation for all the efforts of the women as a part of the fold and members of the State, and people that matter. Women also owe gratitude to the leader and father of Nigerian nationalism, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Government, the Executive Council and all those who were concerned in the appointment of women into this hon. House of Chiefs. May Almighty God grant Dr Azikiwe long life, health and increase in wisdom, so that in whatever position he may be placed, either by evil or godly hands, he still will wisely pilot the ship of the Nigerian State. I hope that if we women who are appointed justify our appointment by our actions, the Eastern Government will not hesitate to open the door wider for more women to come in.

In paragraph 3 under "The Cabinet" it is stated that Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe's place as a Premier is filled by Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara. The women are very happy, and have shown their pleasure about it by

according him and his wife a reception. We have promised them full support and co-operation.

Coming to the Ministry of Agriculture, I listened with some interest the Speech from the Throne on this subject. I have heard the extensive arrangements made to improve many aspects of agriculture, but there is a certain aspect of it, in which, as a housewife, I am most deeply concerned. That aspect is the production of food crops. By food crops, I mean yams, cassava, cocoyam and other food crops in the Region. When I compare the price of yams in 1939 with what it is today, I begin to fear that in the next ten years, it will be almost impossible for the average man to get yams to eat. To offset this impending danger, I suggest that the Government should take some great measure to mechanise agriculture. By mechanising agriculture, Government will find work for many school leavers who would like to work in the farms and by then more food crops are produced.

You will agree with me that when mechanised agriculture will attract the youth and provide field of employment for the school leavers, much food crops will be produced, and when the food becomes cheap housewives will suffer less from the hands of some unsympathetic husbands who bully them because the food allowance finished before the month ended. So I very strongly solicit that Government mechanises agriculture in order to put in more food crops into the market for housewives to buy. I can prove that no amount of money will be too great to spend on getting food. It is enjoined in our nature that we who are housewives, look after the whole family including the hon. Chiefs who are our husbands. If due to lack of food people die of famine and pestilence it will be a calamity because all our development projects will be shattered. A country that depends on others for food supply cannot claim to be independent.

*The Ministry of Commerce.*—I am very much delighted with very many industrial projects that are being carried out by the Ministry of Commerce. I am thankful to the Ministry. But I wish to say that safeguards should be adequately made so that while we are making for independence we do not just see a wonderful piece of work done but do not

know how to do it, as that would make us much more dependent in the years to come. Take for example, if we do not provide the safeguards I am talking about, and which I shall explain later, we shall hand over our industrial projects to the highly qualified technicians of other countries, and so in a few months we see our country fully developed—we see some magnificently built houses, but do not know how to build them. We see most skilfully constructed roads, but do not know how to construct them. We see gigantically built factories but do not know how to build them. And after these expatriate experts shall have built them, got fat from it and gone, we may not even be able to repair them when they go bad, as go bad they must in due time. The safeguard I suggest is that Government should make arrangement to see that our indigenous enterprisers are absorbed into different industrial developments according to their tastes. Let them take active parts as co-partners with these expatriate experts even if it would cost Government more. Thus our people will acquire the skill; and then we eventually become independent.

*The Ministry of Education.*—Reports on the educational advances have been very satisfactory, more especially in connection with the reintroduction of fee-free system in the whole of the junior primary school. This would go a long way to make the whole Region look upon the Government as a wise father who takes the family burdens in their order of importance and in relation as he is able to carry the burdens at the material time. I thank Government heartily for this. The human mind is such that at certain point of disappointment it flares up and blazes, but under contentment or satisfaction, it goes inactive and lulling. I say this because I remember the number of protests, demonstrations and delegations I got from some inspired women when the U.P.E. Scheme flopped temporarily. The leaders among women suffered as if they were the architect of the temporary suspension of the scheme.

I remember that the matter took up all the time we had at the Regional Conference of N.C.N.C. Women Association held at Port Harcourt on 10th and 11th April, 1958, so that we had to put up a petition to the Government to extend the U.P.E. Scheme up to Stand-

ard II. Now that the Government has heard the women and granted their request by extending the U.P.E. Scheme to Standard II, the women are very happy. I pass the load of women's gratitude through the President to the Minister of Education, and then to the Government as a whole.

There is an aspect of educational work which needs looking into. It is the management of the Government controlled or Council schools. I can see that the management of these schools are in most cases put in the hands of people who know nothing about school management. This is a pity. We have men and women who have the knowledge and ability for this great task, and I suggest that Government should employ them to draw and follow up a good system of management. The management of schools should not be made a commercial field where the managers could grow rich by disorganising the smooth running of schools and continuity of work in order to get more money by dismissing or terminating some teachers and employing new ones. Worse still will the results be if teachers of low morals are allowed to continue in the schools.

These little children study their teachers in the same degree they study their lessons. The safeguards against these evils can be got in good management. Education is a national welfare work which needs be done most carefully. If Government would see the sense in what I am saying I would make some suggestions when it comes to the matter of details.

*The Ministry of Works.*—Water supply has drawn my attention because of what water means to a woman. It means a lot. At child birth, she and the new babe need water more than anything else. In the home she cannot do without it. The scuffles that arise at water taps here in Enugu have made many a house master lose pounds in the law courts. And so the attempts being made to supply water to people is highly commendable. I would urge that no efforts should be spared so that water may be adequately supplied before the Independence Day Celebrations so that housewives may have sufficient water for all the washing they need do, for food preparation, etc. It is also necessary that we have water, so that our

[MRS MOKELU]  
visitors from even outside Nigeria may have enough for their use.

Paragraph 96 says:—

“Good progress has also been shown on the rural water supply projects throughout the Region.”

This brings me to what I shall either call failure or incompletion of the work on rural water supply started in 1957 or 1958. In these years certain people who, I was given to understand, were working under Government auspices, were digging a number of wells in Oraifite to supply water.

**Chief E. Egbara** (Obubra Division): Point of Order. Standing Order 30 (1):—

“A Member shall not read his speech, but he may read short extracts from books or papers in support of his argument, and may refresh his memory by reference to notes.”

**The President:** I did not take notice that the Member was reading her speech.

**Mrs Mokelu:** Since 1959 these workers have not been seen again; the wells do not supply water, and rather look abandoned. The local women whose hopes had been raised are now feeling disappointed and uneasy about this situation. I earnestly pray the Government to complete this lofty project. Economically, if these wells are not completed, the money so far spent will be lost, and the local people's hopes shattered.

*The Ministry of Local Government.*—I most humbly suggest or appeal that the Local Government Councils should have women as members. People may say that the door to membership is open to both men and women by the existing ordinance. I have to say that even though the door is open to the women, yet as that door is election, it is very narrow door for the women to enter through. Competition to get into the Councils is too hot and so expensive that a woman with all her responsibilities competing with a man cannot win election except in the case of Mrs M. Ekpo who won election because everybody knows her and her activities. Women's presence in the Councils is very necessary and indispensable. She needs to be there to temper men when they become very hot.

To get her in the Local Council, I suggest that there be amendment in the constitution or ordinance, so that women may be appointed into the Councils. If this cannot work, or is not acceptable, let it be provided in the constitution that in Councils certain number of seats will be reserved for women. Let the women alone contest those seats.

For the appointment or for contesting certain number of seats, I suggest that the seats to be filled by women be at the present 20 per cent of the total number of the Council seats.

Finally, I have to touch on the departure of the Governor, Sir Robert de Stapledon and Lady Stapledon. This couple has worked very hard and co-operated with our people and I can safely say that women have taken their work to heart. I say this because I happened to be one of the leaders of the protest delegation to their predecessors on two occasions, but ever since they came the women had never had any cause for that, and therefore have never gone to them on such delegation and will never go.

I thank them on behalf of the women through you.

With these few remarks, Mr President, I beg to support the motion.

**Chief N. N. Anyika** (Onitsha Province): I rise to support the Motion without prejudice to my right to make some observations. This hon. House also expresses its dutiful thanks to His Excellency the Governor for the most gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature. It is a sound policy which this Government is pursuing by laying emphasis on social services such as Health, Education and Community Development.

*University Project.*—In my general survey, I feel strongly to make some remarks on the University Project initiated by this Government a few years ago. The need for university education in this Region cannot be overstressed. But I have often wondered whether those who made a move in the past to obstruct this scheme did so out of conviction or for personal selfish ends. This House, as the Upper House, must at this first opportunity give its blessings to the University project



and congratulate its foresighted sons who initiated it. As we build, we must build for posterity. We are not a real nation if we must for ever leave our key posts in foreign hands.

Agriculture is the back-bone of our economy, no doubt, but it is necessary to bear in mind that this atomic and rocket age makes it expedient to accelerate the pace of our country's progress by national income thus making it possible to raise quicker, the people's standard of living. I call upon the Minister of Agriculture to initiate a bold scheme to encourage farmers who form over 80 per cent of the population. We live in rural areas and appreciate the abject poverty of these farmers. Wealth must be evenly distributed among the populace of the Region irrespective of status or tribe. The "haves" should sympathise with the "have-nots."

**Mrs M. Ekpo** (Special Member): Point of Order, Standing Order 30(1):

"A Member shall not read his speech, but he may read short extracts from books or papers in support of his argument, and may refresh his memory by reference to notes."

**The President:** Order! Order! Chiefs and hon. Members, this House, though it is good to confine itself to the rules of the House, is very young; knowing its age, there should be some exceptions to the rules.

**Chief Anyika:** I am only refreshing my memory.

*Permanent Boundary Commission.*—The numerous litigations over land title in my Province, and I know it is elsewhere, call for Government action. I am of the opinion that the appointment of a Permanent Boundary Commission to handle the issue in the various Divisions will help.

I shall now proceed to tell the Government the needs of my people. In doing so, I appreciate the fact that the resources of the Government are limited, but I strongly press that bare necessities of the people should be borne in mind, particularly in road development programme which improves communication and transportation.

*Government Secondary School.*—For years, I have advocated for the establishment of a Government Secondary School in Awka Division. The Government on several occasions committed itself to converting one of the oldest educational institutions in the Division—the Government School, Awka—into a secondary school. This pledge has not been redeemed and I will continue to speak about it until it is done. It means more hardship on tax-payers if their children continue for ever to run transport expenses to distant places to obtain post-primary education. A thief said to Christ "If you reach the Kingdom of your father, forget me not". The Minister of Education should please not forget Awka again.

*Road Development in Onitsha Province.*—Much as I will congratulate the Government on what has so far been done, I will bring before its notice the dangerous positions of certain roads in my Province. I received several letters from several people of my area about roads. With your permission, may I read the names of the places. They are: Ozubulu, Atani, Idemili, Oraifite, Ogidi, Abatete, Alor, Agulu, Onitsha, Abagana, Enugu-Agidi, Isu, Mgbakwu to Ebenebe Bridge, 9th Mile Corner from Eke. The roads along these places are long overdue for improvement. Aguata, Njikoka and Orumba Districts, the roads linking Orlu—Achina—Ajalli—Oji and Ebenebe Bridge which reduce the distance from 67 miles to 50 miles from Enugu to Onitsha, are of high economic value as these are highly productive areas besides reducing the distance to Enugu. These roads need tarring. Most of the bridges on District Councils' roads—the Aghomili between Umuomaku and Ezira bridge, Aghomili between Ibibu-Umuchi and Umunze, Ortalu between Aguluezechukwu Ogboji and Mgbakwu—Ebenebe bridge—these four bridges are of such nature that the District Councils Aguata, Njikoka and Orumba cannot cope with them. Grants should be made available to these Councils to construct them. The people who live near these bridges should be helped by improving them.

I always consider it an important item to say that it is needless to recount the achievements of our God-sent former Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe who has devoted his life for

[CHIEF ANYIKA]

the rights of mankind in general. May God give him another fifty years to polish his various "hand works" which will forever, be in the world museum.

*Telephone Installation.*—When His Excellency visited Aguata some three years ago he saw personally the need for telecommunication there, when I led a strong delegation for it. Aguata is overdue for telephone installation. I thought that the Minister concerned would do something when night rogues broke down the District Council's strong room and removed money. They were singing: "jimmy, jimmy, shoot". They shot. If there was telephone installation they should have been caught on the spot. I hope the Minister concerned will lay emphasis in his recommendation to the Cabinet about it.

*Water Supply.*—Towns like Igbo Ukwu, Ekwulobia, Nnobi, Nibo, Awka and Amawbia thank the Government for its efforts in constructing bore-holes for them though water is not yet ready for drinking. Much as I will congratulate the Government on what it has done to the above-mentioned towns, I will bring before its notice the desperate positions of the remaining towns whose inhabitants travel five or six miles before they fetch water and their names are Amesi, Uga, Ezinifite, Umuchu, Nanka, Amichi Ichida, Awgbu, Oreri, Umuona, Ikenga, Aguluzigbo and others in my Province. These places are in sore need of water supply in addition to those already in progress in the above-mentioned towns which have been dealt with.

It is no news to this Government, that lives and property of law abiding citizens of recent have been in danger. Night marauders now constitute a menace in Onitsha Province. Laziness must not be encouraged; so, I call upon the Government to protect the peoples' lives and property. Last two months, Onitsha market traders were forced to take the law into their own hands by beating up and killing some of these rogues. While condemning their act we must consider their plight. More Police posts should be created in the Province to fight these robbers, and investigations should be conducted to probe the allegation that some unfaithful policemen encourage these robbers.

Seven months hence, the good tidings bell of freedom will be tolling. In order to bring the joy to the heart of every citizen, I appeal to the Minister concerned to see to it that the organisers of the Independence Celebrations think not only of the city-men but also of the country-side villagers. Strong campaign should be carried out now to tell every one what freedom means and why all should celebrate it with pomp as a day of triumph and the dawn of a new era of responsibility for everyone.

**Mr C. E. Amobi** (Special Member): I wish to associate myself with the Members of this hon. House who wish that a Motion of Thanks should be given to the Governor for his Speech from the Throne. The Governor's Speech has far-reaching consequences, as well as the decision by the Government to have two more Ministries—that is the Ministries of Information and Economic Planning and the educational scheme of the Eastern Region. For the Ministry of Information, I would ask the Government to facilitate making the *Outlook* a daily newspaper because in the past this Region had been ridiculed by the outside world because it had never been well advertised. But if the *Outlook* is changed to a daily newspaper the activities of the Region will be given the widest and accurate publicity. In fact, in all weekly newspapers, the news items are so stale that people do not bother to read them.

For the Ministry of Economic Planning, I should say that Government is out for the development of this Region, and the Government of the Eastern Region should be congratulated; but I would ask the Government to see that the proper man is employed in the Ministry, preferably an Economist whether with a degree qualification or not, somebody who is versed both in practical economics and theoretical economics. As far as education is concerned, nobody in the Eastern Region should have anything to quarrel with the Government, more especially with the able Minister of Education we have. I say this without fear of any contradiction. Everybody knows that the educational system in Nigeria in the past was so bad and poor and for just a few years now those in the Ministry of Education are doing their best to change the curriculum so that the Eastern Region school-boys will be able to reach the standard required. I congratulate the Government again for the U.P.E. schools but I would suggest that more

attention be paid to these schools. In that particular case it is not the fault of the Ministry. The Minister in-charge of education has done his best but the Councils to which the schools are being assigned seem to neglect their duty and I would ask Government to see that sufficient care is taken in helping to increase the number of school-boys and girls, instead of causing the schools to become places of breeding hooligans. The standard of teachers that are being employed should be examined and many other things should be carefully examined otherwise in due course people may begin to run away from these schools and nobody may like to send his children to the schools, and the money spent might be a complete waste.

I now come to an important question, that is trade depression in the Region. Trade is not going on well in the Region but I know that with the Ministry of Economic Planning Government might be able to find a way of helping the masses, particularly in my Division Onitsha where trade is very bad. Apart from trade there are organised thieves in Onitsha. Even in the market, in the broad daylight they organise themselves to snatch money from traders who come from places outside Onitsha; so that in many cases it is very difficult for strangers to come to Onitsha. Onitsha is a commercial centre in the Region. Many people are becoming afraid of coming to Onitsha to buy things, because of these thieves. Although the police are doing their best to check all these evils, Government should do something, otherwise this is going to affect everybody.

I have to bring to the notice of the Government the state of roads that we have in Onitsha Division. But before doing that I have to thank the Government for the good work they are doing now from Abagana to Aguleri. The type of road built there is excellent and Government must be congratulated for the good contractors employed on that road, but the people of Anambra cannot be satisfied until the road from the junction of Nteje connecting Umunya and Ogidi, and passing through the Agricultural Farm at Nkwelle is tarred. These people have for long been begging for a good road.

I had the opportunity of visiting the area and I could find that everybody there is very

happy about the work going on and I congratulate the Government for doing that. I would like to bring to the notice of Government another important road in Onitsha Division. That road is very important. There are two stretches of the road, that is, one from Ogidi to Abatete connecting Alor. Another one is a very important road in Onitsha Division, that is the road starting from Nkpo to Umuokpo to Uke and then having its terminus again at Alor and touching Nnobi. If Government will have time to look into these roads, I think the people of my Division will be very glad.

I have to thank the Government for the Water Scheme that is going on in the Division now. But I would say that in making schemes, Government should see to it that such schemes are being followed up and finished in time. I am having in mind the Ogidi Water Supply Scheme which was started since 1958. I do not know whether the Government will make a statement as to when that Water Scheme will start to operate.

On the question of Rural Water Supply, I would ask Government to think about the Northern and Southern Districts of Onitsha. We need water more than any other thing. We need water badly and we would ask Government to see that all the people of the Southern and Northern Districts of the Division are supplied with water.

Another thing I would like to say is the improvement made in the General Hospital in Onitsha. Government has done very well to instal many machineries in the Hospital; something like X-ray. But I would ask Government to see that more drugs are being supplied to the hospital. I would also say that the management of the hospital now is quite fair, more than what it used to be before. The Senior Medical Officer now in charge of the General Hospital is a model because if you go to the hospital now, you have plenty of people every morning. People are not afraid to go to the hospital now. But the trouble is that the number of doctors we have in the hospital is too small for the Division. We have only four doctors and at times, drugs are not sufficient for the patients. Government should do something about it.

There is a warning I want to give. Some of the nurses in the hospital and ward servants

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should be taught to know that the hospital is not a place people should be tossed here and there and that the premises of hospitals should be made attractive so that anybody going to the hospital will not be thinking that he is going to die but will be having in mind that he is going to a place where he should find his health improved.

Another aspect of this hospital business is that I would ask the Government to build what is called an Orthopaedic or Physiotherapy Hospital in the Region. In this case, I am not referring to Onitsha Division alone. We are trying to have athletes in the Region. With athletics, we will have boys and girls with fractured bones or limbs. Very often we have to send them to Ibadan which is about 300 miles. This Physiotherapy Hospital is quite needful now. Most of our men, even in this House of Chiefs, are suffering from chronic rheumatism. That Physiotherapy Hospital, if it is being built in any strategic centre in the Region, will be easier to attend than travelling from Onitsha to Ibadan and more so to go to a strange land altogether where you will have nobody to care for you. In many cases, people fear to travel a long distance, but if Government will consider Port Harcourt, Enugu, Aba, Onitsha and Owerri for this establishment, I think the people of the Region will be grateful to the Government.

Before I wind up, I will have to record a few words about our great politician, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who has just left the Region for Lagos as the President of the Senate. Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe laboured for the people of Nigeria almost single handed. It is an irony of fate that he is not to be handed over the key of Independence on 1st October. But whatever happens, I am sure that he is a seasoned man and is not annoyed about whatever comes his way. But I should ask the people of the Eastern Region to have him always in mind and in prayers so that God will give him more life to enjoy the fruits of his labour. With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief N. U. Ofem** (Abakaliki Province): In supporting the Motion of Thanks for His Excellency's Most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Legislature, I feel I should seize this golden opportunity to congra-

tulate the Eastern Government for the various development projects accomplished in the Region during the year. The acceptance of the Report of the Mbanefo Commission to better the living conditions of our Civil Servants and the daily paid workers is worth mentioning. The Eastern Government, as democratic as they are, always bear the interest of workers and the tax-payers at heart. The part that our Premier Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara played soon after the demonstration of the Enugu Coal Miners by flying to Lagos to interview the Prime Minister of the Federation of Nigeria in the interest of the Enugu Coal Miners is significant. The Eastern Government have always been very fortunate to have nation builders like the ex-Premier Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the present Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, at the head of affairs in this Region. Long may they live to enjoy the fruits of their labour !

*Provincial Administration.*—I have to congratulate the Eastern Government for the provincial set-up. These shall allay the fears of the people of the minority groups. There shall not be the question of domination in the Provincial Assemblies; the different Provinces shall air their grievances which will be communicated to the Executive Council of the Region. For this, I owe my thanks to the Eastern Government.

*The Ministry of Commerce.*—I have a special appeal to make to the hon. the Minister of Commerce and Industry. For many a time, the Oversea Industrialists and Capitalists visit the Eastern Region but no visits have ever been considered for the people of Abakaliki and Ogoja Provinces.

We have natural resources such as palm produce and iron ore, specimens of which I have. This shows that there is lead-zinc in Abakaliki and Ogoja Provinces. So that, if these capitalists and industrialists visit Abakaliki and Ogoja Provinces, I think living conditions of the people in those Provinces will be a bit improved and life will be worth living. Therefore, I hope the Minister will see to it that these places are visited by the capitalists and industrialists and that industries are established in those two Provinces.

*The Ministry of Education.*—Anyone in the Eastern Region who has the interest of the

Eastern Region at heart will not fail to congratulate the Ministry of Education for the free primary education up to Standard II. In this Ministry I have certain humble suggestions to make. It would serve a useful purpose if the Ministry of Education should consider it advisable to establish industrial schools in all the twelve Provinces of the Eastern Region, so that our school leavers shall attend these schools to learn carpentry, shoe-making, bricklaying and any such industry as the Government will consider necessary. When these school leavers shall have left these industrial schools, they shall be of some benefit to themselves and the Region as a whole, and unemployment reduced.

*The Ministry of Health.*—I have to thank the Minister of Health for approving a rural health centre in my town, Ugep, in Obubra Division. But I ask that work in the rural health centre should be started. For a long time now we have been yearning for rural health centres in the Division. The people of Obubra Division are lacking in medical facilities, the only Government hospital being thirty-four miles away. So that the establishment of the rural health centre will help the poor tax-payers of the southern part of Obubra Division. The staff of the Medical field unit who are already there should be allowed to remain as this will help to stamp out bogus doctors in the Division.

*The Ministry of Works.*—Work on the water pipe in Ugep was started some months ago, but later the workers were withdrawn. But according to the information I have received, I was made to understand that the Urban District Council was asked to contribute a certain percentage of the cost. Since the Estimates have now been approved, the Minister should consider sending back the workers to continue the work on the water pipes. Good water is essential to good health.

*The Ministry of Local Government.*—As Local Government institution is still new in the Eastern Region, the Minister in charge receives many complaints from Local Government Councils and individuals. I thank him for attending to these questions without bitterness. I will be grateful if the Minister will make it possible for farmers in the rural areas to have loans which have already been

approved by the Government. A greater percentage of the people of the Eastern Region, especially those in the rural areas, are agriculturists. Many a time they have applied for loans but the Loans Board generally turn down their applications. This is unfair to them. In other words, the Government is acting on the old biblical injunction which says "To him that has more shall be added". The Government continues to improve areas which have already been improved at the expense of the rural areas, thus making life very difficult for the people living in the rural areas.

For a long time now, the people of the Eastern Region have been looking forward to seeing that customary courts are established throughout the Region. In these progressive days it is unwise to allow illiterate persons to continue to sit in courts and try cases for literate ones. I am appealing that there should be uniformity in the courts of the Eastern Region.

*The House of Chiefs.*—I thank the Minister charged with the responsibility for chieftaincies and establishments for making it possible to create the Eastern House of Chiefs, because owing to variety of languages and customs in the Region, it has been no simple job. But the Minister and his able staff did all their best to make it possible to create the Eastern House of Chiefs. During election time, the Opposition Members said it was all election ruse and that the Eastern House of Chiefs would never be created in the Eastern Region. But today, the Eastern House of Chiefs is sitting and we now see that it is not an election campaign talk.

*Independence.*—While we hope for prosperity after our independence, we pray that God the Father Almighty guard and guide us in all our ways so that our independence will be a reality and a successful one.

With these few words, I support the Motion.

**Alhaji Chief Umoru Yushau** (Special Member): I rise to support the Motion. I thank our Government and I want to appeal to the Government about the sufferings of cattle entering the Eastern Region. I suggest to the Government to get control posts for the cattle and in doing so to bear in mind places like Abakaliki, Enugu, Awka and

[ALHAJI CHIEF YUSHAU]

Onitsha. This is necessary to avoid the loss of cattle.

I also want to appeal to the Minister of Health about the difficulties we Moslems experience in case of death. According to our custom it must not exceed two or three hours before a dead Moslem is buried. But here in Enugu no burial can take place unless a permit has been obtained and it takes a long time to get this permit, with the result that by the time the permit is got all may not be well with the dead body. I strongly appeal to the Minister of Health to look into this, particularly in Enugu, Port Harcourt, Calabar and Aba. It is our appeal to the Minister that when any Moslem dies we can go and bury him before going for the permit because a stranger may come in from the Northern Region and may get sick and die without anybody to go for a permit, and the body remains two, three or four days in the hospital before any arrangement is made about the burial. It is our custom to bury a Moslem immediately he dies. We do not mind paying for the permit and so I appeal to the Minister of Health to look into this.

**Chief James Okosi II** (The Obi of Onitsha): In supporting this Motion I have two observations to make. One is about the aerodrome in Onitsha which has been proposed for over nine years and nothing has been done. I think that perhaps the Government is afraid and wants to know the owner of the land. But my Councilors have written to say that Government should start working on the aerodrome and the compensation money should be deposited in the bank so that when the matter is over and the owner of the land is known payment could be made.

The second point is that Independence is coming and we do not know how it is to be celebrated. It is understood that there is a fund for it but the people of Onitsha know nothing about it up till now. We do not know what arrangements are on hand, whether money will be sent out to the Provinces or to the Divisions for the celebrations. These are the only points I want to put to the House.

**Rev. and Chief Effiong Utit, M.B.E.** (Enyong Division): I rise to express my deep

appreciation for the Speech from the Throne delivered by His Excellency the Governor last month. It was an inspiring and hopeful Speech he made. This Speech has raised our Government to a higher place of honour and trust.

However, I have a few points to make in this my short speech. I want to draw the attention of the Government to some pressing needs of our nation and of the Enyong Division to which I belong. It seems that the Government is concentrating all its industries in the big towns, particularly Port Harcourt. This, I am told, is for convenience and economy. The Government must not lose sight of rural areas. Small industries should be established in those places so as to provide employment to local inhabitants. Where there is land, as in my Division, plantations should be developed.

I have to thank the Government for tarring the Ikot Ekpene-Itu road. I believe that when funds become available the Itu-Uyo-Itam road shall also be tarred, as well as the Itu-Arochuku road.

Another point I have to make is that the principal means of livelihood for my people is the farming industry and only two pioneer oil mills are in Enyong Division at present. I think that the Government should provide more palm oil mills in that Division.

With regard to Education, I appeal to the Minister of Education to reconsider his policy introduced early this year. This will not allow for new infant schools as well as junior and senior primary schools. Some of those schools had more than one stream before this time; and I wish that the Minister of Education should consider this important matter because this has placed difficulties on the children who have no schools to go to. I beg to mention the District Girls' School at Ikot Obong. This was a very big and important school for the whole area and now this is closed through the instruction of the Government. The girls were given special post-primary education in that school. In the course of local contributions the women spent their money in support of this school. But this school is closed and the women are in tears for missing such a school. I strongly appeal to the Minister of Education to reopen this school. I know that

he has tried his best to see to the education of Eastern Nigeria. That Ministry has been doing a lot to see that we should take our right position on the attainment of Independence and in Education as well.

**Chief F. B. Nduka** (Okigwi Division): I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the Premier and his Government for the noble services done both to the Region and Nigeria as a whole. I cannot in a nutshell marshal out all the good services done, but can mention a few. I wish to thank the Government for their attitude towards the hostile South African Government and the heartless French Government. This, in fact, shows a suitable Government which is an example to our neighbours. Faced with difficulties such as the retrenchment of Colliery workers we have always seen the Premier and his Government act promptly and properly. My thanks also go to the entire Members of the Eastern House of Assembly for their contributions and ideas for the good running of the Government. I have to thank the Government also for the bold steps taken in making laws to protect Chiefs on Chieftaincy matters. After mentioning a few of the many noble services of the Government, I wish to make some appeal to foster the prosperity of the Region and Nigeria as a whole. Before I do this, I will refer you to paragraphs 4 and 5 of His Excellency's Speech from the Throne, which read thus: and with your permission, I quote:

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

"The second Ministry will be the Ministry of Economic Planning. My Government attaches great importance to raising the living standards of the people, and towards this end the new Ministry will conduct a survey of our resources, human, animal, vegetable and

mineral, with a view to producing a plan designed to bring these resources to the fullest benefit of the people. In particular, the Ministry will pay special attention to agricultural production and industrial projects, which will directly increase productivity and the earning capacity of the people."

May I add to the suggestions of those who have spoken much about the opening of more industries in the Region. This is an essential duty which the Government should give priority consideration. The importance of communication need not be over-emphasised, and we suggest to the Government to extend means of communication to every nook and corner of the Region. On this point, I wish to point out that Okigwi has been most neglected. I should like the Government to make considerable efforts to send mineral experts to Okigwi for an extensive search for valuable minerals.

In regard to electricity, I should term it a great obligation if the Government should start considering the possibility of the installation of electricity in Okigwi from Awgu.

In this short time and in this short space given to me, I must not fail to mention the issue of the Mbano Hospital. This hospital, which has long been left without any improvement, should attract the attention of the Government. The Government should now make a decision on the issue because the money of the people has long been wasted. I should also remind Government that Okigwi has not been getting their right shares, though it is one of the largest divisions in the Region. I hope therefore that this time Government will remember Okigwi, especially when considering the question of the two newly created Ministries.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief J. U. U. Ebong** (Abak Division): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Most Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I wish to refer to paragraph 24 of the Speech concerning the Produce Inspection Division of the Ministry of Agriculture. In that paragraph, it is stated that the Division

[CHIEF EBONG]

has eighty Inspection Stations. The duty of the Division is to improve the standard of produce. In that case, I presume that these stations include only those large produce buying stations, excluding all the small buying stations in the remote villages where the produce agents buy oil directly from the producers, and carry out, at the same time, the testing and grading of oil before purchase. In my Division, Abak, the producers complain bitterly of being badly cheated by the produce agents when testing and grading palm oil. The cheat often occurs at the interior stations which are not within the reach of the Produce Inspection staff. In most cases, the producers are illiterates and cannot read the testing tube. I am informed also that certain chemicals are sometimes used to change the colour of a good oil to that of a bad one, causing the producers to be deceived. In any case, it is my belief that if the testing and grading of the oil were to be carried out in the presence of an officer of the Produce Inspection Division, the unsatisfactory state of affairs would be avoided. In the circumstances, I take this opportunity to appeal to the Minister of Agriculture and ask that a reasonable increase in the staff of the Produce Inspection Division be arranged in order to provide adequate staff for the supervision of the testing and grading of oil at the interior buying stations.

The Speech, in my opinion, embraces everything and I therefore support the Motion.

**Chief M. I. Asinobi** (Special Member): I stand to support the Motion. I thank the Government and Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who have struggled to help us to enter this House.

Another point is about boys and girls who have passed Standard Six but have no work. Their parents spent a lot of money to train them but when they came out from school, because their parents could not afford to pay their secondary school fees, they had to stay idle at home. Government should try to do something for these people. The parents of some of these boys and girls borrowed money with which to pay their school fees, promising to pay when their children had started work; but now the children have no work. So I am asking Government to look into the matter and find work for these children.

The other people are those boys and girls who, although they reached Class Five in the Secondary Schools, did not pass the School Certificate examination, and so could not find work. The money spent on them by their parents is lost. Government should also find a way to help this set of people; Government should find work for them so that the money spent in training them might not be a waste.

Another thing I want to add is in respect of schools. We need more secondary schools for this Region. During the time of our forefathers they used to go to wars and they needed guns. Now we do not go to wars but we go to schools and we now need schools. If we get good secondary schools it means our country is doing well. If the President and Ministers of this House were not educated, they would not be enjoying their high offices today. I therefore appeal to the Government to help us build one secondary school for Mbieri. We built one school in 1956 but up till now that school has not been recognised by the Government. The C.M.S. has a hand in it and we are still awaiting the approval of that school. We appeal to the Government to approve this school.

I support the Motion.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Chief G. Agbasiere** (Orlu Division): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks for the Gracious Speech from the Throne made by His Excellency the Governor. Before proceeding, I must thank the Government of the Eastern Region for having established the Eastern House of Chiefs in this Region. My thanks go to the following people, namely: our former Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the present Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, all the hon. Ministers, all the hon. Parliamentary Secretaries, all the hon. floor Members, both Government and Opposition Members. The establishment of the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region is an example of what Moses did for the Israelites when he released them from the hands of Pharaoh and his people and in bringing them out of slavery. It is a laudable achievement that at last the Eastern House of Chiefs is established



in this part of the country as in the Northern and Western Regions. We will endeavour to conform with dignity and traditional respect that must befit Chiefs and we must also try to speak in such a way as to reflect our high position. The powers which chiefs of the olden days had, have now been taken away from them and I hope that the Government will try to restore the civil powers usually possessed by chiefs. Chiefs now have no powers.

There is another very important point I would like to make and that is in connection with uniforms and the entitlement to messengers because no Chief can do without a messenger. In addition, we would like to be allowed to settle civil disputes by our selves if reported to us as Chiefs. This is in conformity with the practice in the olden days. Chiefs not only settled civil matters but also criminal matters. Now, according to Government, we are not entitled to settle even civil matters. This is unlike the position in the Western and Northern Regions, where Chiefs face not only civil but criminal matters. Such matters as land cases, family cases, Isusu cases, etc., now go to the police but that should not be so. It should go to the Chiefs rather than to the police.

I have another serious complaint to make. The whole Chiefs in the Eastern Region have no honour at all. For instance, when Chiefs enter anywhere—a place of public gathering—the police will drive them away with ignominy and will even threaten to arrest them and charge them to Court on hypothetically legal counts, the only wrong being that they have failed to take off their hats from their heads; entirely forgetting that they are traditionally accepted “kings” or what is now generally known as “chiefs”, legally appointed by the Government.

The second point is that in functions, Chiefs who do attend are not given any seats—they are not even allowed to come, let alone being recognised as important figures in the free community. The result is that they have to stand all through—that is, if they are allowed to come in—while small boys are given seats. I want to appeal to the Government to bear in mind the importance attached to traditional Chiefs when they are appointed and, as such, they should be given the honour they are due. The fact that they do or do not understand the

common English language should not debar them from enjoying this honour. Afterwards, in the olden days our mothers and fathers did not allow us to go to school and if any person did it then he or she would be punished for going to study foreign language. I hope, therefore, that before two or three months Government will supply Chiefs with their full materials to guard them and to reflect their dignity so that they may be recognised as real Chiefs.

I must express my gratitude to Government over the way and manner they appointed the First and Second-class Chiefs. I hope that the Third-class Chiefs will soon be selected, at least before two or three months.

I also appeal to the President—who is an able and influential speaker—to see to it that Government treats us with the dignity we are entitled to.

I also want to mention the appointment of Mr L. N. Mbanefo as the Chief Justice of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. I congratulate the Government for the appointment as he is the first Nigerian to be appointed a Chief Justice in the Eastern Region of Nigeria. This appointment will be remembered every year until the end of the world and I pray that God Almighty will allow him long life and prosperity.

It is up to four or five years now I have been expecting the Government of the Eastern Region to build a Magistrate Court at Orlu, but my expectation has been in vain. It was announced that the Government has made money available for the building of a Magistrate Court at Orlu, but up till now nothing has been done. I have spoken about this so many times but the Government has been giving us promises upon promises. From Orlu to Awka is about 30 miles. The Magistrate lives 30 miles from Orlu Division and there he goes to hear cases. This is painful to the people of Orlu Division. In order to make Members understand more of what I am saying, I beg to give an example. Many prisoners suffer much by going to serve their terms of imprisonment at Awka or at Owerri. When their terms of imprisonment in the prison yard expire, they will trek such a long distance because they cannot afford to pay for their transport to their homes. When most of these prisoners arrive

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home, after trekking such a long distance, they fall sick, because of the injuries they sustained. I know many of them who returned from Awka by trekking thirty miles and could not walk for three or four days and consequently went to the hospital. If you carefully examine this, you will pity the people of Orlu. I want the Government to start the building as quickly as possible and not to cause any further delay. I want the Government to erect a permanent building for the Magistrate at Orlu.

I am made to understand that this hon. House will be dissolved after a period of about a year or two. I am appealing to the Government strongly that it will be shameful to us Chiefs in this hon. House, if after the dissolution of the House, we are required to go and stand election or nomination again. After all, many of us have enemies. No one here will say "I am perfect". It would be shameful for us Chiefs in this hon. House after two years to go and stand election with young men who are not qualified to be Chiefs but who would like to be Chiefs because of money. I assure the Government that this hon. House of Chiefs will not forget the Government if we are not required to go and contest further elections. We shall not forget the Government for ever!

*Water supply.*—It is important for the rural areas to have adequate water supply. I know that the people in the urban areas will continue to say "We want more water supply". In the rural areas women, men, and children trek four, five, six, or twelve miles to fetch water. I hope that the Government will do something to relieve them of this difficulty.

Really, I thank the Colonial Office because there are Europeans in our area who dig wells for us. These wells help us a good deal. If this method can be managed by the Government, we urge them to adopt it. It will help us a lot. After all, we do not want things that will cost much money; let them give us the ones that will not cost much, provided we shall have water.

I know that an hon. Member from Orlu Division has spoken about a road in Orlu Division. I hope that the Minister concerned will look into that.

**Chief John N. Nwansi** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the Motion for the Governor's Speech from the Throne. It was a noble Speech. We all congratulate the Governor.

Some Members have made particular requests on behalf of their respective areas. I am going to mention the Owerri—Okigwi road, a long standing road which was opened in 1901 by the first District Officer, M. Douglas. This is a Trunk A road. There have been promises upon promises by the Government, and petitions upon petitions by Owerri Divisional Union about this road. In 1957 when Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe came to the area, this was included in the Welcome Address. He came also with the Minister of Transport. After reading the address he asked us to be patient and informed us that this road had been approved and that the remaining part of it was going to be considered. Since then Ikeduru—Owerri road has been a traffic and mercantile road. The number of lorries that pass on this road everyday to and from Port Harcourt, Aba and so on is about sixty excluding cars. I want to ask what has been the delay in tarring this road.

In my area (I come from Ikeduru in Owerri Division) we lack water. In my own village, Akabor, we have Okitankwo stream which dries up in October and flows in June—nine months without water. There are wells but they are not sufficient. Wells will not suffice the needs of the people. There is water scheme project in our Division, Owerri. I saw the Engineer last two weeks and asked him whether the water scheme could not be extended to Akabor which is six miles from Owerri. He said he was very sorry that it could only be extended within the township and could not be extended six miles. Ikeduru is asking for Cottage Hospital. Some towns in Ikeduru are six to twelve miles away from Owerri Hospital. We are therefore appealing to the Government to be kind enough to listen to our request and grant us Cottage Hospital in Ikeduru.

*The Creation of the House of Chiefs.*—The Eastern Chiefs Conference should not be neglected because that Conference made us to be what we are today. Without that Conference, I do not think that Government would so soon establish the House of Chiefs.

I remember when I was invited to attend the meeting of the Ibo State Union at Port Harcourt in 1957; the present Premier flew from Lagos. That was the time our Prime Minister from the North was appointed. I stood up to speak. I said: well, man can make and unmake. There was no N.C.N.C. in existence before but it was planned and made by man and it has come to existence. People say there is no Chief in the East which is wrong. If there is no Chief who were the responsible people before the advent of the British Government. In the olden days, our fathers before they went to war sent out the young men to go to the battle field. They fought with gunpowder while their fathers remained in the house praying to their "Ofors" that their children should win and come back safely without any wound. Unless the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region was created where the "Ofor" holders of the Eastern Region would stay and pray to their "Ofors" that their children should go to war and return safely without any wound, I do not think that the House of Assembly would stand. This remark I made at Port Harcourt when I attended the Ibo State Union conference in 1957.

I am not so fluent in speech. In concluding, I thank the Government for what they have done for the Eastern Region in creating the House of Chiefs to be what it is today. With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief Sampson Adoki** (Degema Province): I am so glad to hear my name called among these hon. Members. Well, a new boy is normally called a new child. We are being called upon to thank the Governor of the Eastern Region for the Speech he made from the Throne. But before I support that, I would first thank the Ministers. I am never tired to look at them for the reason that when I was coming here, I thought that the people called Ministers would be different people, not knowing that they are bright young gentlemen. I must first thank the Ministers for the offices they hold and for the heavy burden they carry. I thank them most heartily. They are carrying all the burdens and we simply come here to visit them. All that we spoke here yesterday is a past thing compared with what they have done. If when the Governor was sent to be Governor in the Region and the people he came to meet were not capable of their offices,

he would have gone back to say "I was sent to a place where I saw nobody worthy of my presence". But when the present Governor came he saw that the people in office in the Eastern Region are capable and he took up the job with a sense of joy and comfort.

I want to point out two or three things to you. Now we have N.A. schools, i.e., free primary schools in Okrika. I want to bring to the notice of the Minister concerned that the children in these schools are suffering. A school without a covering to protect the children from rain is not conducive to health. Whenever there is rain the schools are flooded and the children are wet. That is a great suffering. I beg the Minister to pay good attention to these schools.

Another thing I want to bring to Government notice is this: Local Councils are a part of the Government everywhere. When a Local Council does not stand well, the District Council cannot stand. The Local Council is always helping the District Council to come up to a good standard. But the members receive no allowance. In my own area, there has not been a Local Council for a year, I am sorry to say. Whenever you speak to them they will always answer you "what am I going to do there, to leave my people and go there to sit down for hours, talking without anything? When I go back to my house my wife will ask me what shall we eat. I should better go to my people and do whatever they are doing so that we may have something to eat". That is the trouble. For one year now we have had no Local Council. I pray the Minister concerned to take an immediate step to encourage the Local Council in Okrika.

Another thing is that for a long time now the Government of this Region promised us a Post Office and suggested that we should collect money to help them to put it up. I believe that most of the people have collected this money which may now be in the Treasury Office. But since then no other work has been done towards it, and I ask the Minister concerned to take steps to put up the Post Office for us and we shall assist with all our might.

Another point I have in mind is about the Grammar School in Okrika. We want to rebuild it, and we want help from the Govern-

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ment to bring the school up to a good standard. We have had this school for many years but it has not progressed sufficiently. So we want Government to help us.

Another thing is that we want Government to help us to put up a technical school. In my area the only work we do is to catch fish, but we do not get fish every time. For some months together we may not get any fish to catch. Children who pass Standard Six and whose parents cannot afford to send them to secondary schools have no work to do and they become house sweepers. So we want Government to give us technical schools, so that these boys who pass Standard Six may get here to learn something.

We thank Government for the hospital they gave us. It is a nice hospital indeed, but there is something there. That "something" is known to the Government. The hospital is nice but we have so far not derived much benefit from it. The area is divided into two, one supporting the Delta Pastorate Church taking over the hospital and the other saying that because the Delta Pastorate Church has no doctors, the Seventh Day Adventist Mission should look after the hospital. So we have not decided on which Mission should take over the hospital and we want Government to decide for us, because since the hospital is theirs they should know the better Mission to look after it.

*Water in Okrika.*—Everybody knows what we mean when we talk of water in Okrika. Okrika is a small island surrounded by salt water. When you go to that town now, nearly everybody is complaining of belly-ache. We do not know what is wrong because we are not doctors. But the salt water may be responsible. So we pray the Government to give us pipe-borne water. I believe this will not cost the Government much. We want water because without water nobody will live. Water and food go together to make a man strong. We pray the Minister concerned to take steps to make water available to us.

With these few remarks, I whole-heartedly support the Motion.

**Chief Josiah N. Orizu** (Onitsha Division): I rise to say a few words in support of the Motion for an Address of Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for his Speech from the Throne.

First of all, I want to say that the entire population of Nnewi and District over which I am the elder Ruler have implicit confidence in the new Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara, and we shall support him and his Government to the last. I am looking forward to his return from the United Kingdom in June when under the auspices of my people, the old Onitsha Province will give him a most hearty welcome at Onitsha.

Now, Sir, I come to my area. The people of Nnewi have been promised pipe-water supply for the past three years, yet nothing has been done. I realise the technical and other difficulties involved and I hope Government will begin the water supply project at Nnewi this financial year. My people have been applying for a Youth Secondary School for Nnewi, and I implore the Minister of Education to consider this seriously.

We also need electricity in the town and money to develop the Nkwo Market.

**The President:** Chiefs and hon. Members, let us exercise every bit of sympathy for the speaker and let him try to place before us what he has got in his mind.

**Chief Orizu:** The great town of Oraifite in my area has for long been neglected. So also are Itchi and Amichi. I would like these towns to be considered for water supply and good roads.

Finally, I wish to say that Government should be careful in selecting a person to be Minister in the new Ministry of Information. We do not want the high-handed and unjust interference from the Information Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs which featured the affairs of the Minister of State (Information and Welfare) since last December to be continued. We like to retain our best men in the Public Service, not to victimise them.

I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Ako Okwoli II** (Enugu Province): I rise to support the Motion on the Governor's Speech from the Throne. I have a comment to make but before proceeding, I congratulate the Ministers for the good work they have done and I hope that they will continue in that manner. I also congratulate the former Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, and the new Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara.

Coming to my comment, I am appealing to the Government to introduce Oil Mill in my Province, Enugu. I feel, as many of you can witness, that Enugu Province is thickly populated and supplies most of the palm produce being used in the Region, and as such, is best suited for the establishment of this Oil Mill. The Oil Mill, if established in the Province, will help the people in quicker production of palm produce.

Leaving this point I go over to roads. I appeal to the Government to consider taking over and tarring some of the important roads from the Local Government Councils, for instance, the road from the 9th Mile Corner leading to Eke-Affa-Nze and Nkpologu in Nsukka Division. This is a very busy road and taps all the economic products of the people of these places.

Another point is that I would like to remind the Government that there are three bridges in Nsukka Division, the Abonyi bridge along Obolo-Eha-Amufu road; the Iyiekoro bridge along Nsukka-Ogurugu road and the Eshi bridge on the same road. I wish to appeal to the Eastern Government to replace these wooden bridges with permanent bridges like the one at Ugwuoba on Enugu-Onitsha road. These roads are so busy but the bridges are so bad that more than 150 persons have lost their lives on these bridges due to their bad conditions, of which some hon. Members can bear me witness.

Another point is that Nsukka, as the home of the University of Nigeria needs a Bank for the efficient and smooth running of the University and other Government projects yet to follow. I appeal to the Government to establish a branch of the African Continental Bank at Nsukka.

Lastly, I appeal to the Government to introduce Sugar Cane Industry at Nsukka.

We have enough fertile soil for this project and it will help the Government to ease the unemployment problem now facing the country.

**Chief Akam Iteshi** (Abakaliki Division): In supporting this Motion I will first of all thank our Country's Saviour—Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe—and I will also thank our present Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara, and the President of this House for helping to establish the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region. I thank the Government for giving somebody his right. Our President deserves this right given him, and also for considering the women of this Region.

Before I go further I wish to thank the Minister of Agriculture for what he has done so far. In this Region I think the Abakaliki people were the best farmers, but now Abakaliki is going backwards in agriculture. In this matter I appeal to the Minister of Agriculture to do something.

Now, about the Ministry of Commerce: we the people of Abakaliki do not know about stealing somebody's property. We are doing nothing now, but there was something we were doing—in the field of mining. There are some minerals, e.g., lead and zinc. My people of Abakaliki support the Government. They are always prepared to do so provided they will be helped in their troubles.

The Minister of Works can confirm that we have no good water supply in Abakaliki. When you come to the hospital at Abakaliki you will see thousands of people suffering from guinea worm. We do not know how we can get amenities for the tax we pay. People are in the prison now because of guinea worm. (*Interruptions*). Yes, I say guinea worm because they have not paid their tax because of the attack of guinea worm; and when Government wants to collect tax from them there will be no money and so they are arrested. So I am appealing to the Government to give us a small well. We are highly worried about water. If we are given a well we do not mind paying for it. And I would also remind Mr President that Abakaliki is a thickly populated area and a very good place which has never worried the Government at all. I will

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only remind you that during the last Federal Election when some people toured Abakaliki none of them drank good water there. I do not think that many of them will like to visit Abakaliki again because of lack of water and bad road. Imagine a Division like Abakaliki having no good water supply! We travel about thirty-two miles at Abakaliki to get water. That is what worries us.

We have been hearing that mining will soon be started. Many people who have lands there are being stopped from doing anything on the lands, waiting that the work will start there; but nothing is going on. I am appealing to the Minister of Commerce that if he knows that there is nothing going on there let him tell the people to do something with their lands. Regarding Zinc Mines, we have zinc at Enyima. In Abakaliki we also have kerosene. At Amaeka we have petrol mines. I strongly appeal to the Government to co-operate with us. We are very happy to see this sort of Government, a very good Government! People will tell you in all other Divisions that they are worried but in Abakaliki there was never a time that Government was worried at all (never mind that there is something like "Odozi Obodo").

Many of us here know what I mean by that. We should not be embarrassed provided that Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe has tried to give us this chance to come in here. I am begging the Chiefs that they should co-operate with this Eastern Government so that it will be the best Government in the whole world.

Secondly, we have seen how Members of the Opposition were promising people, but they deceived so many of them. Many of the people were told that: when they win power, they will be this and they will be that but nothing is done. I do not think that Abakaliki will be deceived at all. I think when we disperse, you will interview Government and tell them to think of Abakaliki people.

In Education, you know that our people are nowhere. Again if the people who have passed Standard Six are not given work, our people will feel so reluctant that they will not send their children to school again. The Minister of Education should think more of

Abakaliki people. This is a Division that Government should help and see that there is improvement there. I hope all the Ministers will think of Abakaliki in respect of all these our problems.

With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief E. A. Egbara** (Obubra Division): I thank you, Mr President, for giving me this chance, because yesterday there were Bills on which I wanted to say something, unfortunately, before I was in a position to say it the Bills were passed.

I thank the Government for the choice they made in the appointment of Ministers. I can see that at any time that a Minister is called upon to say something about his own Ministry, he usually interests us. So that the choice there is very good. Nobody can dispute the fact that whoever was the brain behind this choice of Ministers has done something very good for the Region.

Another striking point is the University of Nigeria. Page 5, paragraphs 24 and 25 of the Report has shown me that this University is not like that of Ibadan. Degrees will be awarded by the University, that is, the University of Nigeria at Nsukka. That of Ibadan, we are told, depend on the London University for its degrees.

So that paragraph 25 has shown us that the University at Nsukka will confer its own degrees. That is very very important to note. If we have got a University that can cope with the others of the world, it is good that we in our own country should be in a position to confer degrees to our own students in the University.

*Ministry of Agriculture.*—I want to align myself with the views expressed by Chief Ofem that Government should consider very much the question of giving loans to farmers. That is very very important. There are very many people who want to plant cocoa and palm trees.

*Ministry of Local Government.*—I have noted that in paragraph 80 page 19, Government is preparing to train Local Government staff here in this Region, instead of going

to Ibadan. Everything there shows the sound economic planning of the Government. I thank Government very much for that.

*Ministry of Works.*—Page 21, paragraph 91 of the Governor's Speech. There are development projects on road. The Ediba-Obubra road was shown in our road development programme in 1959-62. The road was started to be tarred since 1958 but up till now work is yet to be completed on it. We were told that the people who handled the contract were not good contractors but what has the Government done to see that this work is completed? Since the condition of the roads is so bad, I would suggest that work should start there now, because they are very difficult to use during the rains.

My hon. Friend, Chief Agbasiere, has spoken about water supply in the rural areas, and, I am speaking in reference to the Ministry of Works. He said that people travel 30 to 40 miles in search of water. This is true even in my own Division. One Member expressed the sentiment that there is a stream in his own place which goes dry from the month of October to about June. This is the same case in Obubra and unless an arrangement is made to supply these people with well water, I think that the life of the people will not be safe.

*Ministry of Education.*—Paragraph 40 shows that about 128 post-secondary scholarships were awarded. Obubra Division was not considered at all for one post-secondary scholarship; not that the Government denied them the right of having it, but because we had no qualified students. But there is a way in which Government could have helped Obubra in this matter; Government could have done it in such a way that it could have given Obubra so many secondary school scholarships in lieu of post-secondary scholarships. That would help the people of Obubra.

Another thing is about unemployment. To ease unemployment, technical schools should be started in Abakaliki Province, so that those Standard Six school leavers will be trained there.

It is a pity, that Prison comes under the Federal subject, but I am trying to appeal to

the Minister of Internal Affairs to pass to the Federal Government my feelings on the Obubra Prisons. The Obubra Prison which was built at about 1928 is about one of the oldest in the Region, but it is very poorly staffed. There are no quarters for the staff; in short, it needs reconstruction. At present, the fence round the Prisons is made of wood. Obubra still has large amount of white ants and they eat up this fence.

Another point I want to raise is that there should be something like an inner gate in case of riot in the Prison Yard. This tends to check prisoners because before they leave the prison yard some sort of alarm will be raised by the warders and the prisoners will be apprehended.

*Ministry of Health.*—I see from paragraph 59, page 18 of the Speech from the Throne that there is a plan to extend and improve Government Hospitals. It is a pity that the Obubra Divisional Hospital has virtually only one ward which is divided into two main wards—male and female. There is no decency in this. The sooner a separate ward is provided for the female the better. We require an ambulance service. You know the Cross River is a barrier to any development that will come to Obubra. Without an ambulance service how can a patient in the rural area be taken to the hospital. Most of our roads are covered by water during the rainy season and this constitutes an obstacle to the lives of the people. These ambulances could run to Ugep and collect a Doctor who might be on tour in any case of emergency. I am really very grateful to the Eastern Government for its efforts to eradicate yaws. I happen to belong to an area or Division where this disease is very rampant. I am really grateful to the Government because for the few days they worked there this disease was eradicated.

There is another subject which falls within the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. It is about postal services in the Region. One telephone line is connecting Ikom with Bansara. It automatically means that once the work on the Bansara-Ikom line is completed that of the Obubra area will be removed. But Ugep has no telephone link. There will be no harm if that telephone link connecting Ikom and

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Obubra Districts for that matter can be retained. Again there comes the question of tarring the road between Obubra and Ikom. This will not involve the Government in too much expenses.

I now come to the Ministry of Finance. I have got to say that if the Government must help tax collection and be sure that the money collected is safe, the present condition of things must be improved. There was one thing which I forgot to mention. There is a very big forest where cane is being produced in large quantities. This cane is used in the cane industry and we used to get this cane from the forest. The area which produces such a material which gives the Government money should be considered first in the matter of forest development.

**Chief J. J. Ogbulafor** (Bende Division): I rise to support this Motion to thank the Governor for his Speech from the Throne. With regard to this Speech I can say that it is the most encouraging speech ever heard from the Throne and I regard it as bringing independence to Nigeria. It is good to remember that two new important Ministries have been created in this Region and these are the Ministries of Information and Economic Planning. I am sure that according to the Speech from the Throne recruitment into these Ministries will be from amongst our people.

*Ministry of Education.*—I take this opportunity to express my gratitude and joy for the effort of the Minister of Education to make the Primary School free up to Standard II. I am appealing to the Government to extend it up to Standard III next year. Also I am appealing to the Minister to build some more technical schools and to give more grants to the agencies to enable them to employ more staff and improve their finances.

*Ministry of Internal Affairs.*—I have only one point to raise here. The idea of broadcasting is very good but television is a new thing. I am appealing to the Minister to see that arrangement is made to recruit our qualified sons and daughters to do the work in the television service. I am appealing to the Minister responsible to see that our sons and

daughters have something to do in this new project.

I come now to the Ministry of Agriculture. I thank the Minister for the effort he has made in coming to agreement with the Marketing Board. I am now appealing to him to look into it and increase the F.F.A. from 4.4 per cent to 4.5 per cent. I am also appealing to the Minister to see that cocoa is grown in larger number in the Bende Division in future.

We all are assembled here today and we all know how we came in here. We must remember the past work of our former Premier, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, who is now the President of the Senate. We all remember the present Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara and also the other able Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries for their efforts in this Region and how they have seen to it, by their efforts, that this Region is not dragged to shame. Obviously, I have to say that Government has done its best in approving the road between Umuahia and Uzuakoli to be tarred. We have now good roads from Umuahia to Calabar and Umuahia to Enugu which cover some distance.

Another point is that there is a pressing need for a Catering Rest House at Umuahia. Some hon. Members come from Calabar and they must have to stop somewhere to rest and if there is a Catering Rest House at Umuahia—considering the long distance they must have to cover—it will help them. I appeal to the Government that funds be provided for the construction of Catering Rest Houses in Umuahia.

I have to comment on the Chiefs here, starting from our female to our male Chiefs and to express my joy over the way and manner every Chief talks and behaves in this hon. House. We all know that this House is new in this Region and almost everybody is now familiar with the codes of the House. I am happy about that and hope that by the next few months every hon. Chief will be well-informed about the proceedings of the House.

**Chief I. Okoroafor** (Bende Division): I rise to support the Motion and in doing so, I have some observations to make. It is never possible that everybody will be congratulated in the work of this Region—it is not even the case throughout the whole Federation.



On the question of Education, many Members have praised the Minister of Education and the Ministry of Education but I must make some observations in connection with the management of the U.P.E. I must say right away that the management was not satisfactory because it was in the hands of people who could not do it well. Furthermore, I have to emphasise that the delay usually occurring in the Ministry in connection with the Standard Six results is very suspicious. I appeal to the Government to make better arrangements to see that the management of the Standard Six examination and results are in the hands of capable men, so that the results could be published without unnecessary delay.

Again, I have to say that teachers in the voluntary agencies are not treated with the same care as the civil servants in the Government service. It is not the fault of these teachers to be there and having begun there, they should not be allowed to suffer. I therefore appeal to the Minister of Education to see to it that these people are treated with some consideration.

On the question of agriculture, many people have thanked the Minister of Agriculture for all that he has been doing and all that he has further to do, but I have to express my opinion in this respect. In the past, many rich men have used their influence to get all the loans from the Government and, as a result, left all the other farmers very poor; but now farmers are promised that they will be helped and we shall be very grateful if the promise is implemented. There are farmers who deal on economic crops and others on food crops. It is therefore necessary that Government should give them aid—that is money—to enable them work and achieve good results.

I now come to the question of roads. Very many farmers find it difficult to transport their goods because of bad roads. It is certain that without good roads these crops will not be transported and eventually people will not benefit from the efforts of the farmers. I wish Government would help!

I will now talk about the Ministries of Works and Transport. There are so many creeks

and rivers in the Bende area and as the rainy season will soon set in people are imagining the difficulties they will encounter because many of the rivers are without good bridges. Since the beginning of the year, with the able help of one of our men in the Ministry of Works, in the person of Major Rigs, and through the efforts of some other people, we have been able to make Bende people learn to help themselves, before asking the Government to help them. With this, we have been able to make some villages having very few tax-payers to make available to the Government about £10,000 in order to help in making bridges across their rivers. I am sure and promising this hon. House that before the end of next month or two about £15,000 more will be deposited because the villagers wish to enjoy independence alongside with other inhabitants of the Eastern Region. I am asking the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Works to see that more help is given to the Community Development section to enable the poor tax-payers in the rural areas to enjoy amenities and to benefit from the tax they pay. The means for these tax-payers to enjoy their taxes is through community development. We are grateful that hospitals are given to some areas. We have health centres in some areas but we cannot enjoy all these without good roads. Therefore, I am now appealing to the Minister of Works to see that more money is provided for community development. We need caterpillars to reduce the hills. Anybody who has travelled in Bende Division ought to realise that all the roads there are hilly and muddy. Therefore, without caterpillars much will not be achieved. We appeal to the Government as a whole to consider the areas that are helping themselves. People in Bende Division are helping themselves now by trying to put up hospitals and health centres. They should therefore be helped to get roads and to enjoy amenities with the other parts of the Region.

Here at Enugu, I am surprised to see the condition of things. Last night where I put up (not in the Catering Rest House), thieves were chased about and it is a danger to Chiefs and hon. Members who do not put up in the Catering Rest House or places guided by constables. Care should be taken to see that Police are vigilant because thieves are trying to threaten the lives of hon. Members who come to Enugu. Care should be taken to see that they are guarded otherwise there will be

[CHIEF OKOROAFOR]

loss of lives. In the past you have been hearing of some people killing or threatening the lives of people. This is because proper care is not being exercised. Light should be provided in places where there is darkness to chase thieves away.

With all these points, I support the Motion.

**Chief Gordon Ascot Ikibah** (Brass Division): I rise to support the Motion. In doing so I have to thank the President for the opportunity given to me to speak. I want to thank the Government too for all the good works that have been done for this Region. I am going to be brief following the advice of the President before the debate started.

*The House of Chiefs.*—This is a great pleasure and it is a pride to the Eastern Region. When the Eastern Regional Government was trying to create the House of Chiefs other Regions, especially those opposing us in the Western Region, were saying that the Eastern Region would not be able to do it. Some said the Region is financially weak. Some said the N.C.N.C. was introducing a measure through which they could get the votes of the people during the Federal Election. I thank the Government and I am happy that now the House of Chiefs is a success. On this very item, I am very happy that the Government has made a statement that the status of Chiefs in this House is the same. People have been doubting whether the standards of Chiefs in this House are different, that is whether some are higher than others because they hear that some are Second-class, some Third-class and so forth. I am glad that the Government has made a welcome statement on this issue. But at the same time, I observe that the Government after making that statement went further to say that staffs of office have been ordered for a section of the Chiefs in this House, leaving out the rest, and therefore some other people have been eager to ask why such should be the case, because Government had said that all Chiefs are equal. I wish the Government to reconsider its decision of ordering staffs of office only for the First-class Chiefs and leaving out all the rest of the Chiefs and Special Members. The staffs of office should be ordered for all the Chiefs in this hon. House.

As I have said before, I will not waste much of your time, but one more point—Education.

Some of the hon. Members have spoken about education. Some say education in this Region is going down. Certain reasons might be responsible for this and it is our duty to co-operate and solve the problem. We should assist the Government in this respect. When you examine the Standard Six examination results they are not quite satisfactory. They are disappointing in some areas, if not throughout the whole Region. I feel like mentioning a case in Brass Division. In the Brass Division, particularly in the Northern District, so many children failed in their examination and what happened? The result is that after the examination a report came out from the children that some people, and they were teachers from one school, went out three days before the examination, collected some papers, and showed to the children that those papers would be the examination papers, and that they got them from the Ministry of Education. So, these boys instead of doing their revision work studied these faked examination papers with the result that they failed. It was after the examination that this report came out and we reported to the parents and to the teachers as well as to the General Manager of the Schools. On the 7th he invited some people and I am proud to say that I was one of them to go into that matter. We have taken the evidence of the accused teachers and I think by now the matter has been reported to the appropriate authority. I am therefore appealing strongly to the Minister of Education to please take note and go into this matter, and if it is found true, to take appropriate action, otherwise people will continue to practise this sort of thing.

Apart from that, I will now speak on communication. Brass Division is a very difficult place as far as communication is concerned. A letter posted at Enugu will not get to my hand till about two weeks. The last Parliamentary Debates (*Hansard*) that I got was on the 1st of April. Just imagine how long it was posted here. It is the same thing all over. I am not talking only about my own town. We want Government to look into all these things and try to make communications easy for us. In this respect, I have to say that there is only one Post Office at Nembe. That is not enough for the Division. There are Postal Agencies all over in the Division. Take for instance Odi, my own town, the largest town in the Division.

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The Postal Agency has been there for eighteen years. It could be converted; I know this is a Federal matter. But by request through this Government to the Federal Government I know these things could be done. Therefore, if small Post Offices are created in the Division and a thing such as Very High Frequency which is being installed now in the Western Ijaw from Patani can be given to many towns in Brass Division, communication will be made easy. We are suffering a lot. If Government study these things properly, they will be able to help us.

With these few remarks, I would say: long live Zik, long live the Eastern Government,

long live Sir Stapledon and long live the present Premier Dr Okpara. I beg to support the Motion.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the President interrupted the business, and the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed on Thursday, 28th April, 1960.*

ADJOURNMENT

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

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Thursday, 28th April, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President 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—(25th April):—

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

**The President:** Chiefs and hon. Members, as I said yesterday, speakers should please confine themselves to the points in His Excellency's Speech from the Throne and to the points they wish to raise. Repetition should be avoided, please.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Tobacco Company Film Unit

**The President:** Before I propose the Question, I have an announcement to make. I understand representatives of the Tobacco Company are out in Nigeria to shoot films of places and people. I gather they have the support of the Federal Information Service. They have expressed a wish to film members of the House of Chiefs on the grounds of the House and I trust Members are agreeable to this. At 12 o'clock noon the House will have a short break as usual and that would be the time for the Unit to take the pictures of Members.

Question again proposed.

**Chief Johnson Osuji Njemanze, M.B.E.** (Owerri Province): I rise to support wholeheartedly the Speech of His Excellency the

out-going Governor, Sir Robert Stapledon, from the Throne. The Speech is one of the most important Speeches ever delivered from the Throne. The Governor himself is really a very good man. Since he came as Governor of this Region there has never been trouble or disagreement, and there has never been any clash between himself and the Executive Council. This is a big credit to him. Now he is leaving the Region on promotion as Governor of the Bahamas. I do not know whether his successor would be an African or a European. My plea is that whoever will succeed Sir Robert Stapledon should follow his footsteps. The outgoing Governor is not like other Governors who left Nigeria through the backdoor. He is leaving Nigeria with the good wishes of the people, and may God grant him *bon voyage* to England so that after his leave he may take up his appointment as Governor of the Bahamas.

Now, let me give honour to whom honour is due, and credit to whom credit is due, that is to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. He was created to save his people. He is not like Pharaoh of Egypt whom God said he created in order that His name may be known on the earth.

In my Division, Owerri, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe is held in high esteem and anything that touches him touches the whole of Owerri Division—and I hope, as well, all the other Divisions in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, except possibly some of the areas inhabited by Action Group supporters. We are today privileged to be hon. Members of this House, but who is responsible for the setting up of the Eastern House of Chiefs? The answer is: Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, and of course, with the assistance of his colleagues in office. I do not intend to offend anybody—I think we are all privileged to speak our minds in this hon. House provided we are not very personal—but I recollect that in the days past, there were some people who were opposed to the creation of the House of Chiefs who are today clamouring for membership of this House. When our Lord was to be crucified some people said, "Crucify him, crucify him". Some days after they cried, "Hallelujah". But this is another issue. The fact is that some people who said there should be no House of Chiefs are now fighting tooth and nail to get themselves recognised by the

Government as Chiefs in that very House they did not want. (*Some hon. Members: Shame to them*). They know themselves.

I think I must now give credit to our hon. President, who, as far as I can remember, made a very strong point in 1954 about the setting up of a House of Chiefs in this Region. I admire him and praise him for his foresight and we are all happy that his dreams have now come true with the establishment of a House of Chiefs and the recognition of Chiefs in the Region.

It is a well known fact today that the Easterners enjoy fundamental human rights more than any other Region in the Federation of Nigeria. Who is responsible? Again, it is our leader, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe and his able colleagues. There is one thing clear about this great man. Most of the hon. Chiefs here will recollect the recent happening when it was thought by some people—and when I say people I know the people I mean; others know them too—that denying Dr Azikiwe of his rights and causing unnecessary troubles would bring about the postponement of our Independence. But what happened? Our great man was full of tact in facing the task he had in hand; that is, the task that God sent him for—that of redeeming his people from bondage—and in fact he has not only redeemed Nigeria but also Africa as a whole. Today Africa is waking up. Who is waking her up? The obvious answer is: that indefatigable man of Africa, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

Some people thought that breeding troubles—both internal and external—and making agitations here and there, in order to postpone Nigeria's Independence make them popular, but this leader of ours has used all the forces and tact at his command to defeat their intention and we are most grateful to him. He did not give them any chance, and when after the Federal Elections he was offered the post of President of the Senate, he accepted it with open heart contrary to the expectation of some people. In accordance with our Lord's teaching, Dr Azikiwe accepted what was given to him in order to co-operate in the building up of Nigeria. We are definitely sure that one day he will reap what he has sown. May God bless him. (*Several hon. Members: Amen*).

I now turn to the Ministry of Education. The Minister has done and is doing everything possible to raise the standard of education in this Region. Owerri Division is one of the best Divisions in this Region. No one can gainsay that. Every year this Division produces over 2,000 Standard VI School leavers. The parents of some of these children are not financially able to send them to higher institutions of learning. We have now seen that the Education Department has given Owerri Urban area what is called a "Craft" school. This is quite good but I must say that it will not meet our demand; it will not satisfy our need. I pray Government to register this school as a full-fledged Technical School to enable all these young school leavers to further their education by giving them an opportunity to learn some trade and become useful citizens of the country. At present there are many such school leavers who are roaming about without anything to do simply because they cannot get any good employment with their present education. After all, half education is worse than sickness.

Now to the Ministry of Health. I thank Government for the able Doctors who have worked in Owerri Division for a number of years. We in Owerri have been crying for Doctors who know the feelings of the people, Doctors who realise that they have come there to serve the people and Doctors who respect public opinion. I am glad to say that the Doctors in Owerri now have been doing very well in their field and I wish they will be allowed to continue to serve in Owerri Division. If, however, they must be transferred sometime, I pray that Doctors of similar character be sent to Owerri.

The question of dispensary: It is not possible for one Dispenser to attend out-patients ranging from four to six hundred every morning. Some out-patients travel from five to seven miles to the Dispensary and they will be there for about eight to ten hours waiting for their turn and sometimes they are not even attended that day. I hope the Government will consider this and detail more Dispensers to work in Owerri Division so that the work will be eased for the present poor Dispensers who are working under pressure. We want another maternity and operation theatre. The progress that is being made at present is not yet to our expectation.

[CHIEF NJEMANZE]

I have to appeal to the Minister of Education that in order to avoid suspicion, corruption and favouritism, when teachers are to be examined for the U.P.E. schools, where there is a Secondary School and there is a Principal in that school, the examination should be conducted by the Principal of that school. The examination of U.P.E. teachers for employment should be centralised and not to be conducted by the so-called Secretary/Treasurer or the Chairman of a Council. There is a reason why I am saying this. I am not here to accuse anybody, but I have to seize the opportunity given me to make the point and I am sure the Minister will take some steps.

I do not think our ex-Premier could have made a better choice in the appointment of the present Premier and we pray that God may spare his life. I am happy that since the opening of this hon. House I have observed that, looking at the Government side, none of the Ministers who had entered here had done so without a smile. That is an indication of happiness and it makes us Chiefs to be happy as well. When the Ministers are happy, we too are happy. I appeal to them to always rally round the present Premier and work hand in hand with him. We do not expect any more Judases in the Government and I can assure the Premier and his able Ministers that the Chiefs of this Region, whether they are Members of this hon. House or not, shall ever be ready to support them when they are right. We will give them full support as we have given to our ex-Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. We do not expect any more stabbing at the back. Rather than stab themselves, let them forge ahead and fight a good fight for the liberation of the Federation of Nigeria. I support this Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Most Gracious Speech from the Throne.

**Chief Francis O. Joseph Allagoa** (The Amanyanabo of Nembe): I rise with humility and pleasure to support the Motion. Honour should be given to whom honour is due. I am personally indebted to His Excellency. It is true that Nembe is one of the ancient cities, but it has never fallen to our lot, for many, many years, for a Governor, be he the Governor of the East, the Governor-General or any other Governor, to travel to Nembe area. It is not our fault; it is due to the position of the place. But I was fortunate in

my time that when His Excellency visited Brass Division he called at Nembe. Every child, every man, every woman, all Chiefs, elders, all turned out to give him a very good and pleasant welcome. He too was smiling all the time. Women were going from corner to corner, dancing and jubilating. And when it came to my time to speak I told him that I congratulated him because, although we had known many Governors whom we met at Brass and later on at Yenagoa, we had never had the pleasure of receiving a Governor in Nembe. He was the first Governor to visit Nembe and we shall never forget it.

The Speech in itself is an excellent one. I have heard many speeches, all in their own styles, but I was highly impressed when the Speech from the Throne was read here in my presence. Therefore I align myself with the previous speakers, especially the last speaker, in praising the able manner in which that Speech was delivered. I align myself also with him when he mentioned our dear son, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. He came to Nigeria to show the light. He did show the light and I am glad to see that Nigeria followed the light. All that we gain today, all that we are enjoying today, are due to him. He had a tedious time in America and had many obstacles but he bore all for the love of his country and came and showed the light. I align myself, therefore, with the last speaker, in saying that wherever he is and wherever he goes God will guide, guard, preserve and prosper him.

We were afraid that if he left the Region we may not get a capable successor. But God heard our prayers, and brought us a man who is God-fearing. We pray that God will guide him. I will refer to one or two instances where Nembe should be remembered.

*The Ministry of Agriculture.*—The Ministers in charge of Agriculture, both the present and the past, have done very good work in our area. We used to spend thousands and thousands of pounds to improve our farm. Now if you come to Oloibiri area the whole place has been transformed with machinery; and our people who were apt to be lazy are now doing good work. But we still need more of that, and if we leave people to do their work with their hands without machinery, we cannot achieve such results as if machinery were available. I should like the Minister of Agriculture to remember this and apply the same method to fishing also—which is the principal occupation

of the people—by introducing trawl-net fishing and establishing fishing stations in the Province to educate the people in scientific methods of fishing in order to enhance the catch and improve their standard of living.

Now I will speak on the Ministry of Health. The previous Minister did well, and the present one has done very very well. I am sorry he is not here. Nembe is very poor with regard to health matters. We were promised a laboratory. If each District Council area will be provided with hospital it will be a very welcome thing. We have only a dispenser with an assistant. The maternity established in Nembe should be supplied with a doctor. I say this because although there is a doctor at Yenagoa and one at Degema, the distance from Nembe to Degema is very great. And if there is an emergency case, for instance, a lady under labour or a child to be taken to the Hospital, before the person travels by canoe to reach a doctor, what happens is that the woman or the child dies, because the distance is very great. Government should have done a very good work if Government considered Nembe and gave us a doctor.

Now turning to the Ministry of Justice, we hear throughout the whole area that Customary Courts have been established. We also hear that the Minister in charge of Customary Courts is to pay a visit to our area. We have been waiting all along without seeing him. We know he has been very busy, but we say it is high time he came out to establish these Customary Courts. With regard to those Customary Courts, I wish to say that some clerks that have been employed to keep records have very poor education. They can not write good sentences. Therefore clerks or registrars should be properly trained so as to be able to record matters well.

Now, talking about water, our people have been asking for water. We have only salt water but it is not good for drinking. I was trained and brought up in healthy areas. The well water in my area is filthy. Imagine the condition of people without water! I want the supply of good well water in Nembe to be given first consideration. I am saying this because in the House of Assembly there is nobody to represent us. For myself, during scarcity of water, the U.A.C. generally supplied me with water. But the other people were buying water; some go to Ouba, a fresh water

stream five miles away in the north of Nembe to get water. I therefore pray Government to provide pipe-borne water for Nembe from the said Ouba Stream. In fact, we have no amenities at all.

With regard to the Ministry of Town Planning, the Minister of Town Planning is doing excellent work in the Region. I have lived in Port Harcourt for several years and I enjoyed it. I expect similar development in my area; and when I approached the Minister and told him, he replied that there was no money. I am sorry he is not here—Oh, he is here! I am anxious that friends who enjoy good things should come down to my area. In fact they will be handicapped because of lack of transport. But there is now the possibility of a road to link Nembe with the Ahoada-Yenagoa Road. I have seen the track myself and have even worked there with my own hands to show the people that we really need the road. When I was coming from Port Harcourt to Enugu I saw that places like Nenwe and Nokpanta have been developed.

My gratitude to this Government is fathomless. But I want the Government to come and help us in Nembe. If this road is connected with Oloibiri, I am sure there will be a lot of trade; every facility will be supplied.

I owe gratitude to the hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe and to all his able Ministers and to all the Chiefs, through whose efforts it has been possible to establish the House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region. I know each of us is anxious to see that this House of Chiefs is a success. As I said on one occasion, wisdom has come to the East, and, thanks to God, we have got an experienced President. We shall follow his footsteps and we shall help him in the best way we can. I want us to take the business of this House as our personal business and make it a success. We should do the best we can to show that really, we are the people ruling this Region. When we come here, we should forget our differences and regard ourselves as brothers and not as enemies, so that we can prove to the outside world that wisdom has come to the Eastern Region.

Mr President, I will not keep you longer; I support the Motion.

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo** (Special Member): As you said yesterday that this House is too young to pay attention to the Standing Orders, I hope I will not be out of Order if I pay my

[MRS EKPO]

respect and gratitude to the Government of the Eastern Region for the announcement I heard over the wireless last night: that some of our Chiefs have been raised to Ministerial status. We are very happy indeed.

Coming to the Speech from the Throne, before I say anything else, I have to pay my greatest respect to our great son of Africa who is Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, who is now the President of the Senate. When the news of the last Federal elections came out, and when the names of the Members of the Federal Cabinet were announced, some of our women were weeping. I told them: "Look, you women do not weep; one fine day the stone that the builder rejected, the same shall soon become the pillar of the House". It is his belief that whatever he is doing, wherever he is, he will always remember that human beings come from the womb of women, and that without women in any part of the world, things will not be smooth-sailing. He has thought it fit to place two women in this House of Chiefs to represent the interests of the other women, and, so, our gratuities go to him.

I want also to pay gratitude to our new Premier, Dr the hon. Okpara because when this hon. Gentleman started politics, some of these people who are now reaping where they did not sow and who will not allow those who sowed to reap were afraid to allow themselves to be seen talking to an N.C.N.C. Member. That was as far back as in 1946. Some of the professionals with the doctor's stethoscopes and the lawyers with their wigs and gowns, were all hiding when this professional, Dr Okpara, came out. He was in 1951, the Treasurer of the Eastern Working Committee of the N.C.N.C. That meeting was held in my residence at 162/164 Azikiwe Road, Aba. He has now been appointed and he is reaping where he sowed. He has been tested and today he has assumed the power of the political "shock-proof". So we the women of this Region will extend to Dr Okpara the same respect and the same co-operation we showed to our former Premier, Dr Azikiwe.

Few words to our outgoing Governor: He has seen that there is a difference between a "white government" and a "black government". With his twenty years experience in Nigeria, or in Eastern Nigeria for that

matter, he will now go home and tell his predecessors that our money which, they were using to build mighty sky-scrapers in their country, is now, since 1951 when the present Government came into our hands, being used to develop the whole of the Eastern Region.

If you pass through Umuahia to Enugu, you will feel that this Government is really working. What were the other Governors doing? Look at the hospitals being opened everywhere. Our money is being used well, and, so, when we are talking about loans, let us get as much loans as possible from Britain; it is our money. We wish the Governor safe journey. He has passed through the "front door" as an hon. Chief said; he did not pass through the "back door" as the former Governor did.

I want also to pay my greatest respect to our Provincial Commissioners. When all our women during the last Federal elections toured this Region with me for three months, these Provincial Commissioners were very hard-working. Some of them toured with us; they did all they could to protect our interests. They took us where we did not know; they took all of us round and we really enjoyed our trip. This is from the horse's mouth; there is no flattering about it. If I had found anyone of them lacking, I would have come here and would have told you who did not do his work well. I am very grateful to the Provincial Commissioners. When we went to some of these places, some of the men and women brought their complaints to us and we always directed them to go to the Commissioners and that the Commissioners would take their cases up. By that way we helped the Government.

I have a few remarks to make on the Ministry of Education. What so many of us are complaining in the Ministry of Education is that the education of our youth is one hundred per cent backward these days. In this country if you check on the people who passed Standard Six in the olden days you will find that they are better and more educated than people who have passed the School Certificate examination today; or put the other way round, if you check on the people who passed Standard VI today they will be equal to people who passed Standard I in the early stages of our education.



This is because the teachers we have today are lazy. They are not satisfied with the salary given them. They keep on filling football coupons in the school and will not pay attention to their school children.

The Minister of Education should advise his Supervisors of Schools to take note of this. If the teachers are not prepared to remain in the schools, let them come out and play politics because they have been doing this in the schools. These are the things which contribute to failure in our education. I was a teacher before I got married and I know how I treated my school children. I am suggesting to the Minister of Education that these things should be improved. Our scheme of work in the Education Department should be revised and our moral and religious instructions and Hygiene should also be revised so that this will help us in independent Nigeria. School children these days do not know anything about moral instruction. Children outside the school are much better than the ones we have at school.

I have some advice for the Ministry of Town Planning. The Minister of Town Planning has gone overseas and seen far. He should consider that with the rapid expansion of the townships now and the rapid growth of our population, it will be good, when planning towns and villages, to remember to leave open spaces and parks where people could relax, because all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. There should be open spaces and parks with flowers to attract our oversea visitors. The Minister of Town Planning should take note of this.

I now come to the Ministry of Health. I am very happy for all that this Ministry has been able to do. I want to remark that we badly lack doctors in the Region now. I would suggest that our young girls and boys should be given scholarships to go and study medicine so that we should have enough doctors in the future. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Health to some of the quarters built for nurses. The quarters where our nurses are staying are some sort of apology. Grant should be given for the building of more and decent quarters for these nurses because when somebody who is looking after a patient is not clean the patient has slight chances of recovery.

I want to remind him of the position of our native doctors. Research should be made to see what we can get out of our native medicines. I suggest that scholarships should be granted to some of our native doctors to go overseas and put their knowledge in a modern way. Some of these people are very old and may soon die away; so that the earlier we make an attempt to get something out of their knowledge the better. For instance, you find people removing their relatives suffering from fractures from hospitals to these native doctors who put the bones right in no time.

I have read through the Speech from the Throne and regret to note that no mention was made about cassava which is the staple food of the people of this country. It is well known that some of us cannot do without this important foodstuff. This is the work of the Ministry of Agriculture. This Ministry should make all efforts to see that the production of garri is increased so that everybody can afford to buy sufficient garri for consumption. Cassava should be given considerable thought and ways and means of improving its cultivation should be made. It is my earnest hope that this should be done so that our poor people will be able to buy garri at about fifty cups for a shilling.

I now turn to the Ministry of Information. As you all know, this is an important Ministry, because those of us who have travelled outside Nigeria will have experienced the sort of harm done to us by the Missionaries. They have painted us black. If we look into overseas papers, it will be seen that they give publicity to our women in the bush who do not cover their nakedness. These overseas reporters and photographers will always go right into the interior, like Kafanchan and take pictures of all those natives and when you happen to go overseas you will be looked at with disregard, mostly tending to suggest that you are not fit to enter any hotel. If you do, they will all turn to look at you to see how—monkeys they say—handle spoons and forks. Some of them who are old would even come to you and ask you “when did you start to use spoons and forks?” It is indeed very necessary that the Minister of Information should visit schools and colleges and publish our true life and send copies overseas so that they may know us well.

Before I left Washington D.C. on December 15, 1959, I went into the Nigeria House

[MRS EKPO]

in Washington. I collected all our books relating to Nigeria and paid extra for them because my journey was by air. Let me tell you what happened. It was really wonderful! From there, I distributed all the papers to places like Las Palmas, Puerto Rico, etc., for them to know the true position about our country. From experience, I am entirely convinced that we should not depend upon the *Eastern Outlook* as the only medium of giving publicity to this Region. This our newspaper the *Eastern Outlook* does not appear to be circulated beyond Agbani and Milliken Hill. I have never seen it in my area, let alone Calabar where the C.O.R. advocates talk anything they like. Now, we are considering making the *Outlook* a daily newspaper; that should not end there. Let us take the challenge and write and publish broadly. We have two major languages in this Region—Efik and Ibo. Why can we not publish in Ibo and Efik translations, so that every man and woman can read. We should not try to run away from this paper—our Government paper. When these translations are effected, the illiterate man and woman can read them and they will no longer be deceived by these C.O.R. people. In fact, when the deceivers come, they will be able to tell them—in the case of an Efik man—“Mekot Ekim” and the other person—the Ibo man—will speak in his own language. This will, no doubt, beat these deceivers. We in the townships are all right, but what of those in the bush? Their sons and daughters are away in the colleges and, as a result, they have nobody to read these papers for them. They will read for themselves in their own languages, as Government is paying heavily for the sake of encouraging adult education.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Eket Inyang-Udo** (Uyo Province): I rise to support the motion of thanks for the Gracious Speech from the Throne made by His Excellency the Governor. I am so glad that now that His Excellency the Governor is going away—and we are happy to have some of us who are 56 years and 70 years of age, etc.—he should be the last whiteman to be the Governor of this Region.

In 1885, at the Berlin Conference, Britain declared this section of the country as a

Protectorate in that Conference without even consulting the Kings and Chiefs who should sign the treaty.

The next point is that I will confine myself to the efforts of our African personalities—African heroes like Zik the great of Africa. I first met this great African in the United States in 1926. In 1930, when he was in the Lincoln University—after his graduation—he wrote the book *Liberia in World Politics*. It was one of the sensational books in the United States in 1930. I have always thought of him as the man to redeem this country because the late Dr Aggrey of Africa—I know him very well—when he returned to Africa and founded the Achimota College, he was seeking for Knighthood. Our great Zik never sought for Knighthood. When he came back to Africa he put up a Press in Accra and what followed was a case of sedition after which he returned home and had the support of the Easterners and Westerners alike, because then there was no division. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe—we all know—will remember his friends during the dark days especially during the great fight in 1953. Then we had only two lawyers who could give us support. Everybody was running away from us and whenever anybody was asked why he was running he would say “Do you want me to lose my bread?” Today, many of them are happy, though in those days they would always say “Prince Eket, you are a rat; your son is a rat”. I would always reply, “yes, but one day a rat will make something out of you”. I am glad so many of them are now well-dressed in jackets in courts. Dr Azikiwe—this great African—not only showed the light but also with a broom swept the whiteman out of the African Continent. This man educated many people.

When he went to America with the former Minister of Education, a request was sent to the Eastern Region Marketing Board for a loan of £5,000,000 for our University at Nsukka. Do you know what happened? That old Colonial Governor who used to sit here as the President of the House of Assembly asked some Africans to say “no”; but as God would have it, we succeeded in getting the amount. Many Nigerians said “we do not want this University; we do not want this, we do not want that”. Do you know why they said so? These people wanted to be the only people who possessed B.A. and B.Sc. so

that the masses who could not afford to go overseas to get their degrees would not find any place. The United States is built up by great industries. The late Henry IV told his son: "Do not read too much—do not keep on reading books; you know your father only read up to Standard IV; look after my factory—Henry IV's factory".

The time has come for us to try and do something for ourselves instead of waiting on the Federal and Regional Governments to do everything for us. When I was the President of my Native Authority, and saw Europeans at the head, tears nearly came out of my eyes as a nationalist, to see these people ruling us in our own country. I am very happy today for the great improvement that has taken place within so short a period under the leadership of Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe. I am glad that by the grace of God the next Governor of the Eastern Region will be a negro. Dr Azikiwe is a patient person, he is never sad. He works all the time. When I was travelling to Lagos in the same car with Dr Azikiwe, I asked him "Suppose the thing does not go our way?" He replied that his main objective was to get his country free, and that he did not care who would be the Prime Minister. I could remember during the 1957 Constitutional Conference when the Sardauna of Sokoto came out of the Conference Hall and when I met him I said "Salamaleku, why are you sad today?" He said "I am very sad, but for the sake of Zik I would have flown back to Northern Nigeria today". We must not forget Dr Azikiwe for his good and excellent work. After the last election, I telegraphed him "Meet Sardauna and form the Government". I am glad he will be the first Governor-General of the Federation. I am glad too to see Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Leader of the Opposition in the Federal House. We must all be grateful to Zik. He is an international figure.

Turning to the Ministry of Agriculture under which is the Marketing Board, I would point out that since 1954 we have always been told that large amounts have been spent on experiment. We do not want experiment without achieving anything. What we want is production; so I hope that the Minister concerned will note this. We want production and not experiment.

*Ministry of Commerce.*—I would point out that Commerce is important in the world. It is because of commerce that the Germans went to war with Great Britain. The United States even needs commerce. I would urge the Government that we send our boys to industrial universities so that they may be able to handle the production side of our country. Again, we need expert advisers in this country. We cannot do well without consulting experts. Before any agreement is entered into, expert advisers should be consulted. A person does not know everything.

*Ministry of Education.*—The Government will do well in U.P.E. schools if Inspectors are appointed. In my area teachers do what they like. They become councillors, they leave the schools for weeks. By the appointment of School Inspectors I think the situation will greatly improve.

Some of our graduates who return from the United Kingdom do not want to join Missionary Schools or other Voluntary Agency Schools. They choose to become independent men. They manage to erect good buildings and apply to this Ministry to open schools but they are refused on religious basis. Our country is a free country and we have every right to worship wherever we like. We should not bring discrimination in this case.

I have come here to join my brethren to make suggestions to the Government. We should not ill-advise them. Some of these Missionaries are not out to help us. A house worth £5,000 will be put up without their contributing a penny yet they will criticise the efforts of others. I went to one of the Missionaries and asked why they have always levelled criticisms on our efforts. I told him my people did not like the idea. I made it clear to him that I was not accusing him but I warned him that when I flared it would be disastrous.

The Ministry of Finance has taken over the African Continental Bank. It is the fruit of the labour of our great leader; the labour of a man who thinks far and wide. Sometime ago, somebody lied against him to the Colonial Office and pressed for a Commission of Inquiry. This Commission of Inquiry was set up with the ultimate aim of demoralising this our African Bank. But thank God that

[CHIEF INYANG-UDO]

did not happen. I will therefore ask the Minister to employ experienced men in banking business whose business will be to advise him as to the workings of the Bank. The building housing this Bank is very magnificent and I would like to work in it! But go there and see the Assistant Manager. He looks like a shop boy. I would like the Minister to appoint Bank Inspectors. I would also like him to employ good bankers. There are enough of them in America. Get them to teach our men how to handle banking business. The other day, I wanted £3 and issued a cheque for this amount on the A.C.B. But do you know what the Cashier gave me? He gave me £30! I looked at this money wondering how £3 could be taken for £30. I called his attention and I said "It is a fact that I want money but if I took this, I would be a thief". He started to beg me. This type of carelessness should be checked by employing experienced hands on the job.

I am happy that one of the Amanyanabos has been made a Minister without Portfolio.

The Action Group promised the people COR State, Rivers State, etc., but I thank God that they have failed. Chief Awolowo passed through my constituency to Eket and promised the people the construction of new roads, tarred from Uyo to Oron, and other places. Now what have they done? My people came to complain to me. I told them not to worry me. They should go to Awolowo at Ibadan and ask him why he has not fulfilled his promises to them. I would ask the Minister not to follow the devils in the COR State area. The leader of the COR State confusionists comes from Arochuku. He is now fed up with affairs and he wants to run from the Action Group.

I would advise the Minister of Works to overlook all these Uyo Province devils. During the last Federal Elections, Chief the hon. Mrs Margaret Ekpo was attacked as well as Mrs Flora Azikiwe. They were attacked and you know when a man has the heart to attack a woman, that man is very crude—he is a crude African. Even in war, women are never attacked but these cruel people had the courage to attack women. When also the hon. M. I. Okpara, Premier of the Eastern Region, was leading a campaign team in that area, he was attacked by their so-called "Ekpo". Yet the

people always grumble that they do not get anything from Government. I told them that if I were the Government I would give them dried bread with no butter. The Government has actually been very liberal to them. In the olden days, our grandfathers lived together—the Ibos and the Ibibios—there was no civil war, but today, only one man who calls himself the Leader of the Opposition has been ruining the people.

Before I take my seat, let me discuss our Premier Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara. You know Dr Okpara was a Minister in the Imperial Government and he was one of the Ministers who supported us in that year of crisis, 1953, and therefore he is a true nationalist. The "sit-tight" Ministers were there against the will of the people but Dr Okpara insisted on chasing the devil out of the Government. We are now sitting in the House because Dr Okpara had helped to drive the devil out of the House. I always thought that Dr Okpara would be a great man and now he is. I pray God that his Government will run smoothly, and I advise his Ministers to work with him and not to listen to evil advice or gossiping.

Now I turn to the Ministry of Information . . .

**Chief G. Agbasiere** (Orlu Division): Point of Order. Standing Order 36 (1) says: "... no Member shall be entitled to address the House or a Committee of the Whole House for more than thirty minutes on any subject." The hon. Chief has spoken for more than thirty minutes and so many other Members are anxious to speak.

**Chief Inyang-Udo:** No, I have not.

**The President:** The hon. Member has five minutes more.

**Chief Inyang-Udo:** The Ministry of Information needs some polishing. I am not afraid to say that we need a highly educated man to be at the head of our Press so that when the papers are sold to the outside world they will know that we have educated people in the Eastern Region. Anyone with Standard II certificate can be a reporter. But a reporter is different from the man who writes literature. (*Interruption*). A Chief is grumbling because he wants to talk—he has been talking all the time. I will now wind up.

Before I resume my seat, there is one thing I must mention, and that is a warning to the people who take notes in this House; people who are paid but when I make a speech I do not see it recorded in the *Hansard*. Some of our speeches are not recorded. They distort our speeches. If I come tomorrow and observe that my speech is not recorded correctly, I will table a motion to dismiss the reporters.

The other enemies of the Chiefs are the reporters of the *Daily Times*. Whenever the House of Chiefs is sitting they come here and expect us to give them bribe before they record our speeches. We are not going to give them any bribe in this House and I will ask all the Chiefs not to buy this paper. At the Eastern Chiefs Conference I shall also persuade Chiefs to boycott the *Daily Times*.

**Chief Angus Ilonze** (Awka Division): In speaking to this Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Gracious Speech from the Throne, I wish to congratulate the new Premier on his succession to our former Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

I am grateful to this Government for the creation of the two new Ministries of Information and Economic Planning, especially the latter which will eventually raise the standard of living of the people of this Region.

I am thankful to the Government for establishing the House of Chiefs and for setting up a strong Provincial Administration.

I must also thank the Government—and the people of this Region, I am sure, realise their efforts—for their determination to Nigerianise the Public Service. The implementation of the University of Nigeria project, in spite of wicked propaganda, the attraction of foreign investors by the establishment of various industries, are things for which we should be grateful to Government.

The Government has also demonstrated its intention to help people in the field of education.

I also thank the Government for being the first in the Federation of Nigeria to bridge the gap between the higher and lower income groups, for setting up information agencies in

Britain and America and for taking a definite step on the Sahara Atom Test issue.

I must not fail to register my appreciation in connection with the Region's water supply scheme and for various other projects.

I seize this opportunity to express our appreciation for the very kind contributions made by the outgoing Governor of the Region, Sir Robert Stapledon. During his stay in this Region he excelled his predecessor in many things, and he is loved by his colleagues. I consider this very important because many years ago, we found it very difficult to put our men in senior posts but now the Region has progressed considerably in all fields of public undertakings. We have had our Nigerianisation policy gradually implemented and now we have more Nigerians heading various Government Departments. For the unequalled activities of Sir Robert Stapledon and Lady Stapledon, I consider it necessary to stress that they should be invited to attend our Independence Celebrations in October this year. I wish to say that I am expressing the opinion of Members of this hon. House, and the Region as well, in wishing Sir Robert and Lady Stapledon abundant success and happiness wherever they may be. I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Michael Eze** (Awka Division): I am in support of the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Speech from the Throne. I have to congratulate the Executive Council and all the other Ministers, and mostly Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe who paved the way on which we are now passing. I pray that the God of Heaven and Earth may bless them, give them prosperity and endow them with wisdom wherever they go.

I come now to a serious point—the Mgbakwu-Ebenebe bridge. This bridge has been too long unfinished by the Government. The decking of it was completed since three years ago but the embarkment of the bridge has not been touched since then. I consider it a loss to the Government that this bridge has not been completed because no vehicle and indeed nobody can pass through it. So, I beg the Government to look into it and see that the bridge is completed, because we are now looking forward to the Independence Day

[CHIEF EZE]

and that bridge is on an important road. It will be of great use during the Independence celebrations.

My second point concerns the Awka Government School. The Awka Division as a whole has long been requesting that this school be converted into a Secondary School but since then no attention has been paid to it. We still request this Government to take steps to have the school converted to a Secondary School.

My third point is about Customary Court Judges. Some people try to give the impression that these judges practise bribery and corruption. Sometimes this might be true and sometimes it might not. Bribery and corruption are criminal offences for which people are liable to prosecution in court. Nevertheless, I consider that the salary of these judges is too low and I observe that many Court Messengers under the judges are receiving more salaries than the judges themselves. It is never good that a servant should receive more pay than the master. Such a thing is never in order. So I am appealing to this Government to consider the salary of Customary Court Judges. Not all people can say that the judges are trying cases very well. Some will say they are doing well and others will say they are not. Once you have declared some one guilty and sentenced him, he will hate you and the person in whose favour the case has been judged will love you. And that is the case with the judges. Many of us have been attending Courts as Court members and we know what it is. What I mean to say is that a hungry man does not mind what he does when he is badly hungry. So I beg the Government to consider this matter very carefully.

I come now to the question of water supply. I am not at all happy with the way and manner the wells are being constructed. The open well system is another danger to the health of the people. I think that the best way to do it is to make tanks with taps on it instead of this present arrangement. I hope that the Minister of Works will look into this matter.

Many people in my area have made applications for water supply. Among them are the people of Nneuchu, Nnanka and Ekwuluobia. I wish that the Minister concerned will

entertain their applications and see that they have adequate water supply.

Again, it is surprising that a Division like Awka, a famous Division in the Region, has no Minister in this House, while other towns have got Ministers, some two, some three and so on. We are not envying those who have got three or four Ministers but we are claiming our own right. We are due to have a Minister in this House. We do not mind who is appointed but let us have a Minister from Awka Division. The Division as a whole does not like it at all, and I hope that the Government will give serious consideration to the matter.

**Chief Prince E. W. D. Pepple** (The Amanyanabo of Bonny): In support of the Motion of Thanks for the Speech of His Excellency from the Throne, I have to say a few words. First of all, I have to mention that the Governor, Sir Robert and Lady Stapledon came to this Region when we had series of crises off and on. And I have to say that in those days before Sir Robert arrived (that was the time when our honourable leader, Dr Azikiwe had returned from America) the then Governor felt that the best thing for him to do was to use the power which he should not have used. And so there continued to be crises upon crises. But fortunately enough, after he had left we had Sir Robert who stepped in his shoes. I have to say that during his tenure of office he served this Region in a way everybody liked. He served in co-operation with the Government and in a way we all appreciated. And I am to say that it is unfortunate we are missing Sir Robert and Lady Stapledon at this time. We feel that when they get to their new abode they will show that intelligence and experience which they have used in this Region. Furthermore, I have to say that it has been always mentioned in this House (and it is a thing we cannot avoid) that we owe a lot of gratitude to our hon. Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe for initiating this House. You should not feel it is aching to the ears, for I have to say that it is through the experience and the God-fearing attitude which this our God-given leader possesses that we were able to have this House of Chiefs established in the Eastern Region. There is one thing, and that is that somebody can be a leader but may not be a Christian Leader. But this leader, as far

as I can see him, is one who has the fear of God; and in having the fear of God, he has always tried as much as possible to lead us in the path of Christ. With his Ministers, he fought hard whilst people on the Opposition were opposing him, telling people that there was nothing like chieftaincy institution in this Region. Our leader told them it is a thing which has been in history and a thing which everybody knows. He carried on with his Ministers and today we stand to reap the benefit of their efforts.

**The President:** The Amanyanabo has got fifteen minutes to his credit. Now sitting is suspended for recess for thirty minutes.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Chief Pepple:** I owe my gratitude to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. I quite remember when we received the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, Dr Azikiwe saw the eyes of the Opposition Members how they were looking at us when they felt that there were no Chiefs in the Eastern Region. We were happy and are still happy to find that we have a constituted body in this House which has the sympathy of the Chiefs at heart and this body fought to bring the position of Chiefs in this Region to the same pattern as in the other Regions.

I have to say also that the Speech from the Throne is a masterpiece. I have to congratulate the Governor for producing such a specimen of work. I am happy of the fact that we have an able leader as Premier in the person of Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara; his Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries are all able men.

May I then turn to the Ministry of Agriculture. Of late the Ministry has devoted most of the time and resources to the mainland. It is unfortunate that not much work has been done in the Rivers area. I have to press that it is essential that such amenities as have been extended to the mainland should also be extended to the Rivers area. You know that we are entirely cut off from the rest of the Region and it is important that the Minister of Agriculture should make time to tour

extensively the Rivers area. We hear that there is a type of rice which could resist the salt water and grow in the Rivers area. We shall be very grateful if this type of seedling is planted in our area; this will not only help in developing the area, but also will be a sort of help to our people who are without work and are looking for jobs. This is very important and I think the Minister should try to undertake this work. It is the policy of this Government to go to the people always and tell them how the Government is being run and also to find out their needs. So I am asking the Minister to try and have time to tour the Rivers so that he may see things for himself. He should not only send his representatives who report to him and then be satisfied; he should try to come himself. This Government is a government which is prepared to hear and help the people.

I thank the Minister of Agriculture for the Coconut Estate in Bonny. This is more or less the only Estate situated in the Rivers area; it covers about 1,200 acres of land and within a short time these coconut trees will start yielding fruits.

I am glad to see that the Minister of Agriculture has already undertaken to instal a processing mill in Bonny. This Mill is expected to be fed by the various towns and villages in Bonny area; but, the difficulty there is how to get these villages and towns to the Estate. There are no roads and therefore no means to get to the Estate. So, I am asking the Minister of Agriculture to do something about this; if possible, the Minister of Agriculture should see the Minister of Works to examine whether there is anything that can be done about it in the way of constructing good roads to connect the Mill with the towns and villages to feed the Mill. I want to say as I said before, that this is the only estate or the only development as far as agriculture is concerned in the Rivers area.

I now turn to the Ministry of Education. This is the Ministry on which this Region is spending much money and much attention has been paid to it. I quite remember sometime ago when a delegation was sent from my home to see the Minister of Education.

I know very well that no Minister can make an irresponsible statement and I am very sure

[CHIEF PEPPLÉ]

that the statement made by the Minister that Government Schools in the Region would be converted into secondary schools was made in good faith and that it would be implemented. So, Sir, all the time I have been trying to make contacts with the Minister by sending delegations to find out whether we are going to have these Government Schools converted into secondary schools. The Minister explained it in a way I was able to understand. He believed that it would be most unnecessary to have about six or eight graduates in a secondary school and at the end of the year turn out few Cambridge holders and I agreed with him on that point. I agreed with him that this would be most expensive and I agreed with him also that we can safely distribute these graduates to about eight or more schools and mix them up with some Higher Elementary teachers. At the end of the year, instead of turning out thirty Cambridge holders we can turn out thirty times eight and so this is a sort of improvement. My only question is: when are these things to be done? When are these Government schools to be converted? In the whole of the Rivers Area there is no Government secondary school. In fact, I must say that this Government is so far the best Government in the country and I say this emphatically without fear or favour. The fact is that some of us in the Rivers Area feel that there is Ibo domination and certain individuals who are disgruntled feel that the best thing to be done to make good their own ways is to use this stunt. My view is that people who feel that they should make their fellow men their enemies should be feared. It is my duty to call the attention of the Government to this project of converting Government Schools into secondary schools. It is my conviction that if you do not like me you should not expect anything from me. It has always been said that Chiefs should not play politics. I do not know what that means. Naturally, if Chiefs should not play politics I do not know why we should be here in this House. It is politics we are talking in this House.

I am now saying it emphatically that in my area there are some people who are tired with life and fed up with those who come to deceive the people by promising them that tax would be reduced to 12s each year but time tests everything. These people also deceive my people with this Ibo domination stunt for-

getting that these Ibo people have been there in those days when there was slavery. Their population has been the same, there has been no change but the fact is that these people were not as civilised as we were in those days in the Rivers area and so they could not use their initiative to get anything they wanted. Today the reverse is the case. These Ibo people have increased in population and also they now have better education. I do not agree with the hon. Member who has just spoken. He said that some Ministers, about two or three of them come from the same area. This is because you have the right people in that area; the right people who can man these Ministries. My point is that if Government finds it necessary to get two people who are capable from the same area it would be essential that they man the Ministries. The Government is the mother of the people and what we need is what will make this Government work well.

I would like to say something about the Ministry of Health. I would like to extend my congratulation to that Ministry in that during the election campaigns they promised that they would give each District Council area a rural Health Centre. Already money has been allocated and given out for the building of new rural Health Centres. I have to thank the Minister for that.

On the Ministry of Local Government, I would like to say that much was said about that Ministry when we debated the Local Government Bill. I was surprised to hear some of the things which were said about Secretary/Treasurers and certain irregularities in the Councils. We do not experience these things in my area. It may be that we are poor in the Rivers area and therefore we are very careful with what we have to do with every penny. As far as Local Government Councils are concerned there is nothing like bribery or corruption in my area. Nothing has been done in our Councils without the approval of the Minister of Local Government whenever his approval is necessary.

With these few remarks, I have to extend through you, Mr President, my thanks to the Governor, the Premier and the Ministers of this Region.

I support the Motion.

**Chief J. E. Ikeogu** (Bende Division): I rise to support the Motion for an Address of



thanks to His Excellency for the Speech from the Throne. I have first of all to thank the Government for the Budget they have so ably presented to this House. I have also to extend my thanks and sincerity of the people of this Region to our outgoing Governor. At first people used to say that this is a trouble-making Region but I would say that this is not true. We do not make trouble. We only make trouble when people refuse to reason with us. The outgoing Governor came to this Region as a man who understood the feelings of the people and he is now going with a joyous heart. We wish him well.

I also have to thank the Government for making arrangements for certain distinguished visitors to come to this Region. We had the British Prime Minister, Mr Harold Macmillan and the Governor-General of the Spanish Guinea. The visit of the Governor-General of Spanish Guinea had made it possible for him to repeal certain laws and thereby made our boys to enjoy life more abundantly in that Island and also made it possible for him to see that the Africans here in Nigeria are capable of ruling themselves.

Agriculture is the live-wire of this Region and I believe the best the Government will do is to try to develop anywhere they see that is fertile land, no matter who owns it, for the betterment of the people. In Bende Division we have fertile land and we know that a good percentage of the yield of cocoa in this Region comes from that place. There is a road in that area that cost the Marketing Board nearly £16,000 to construct but which is now left without care with the result that no benefit is derived now. The Ikwano District Council in charge has asked for money for that road to be maintained but the application was turned down. We know our Government have done their best and have much to do, but where there is something that will bring us revenue, it will be better to have it done.

The next and important point is that if you go through the roll of tax-payers in this Region, you will see that most of the people are in Schedule One while few are in Schedule Two, because of tax evasion. I am appealing to the Minister of Finance to have a look into it and I believe this idea of evading tax passes through the junior officers of the Board of Internal Revenue. We cannot get everything we want in this House as long as our revenue is not

gathered. There is no other way Government can make money to foot all the various bills except from our tax and when people do evade paying this tax, I am afraid there is nothing Government can do to meet all our demands.

I now come to the question of approval of the Estimates of Local Government Councils. The Administrative Officers in this Region make it absolutely impossible for Councils to get their estimates passed because by the time the estimates are sent to Enugu they might have already turned it down. The people in the rural area believe in what the Councils can do for them but when these Councils cannot get their estimates approved, perhaps due to the recommendations of the Administrative Officers, it is definitely impossible for things to be done. Now that Africans have taken up most of these administrative problems, they may well be in the know to realise that these things are very necessary. We in the Bende Division have learnt self-help from the beginning and we are doing it. I believe that with a little assistance, particularly in roads, we will make this Region a happy place.

Furthermore, I want to emphasise to hon. Members that we should bear in mind that now that the House of Chiefs is established, it depends upon us to go to our people and mobilise all forces and try to do certain things that will help the Government and the Region. Every Member should go back to his village and do everything he can to help this Government and the best way we can do this is by telling them what are the right things to be done and the right time to do them. I also want to ask the Government, according to the last hon. speaker, to think of the so-called "Minority Area"—the C.O.R. State. Many of us who are Ibos live there and we help to develop the area. We have our wealth there. Afterwards, we are all Nigerians and anybody who says that he does not come from Nigeria, I wonder seriously where he belongs to. Therefore, I believe that Government shall try to forget what has gone wrong and work as one Nigeria and have sympathy for the minority area.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Silas Okaa Ezenwa** (Onitsha Division): I rise to support the Motion that a humble Address of Thanks be sent to His Excellency the Governor for his Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I will take this

[CHIEF EZENWA]

opportunity to thank the former Premier Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe for all his efforts in the liberation of mankind. My thanks go also to the new Premier and his Ministers for their efforts in bringing the Eastern Region to its present standard. Before I continue with my speech I will like the Government to look into how Chiefs in this hon. House are addressed because in Yoruba and Hausa areas, Chiefs are addressed by their titles and not by their names. In this House Chiefs are called "Chief Michael . . . , forgetting that in, say, Ibo land, we have Obis, Ezes and Igwes; in Calabar area we have the Obong, etc., and in Rivers area the Amanyanabos. I wonder why these titles are always forgotten. In my own town, for example, my fore-fathers were called "Obi". It was in 1904 when Col. Moore-House visited my home town that Obieze Nwosu was recognised as a Paramount Chief. It was from that time that the word "Chief" was used in my area. Formerly we were addressed as "Obi". The way we address Chiefs here is not good enough and does not compare favourably with the way Chiefs are addressed in the other Regions. I wish the Government could look into this so that our Chiefs are called by their titles before their names follow.

Furthermore as regards "staff of office", I think it is very important that the Government should know that everyone of us would like to have "staff of office", and it is good that they provide for everybody, both First-class and Second-class Chiefs in this Region and if possible to provide them with Orderlies so that they can send them anywhere to help in the discharge of some of their duties. This will go a long way to dignify, and make people respect them. With regard to the term of office of Chiefs, I would wish the Government to look into it again. I understand that the term is five years. We do not want to claim everlasting membership of this House of Chiefs, but we want to see that we are allowed to have our own share. We have a saying in Ibo that "The first bird drinks the best water". I think the Government should look into this matter so that during the forthcoming Provincial Election not every house will be running up and down to campaign.

Turning to the Ministry of Works, the drainage system of Onitsha township is now overdue for effective reconstruction because in Fegge layout every year thousands of goods

and property are destroyed by the flood. Every year more than twenty houses are pulled down by the flood. Traders have been crying because of this every year but up till now, nothing has been done. If Government will look into this I know the traders will be very grateful.

Turning to the Ministry of Health, I am happy that a Health Centre has been built in my area but the system of supply of drugs at the dispensary does not exempt school children from payment. I would like the Government to look into this and assist to see that these school children are exempted from payments. In my area school children pay fees for their treatment. I should be grateful if Government would help us in this respect.

Now, speaking on water supply . . .

**The President:** Order! Order! I have noticed that all hon. Members wish to speak. We have got to conclude speeches today for hon. Ministers to reply tomorrow so that we may take another item on the Order of the Day. Therefore, by your wish and permission, I have shortened the time for speeches from 30 minutes to 15 minutes so that all those who wish to speak may have time to do so.

**Chief Ezenwa:** Turning to Education, I am happy that our school children have been given free primary education up to Standard II. But one thing that is giving us trouble in Onitsha Division is Secondary School. We turn out thousands of school boys and girls every year from Standard Six but they wander about because they have no secondary schools to enter. If the Government will consider and allow more secondary schools to be opened in Onitsha Division so that these people who are wandering about will have places to further their studies, the people will be very grateful. Their wandering about in the town compels them to join band of thieves.

Finally, I would like the Government to look into the establishment of industries with a view to increasing the material wealth of the Region and also absorbing the numerous school leavers turned out by our schools every year. I also pray that Government should give loans to Industrialists and traders if possible because they help to employ all these standard six boys and girls in the Region.

With this few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief R. J. Onyeneho** (Okigwi Division): I am very happy I am now allowed to speak but before I speak, I would like the word 'Noes' which is inscribed on this side of the House to be veiled when we sit in this House so that the notion that the people here are for the 'Noes' may be avoided.

I am supporting the Motion. We are all praising the Speech from the Throne. It is the business of the Executive Council of the Eastern Region. The Speech was prepared by cool brains. If the brains had been worried, the Speech would not have been as good as it is. That is why many a time you hear that our Government is planless. It is because we worry the Cabinet. They think of how to avoid displeasing us; they have a case with the Governor, they have a case with the Action Group and they have several other matters to attend. For that reason, they have no time to plan their business well. Now that nobody worries them, now that they can sit down with a good Governor, they have been able to lay out a good plan for the Eastern Region. I am very happy indeed that the Government has been good enough to appoint the First-class Chiefs, the Special Members, and the Second-class Chiefs. It is our duty now to educate our people to see that they do not put our Government into trouble again. Chiefs who have some hon. Members in the Opposition should please advise them to criticise the Government constructively and not to cause trouble for if we have people who are causing trouble to Government, we will not listen to them when we come to this House.

The Speech from the Throne is explicit enough and most inspiring. It has inspired me to go on with the points I am going to raise under the Legislature, Provincial Assemblies and Ministries. Under the Legislature, we are happy the House of Chiefs has been created. It is now certain that Government knows the people and whatever they have for these people should now be unveiled. It is one thing to create House of Chiefs and leave it in skeleton. Some people are nominal Chiefs in this House. When a Chief is not dignified, he is not a Chief, whatever provisions in law may be made. A Chief must be a big man. He will

go to his House and say "I am a Chief". What kind of Chief is he when he has nothing? I am saying that as many Second-class Chiefs as are outside who are not in the Eastern House of Chiefs be paid £400 annually as remuneration. (*Hon. Members: Bad talk*). It should be bad to some people who may always be in this House. When the Colonial Government was in power, Chiefs were appointed according to villages. The Colonial Government was able to supply Staffs and Caps to all these Chiefs. I wonder why my own Government, the Government of the people by the people and for the people, should not be able to supply Staffs of Office and Caps to the Chiefs. I am saying that if the Government is not able to give these things let them refer the matter back to the District Councils or to the people who appointed us as Chiefs because, it is not good for us to go without anything to dignify us as Chiefs.

I am still talking on the Legislature. I know my good Ministers know what it is to be elected into the House. At least for one to be elected into the House for only 21 months, that is, one year and 9 months, is very disgraceful indeed. I am saying that when time comes, my good Government should look into the matter to see that these 21 months or two years during which we tasted the House of Chiefs provided us great joy. The Chiefs, on behalf of Government, are responsible for peace and orderliness within their respective local communities. For them to discharge their duty efficiently they need every encouragement.

I come up again to Provincial Assemblies. I am waiting to hear Government announce that all the recognised Chiefs are Members of the Provincial Assemblies in their respective Provinces. I have to refer you to the Report of the Resumed Nigerian Constitutional Conference held in London in September and October, 1958 section 55 which reads *inter alia*:

"The Conference took note that the Government of the Eastern Region proposed to establish a Provincial Assembly, comprising representatives of Local Council areas and recognised Chiefs, as a deliberative and consultative body in each Province of the Eastern Region. Members of the House of Chiefs and House of Assembly from the province should be *ex officio* members of the Assembly".

[CHIEF ONYENEHO]

I am therefore looking forward to Government announcement that recognised chiefs will be Members of the Provincial Assemblies.

**The President:** Five minutes more.

**Chief Onyeneho:** You want to rush me up; I am an unlucky man!

**The President:** It is not the wish of the President but that of the House.

**Chief Onyeneho:** *The Ministry of Agriculture:* The Minister might be here. There is something about this inoculation against rabies which is rampant in the Region. Dogs are domestic animals. Would it not be possible for Government to devise a means or hold a meeting with the Medical Authorities to determine what treatment will be given to dogs against rabies rather than killing all the dogs we have in the Region because of rabies? In this connection, may I suggest to the Government to look into it and see what better safeguards against rabies could be made.

*Fishing:* I want to point out something about Okigwi fishery. We must learn to forget "white man's business". This business is being delayed for too long. The Manager of Okigwi National Grammar School has written to suggest that we should supply fresh fish to the students in the school, but I do not know when they are finishing that work. Please let the "white man's business" be scrapped and the people think fast and do the work in time.

*The Ministry of Education:* Scholarships should be given on District Council bases. We want this to be clarified so that the scholarships may be allocated in the districts according to villages instead of giving them to one particular area in the district.

*Standard VI Examinations:* I discover now that there is something sinister somewhere in the Region. I know we are very loose with Standard VI question and answer papers and even the invigilation. Government must do

something about it. When something is a Government concern, care should be taken about it. Instead of giving out our question papers to the Voluntary Agencies or some other people to deliver, let us give them to District Officers to pass round to the schools on the morning of examinations and let the headmasters not invigilate the schools in which they teach. Let them go to other schools to invigilate; if possible, a school of another denomination, so that we may know the boys who are doing well. Not when you have left your children to wander about while you are at council meetings, when the time of examination comes you begin to buy question papers in order to make your children pass, scoring fifty per cent, and then claim to have done very well, whereas in fact you have done very badly.

**The President:** Will the hon. Chief, please, wind up.

**Chief Onyeneho:** There is one thing I would like to say about Chiefs—that is under the Ministry of Local Government. If you will not allow me to say more, let me say this. There is a provision I saw in the Local Government Law that the Minister will appoint the President of any Council. I wish that this may be true. I do not want the Minister to ask the Councils to recommend their Presidents. Rather let the Chief of the Council recommend the President to the Minister. If you want the Council to recommend the President, believe me, for fear of votes, the Presidents are not going to do what they are expected to do in the Councils.

The last thing I want to say is about the Ministry of Works. I saw some yellow boards at the terminus of some roads to be taken over by Government. I have two roads like that in mind. One is Umuahia-Emekuku-Owerri and the other is Umuna-Okigwi-Owerri. These roads are overdue for tarring. The Eastern Region Government has not tarred any road in Okigwi Division. Please remember us as a Division to give us one tarred road because we are the fifth in this Region as far as population is concerned.

With these remarks, I beg to support.

**Chief Akpabio Udo Ukpá** (Eket Division): I thank you for the time granted me. It affords me an immeasurable pleasure to speak on the Motion made by the Parliamentary Secretary, Premier's Office, that this Upper House of the Eastern Region expresses Loyal and dutiful Thanks to His Excellency for His Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses of the Eastern Legislature.

To begin with, I have to take this opportunity to render my sincere thanks to the Government of the Eastern Region for all its projects of development all over the Region, amenities and performances throughout the Region. Referring to the statement made by Chief the hon. Eket Inyang-Udo, First-class Chief for Uyo, it is a pleasure to listen to Members speak. You will observe that the people of Ibibio and Annang have been living in harmony with the Ibos right from ancient times. No record of civil war can correctly be quoted among the Ibos, Annangs and the Ibibios. But the Leader of the Opposition and few Members of the Lower House of the Legislature of this Region, for personal benefits, are trying to break the link which has been so created by God. Life is inter-dependent. We must therefore stand firm on this matter of national relationship. The people from the area of the Leader of the Opposition are benefiting from the various fields of development which the Government is introducing but the people of Ibibio and Annang are suffering as a result of the activities of the Leader of the Opposition. What is the position in Aro today? Is there any Action Group in Aro? No, but the Leader of the Opposition is from there.

It is quite beyond all doubts that the year, 1960, is a year that draws a line of demarcation in the history of the Federation of Nigeria—the year that marks the end of one era and the beginning of another. This country in general and the Eastern Region in particular, owes an immense gratitude to our saviour, redeemer, the National President of the N.C.N.C., and first President of the Nigerian Senate, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, for all his activities and struggles to make our country, Nigeria, to take its stand among other great countries of the world politically, socially, economically and so on.

We hope and believe that our new Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, our faithful statesman of the first order, and his well-formed Cabinet, will bring happiness to this Region and make the Region continue to top the other Regions in the Federation as has been the case in the past. Long live the N.C.N.C. Government. As sagacious leaders the Ministers have fought gallantly for the continued interest and stability of this Region and the country at large. We cannot recompense them for all these but with clean and sincere frame of mind, believing that they lead us along right lines, I say to them "thank you" and wish them God's guidance and blessing in discharging the onerous task lying ahead of them.

The inception of Provincial Administration brings the Government from the Headquarters nearer to the people. We therefore suggest to the Government that the Provincial Assembly Secretariats and halls should be put up at no distant date in order to allow the Members to get on to work. With our prudent Commissioner, hon H. U. Akpabio, we hope that Uyo Provincial Asssmbly will be one of the leading Assemblies in the Eastern Region. I therefore express my sincere and honest gratitude to the Government for the Provincial set-up.

*The University of Nigeria.*—Here again we have to congratulate our former Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, for creating an indelible record in the history of Nigeria. The Eastern Region of Nigeria takes the lead in building a high institution of learning, the University at Nsukka, unlike any other Region in the Federation of Nigeria. May he live long to enjoy the fruits of his labour.

*The Ministry of Commerce.*—Industries should be extended to all sections of the Region. An application has been made to the Ministry by the neglected area of Oniong-Nung Ndem-Awa District Council. This neglect may be because of the C.O.R. State which at the moment is a dead issue. I submit, with due respect, that the Minister concerned should give due consideration to the application so made.

*The Ministry of Education.*—The activities of the Minister in the field of education require no amplification. Without exaggeration or embarrassment to him, I venture to say that

[CHIEF UKPA]

the growth of U.P.E. schools to full-fledged primary status is a celebrated achievement attributable to this Ministry. Now that the U.P.E. schools have attained full junior primary status, and in view of the fact that in three years' time they will require grade two teachers, I submit, with due respect, that some of the County T.T.C.s that do merit it should be raised to higher elementary status to train these teachers against the senior primary section, because the Voluntary Agencies will not give a hundred per cent support to the County schools.

My Council area is completely cut away by the Qua Iboe River from the rest of Eket Division. An annual grant of £2,500 was allocated to the Oniong-Nung Ndem-Awa District Council. Without any just cause this grant was withdrawn. A petition was put up to the Ministry concerned but up to this hour no reply has been received. Rather there is a rumour that this grant withdrawn from the Oniong-Nung Ndem-Awa District Council has been given to another Council within the Division. I must say that this places the Government and the people of the area in a very difficult position. I will submit, through you, that the Minister concerned should give it due consideration and the grant so given be re-allocated.

I am suggesting that Catering Rest Houses should be built at all Provincial Headquarters. Now that we are going to have Provincial Assemblies, some men will travel long distances and they will normally find it difficult to have where to put their heads.

*The Ministry of Works.*—I am from a difficult area. No road in my District Council area is maintained by the Regional Government. We have 67 miles of roads. I am submitting through you to this House that the Ministry concerned should give consideration to taking over some of the roads from the District Council.

In the ancient Headquarters of Eket all the firms are gone but the ruins are there. There Awolowo had been installed a Chief. Even in England or in history I have never heard of any one case where a stranger had been installed a chief. But our leaders, trying to mislead us, probably, as I said before, for

their personal benefits, have proposed and installed a false chief who would never in the history of this Region do anything for the Eket Division. I am submitting to the Government that it should not show us an unkind attitude because the majority of people in Eket Division, in the past two elections, have turned their backs to it. What of the few? So on behalf of the few who are prepared to move abreast with the Government, consideration should be given in the award of amenities.

With these few words, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Daniel Ekekwetere Onuaguluchi** (Awgu Division): I rise to support the Motion. In doing so, I have to congratulate the Regional Government for the very good work done during the past few years. They have developed many places and provided various social services.

I have to thank the Minister of Works on behalf of my people for the water supply project in Achi area. Achi consists of about twelve villages and an estimated population of 20,000; and the people over there hope to get water in every village. Regarding the Ishikwe-Enugu-Agu Water System, the people of Achi feel it is unfair that only two villages in Achi should have water and request that the Government should consider putting at least one point each in those twelve villages. It will be hard for the Government to collect rates for this water, if these villages are not given water. So I ask the Government to reconsider this water scheme in Achi District. The people of Mbanato in Awgu, Mbanano Odoetiti also have urgent need for water, because they have no pure water. Their water contains guinea worms. I hope the Minister of Works will help to make provision for that clan because anybody who goes to Awgu Division, Odoetiti, Mbanano and Mbanato will find that many people are lying sick suffering from guinea worm, and they cannot work for about six months; therefore they cannot pay tax and so many of them are put to court.

Also I thank the Federal Government for the tarring of Oji-Okigwi-Awgu road.

I beg to stop so far and I support the Motion.

**Chief M. O. Kanu** (Okigwi Division): I rise to thank His Excellency the Governor of the Eastern Region, Sir Stapledon, for his Gracious Speech from the Throne. I also thank the former Premier Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. I also congratulate Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, the present Premier and I wish that he would follow the footsteps of his predecessor for the unity of Nigeria in general and Eastern Region in particular. The Ministers and the Parliamentarians deserve my thanks for their noble deed in making the Eastern Region what it is today. While on this, may I remind the Government that my town—Imenyi—in Okigwi Division lacks many amenities and has never enjoyed their tax money. The Umuahia-Ahaba road, and Ahaba-Abiriba road are very bad. Government has wasted a lot of money to maintain these roads, but work on the roads has not been completed, and the roads are going to be worse when the rain starts. I pray Government to look into this matter and see that the roads are brought up-to-date; otherwise, the money they spent will be for nothing. Another road that leads from Ahaba to Okigwi in my Division is very bad. All the bridges in that area are not good. I can remember last time during the Federal Elections when the Ministers visited that place their cars got damaged. Even the Premier remained there for over two hours. The road is a short one and it needs great attention. Even now when I leave here for my town it will be hard for me to pass through that short cut. So Government should see that they pay attention and repair that short road.

Regarding Postal facilities, in Imenyi we have no post office. The nearest post office is at Uzuakoli and it is a very far distance. We need post office so as to help the tax-payers in that area as many of them are now complaining. Again, we have no hospital. We need at least a Rural Health Centre at Imenyi. The nearest hospital we have is almost about twenty-one miles away: (to Okigwi it is twenty-one miles, then to Umuahia eighteen miles). So we have no hospital at all. Therefore we need at least a Rural Health Centre to enable the poor tax-payers to bring their children for treatment when they are ill.

Okigwi is an old township and it needs electricity, because without electricity I do not

think that development will spread to the rural areas. Government knows that electricity is very important. I remember when I visited India (I remained there for six years) in every corner you find electricity, and that helps in spreading industry in the rural areas.

I join to thank the Minister in charge of chieftaincy for making it possible for us to come together as hon. Chiefs and to have a say in the Government. Indeed this is a clear evidence that the Government abides by democracy. I will ask hon. Members to cooperate with the Government in carrying out its work efficiently. Now we are Chiefs, and I remember the olden days when my father was alive, Government gave him a "staff of office" and now that it has come to our turn I pray Government to see that all the Members have their "staffs of office".

There is a rumour that Chiefs will remain in this House for twenty months. The other speakers have said a lot and I do not want to waste your time by repeating in detail what they have already said. I support them and I am asking Government to look into it. It is not good for the whole House to be dissolved: the House of Assembly is dissolved and the House of Chiefs is dissolved and then, every Dick and Tom will begin to run about looking for shelter. It will be wise for Government to look into this matter and see if it will be possible to dissolve only the House of Assembly and prolong the life of the House of Chiefs. Let the Government give us, at least, five years, or add additional two years to make seven years.

With these remarks, I support the Motion on the Speech from the Throne.

**Chief E. Ashirim-Unosi** (Ahoada Division): I rise to support the Motion. I should like to express my gratitude to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Premier of the Eastern Region, Dr M. I. Okpara, and his Cabinet Ministers for their efforts and contributions in the establishment of the Eastern House of Chiefs. I would particularly like to thank the hon. Minister of State charged with responsibility for Establishments and Chieftaincy for his activities in implementing this policy. The creation of the Eastern House of Chiefs is a necessary complement to the bicameral legislature of the Eastern Region. It is founded on our indigenous

## [CHIEF ASHIRIM-UNOSI]

system of chieftaincy and this fact automatically dismisses the old fable under Colonial Government that there were no chiefs in the Eastern Region. The Eastern Region is fortunate in having leaders of nationalistic spirit devoted to the emancipation of the people. We are happy and proud to have Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara as the successor of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

The Speech from the Throne promises us political freedom as well as economic freedom; in other words a higher standard of living. The Government has granted pay increase to its workers and also to the servants of voluntary agencies. But the question is: how can the masses in the rural areas with the teeming population be assisted in order to give them comfortable standard of living? What has Government done to increase the earning capacity of this teeming population in the rural areas? Our people are farmers and their only means of livelihood is mainly agriculture. The Government must do something to speed up production and the Minister of Commerce must ensure that the farmers get the maximum price for their products; otherwise there will be no hope of raising the standard of living of the people to the level envisaged.

Coming to the Ministry of Finance, I have to congratulate the Minister of Finance for his excellent budget speech which covers all aspects of his portfolio. I have some observations to make and one is on what is known as the "tax drive". I know that was done with the intention of tracting tax and rate evaders; but in carrying out this system there have been abuses. Tax raids are always made on a village without any notice to checking how many have paid and how many have not paid. This is done without notice to the villagers; suddenly, maybe on one morning or so, you will find a tax squad swooping a village and as they get to the entrance to the village some of the villagers might be going out and some coming in. Some traders might be going to the village and all these are arrested on the spot and are asked to produce their receipts, either for tax or for rates. When these men are unable to show their receipts as they are not prepared, they are apprehended, packed into lorries and driven direct to the native courts; whereas there are some of them who have paid their taxes or rates but have got their receipts at

home and they are not allowed to go and get the receipts. Immediately they get to the native courts, they are locked in and they will be screaming to be released from the lock-up. According to the news from some of these courts, these men who have paid their taxes and rates are asked to pay some bail fees before they are released from the lock-up. This sort of thing adds to the hardship of the people who could use this extra money to help themselves in meeting other pressing commitments. I am asking Government to look into it and stop this practice.

I come to the Ministry of Education. I have got to congratulate the Minister of Education for the progress achieved in the Region. In the U.P.E. scheme, schools absorb so many children who under ordinary circumstances could not have gone to school; these schools also absorb hundreds of Standard Six leavers, who, if not for these schools, could not have got employment. We want the Minister to encourage the opening of more schools.

I also thank the Minister of Education for scrapping the fees in the junior primary and I wish him steady progress.

Now, I come to the Ministry of Works. Last year, about September, we had a sign-board on our road promising that the road from Ahoada to Abua would be tarred. Unfortunately, we live in swampy area and during the rainy season lorries cannot ply on these roads.

We have been agitating and calling on the Government to take up this road. At last we had some signs that the Government was going to do something but nothing has yet been done. We are calling on the Minister concerned to come to our rescue because many of our people depend on the good state of this road and the commodity transported through it. These are people who are placed on Schedule II tax. If you do not give them good roads in order to get money how do you expect them to pay their taxes? With these few remarks I support the Motion.

**Chief R. A. Ukwu** (Ahoada Division): Thank you Mr President for allowing me to speak, although my hon. Friend who has just spoken has already aired what I had in mind as we come from the same Division. This



road has caused quite a lot of inconvenience to the people of this Region and the Government should try to rebuild this road. We have received a reply to the petition we wrote in respect of the Degema-Oguta road. We heard that an amount has been provided in the Estimates for this but up till now nothing has been done. What has been done so far is theoretical.

I thank the Minister of Agriculture for sending out Agricultural Assistants who come to our area to advise the farmers. But there is one thing that is worrying us. That thing is money. If the Government should ask the Minister concerned to see that our people have loans to help them run their farms that would be very much appreciated. My thanks again go to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the "Father" of Nigerian nationalism. I call him the Father of Nigerian nationalism because he has done more than any other fellow for this country. He has brought us to the position we are now in this country.

We have another thing that is worrying us and that is schools. What I mean is the improvement of schools. We have schools which are promising. When a school scores a high percentage you know that that school is progressing. We are the people who must contribute to the progress of these schools and therefore we decided to make some collection in this respect so that better school buildings and better accommodation for teachers would be provided. Some people refused to pay this collection and when we had no other alternative but to send them to court, the Administrative Officers who heard the case set these people free and this had retarded the progress of the work. As I pass along the roads I see many works on community development which were done by the people themselves but the reverse has been the case in my place. I wish the Minister to see that these schools are improved. We want the Minister to make a bye-law to effect this collection so that something is done by the people themselves.

I thank the Minister responsible for chieftaincy for the creation of the House of Chiefs. There has never been a House of Chiefs before but now there is one in this Region.

My thanks go to the Governor also because he has done well. He has come all the way to this Region to help us and I thank him so much.

Once more my thanks go to Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe.

I support the Motion.

**Chief G. O. Ihenacho, M.B.E.** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the Motion ably moved by Chief the hon. S. E. Onukogu on the Governor's Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I take this opportunity to thank our Premier both past and present and also Members of this Cabinet for what they have done in bringing this long-talked-about Eastern House of Chiefs to reality. Long may they all live. I would also like to speak about the efforts put forward by Members of the Government in power in different parts of the Region, particularly in those places which are strongholds of the N.C.N.C.

The Governor's Speech from the Throne is very comprehensive in all respects. He spoke of the past activities and proposals for the future. In fact going deep into it, it seems that His Excellency knew about his impending departure before the independence of Nigeria. The Speech seems to me a complete handing over by an outgoing officer to his successor.

May I sound a note of warning to the Minister of Education. It seems to me, Sir, that there is a tendency in that Ministry of our able workers trying to leave that Department by one way or another. I say this because I have seen a lot of our promising and energetic workers in that Department taking up jobs as Parliamentarians and Administrative Officers.

Such practices may cripple the educational frame-work of this Region. I feel that Education Department is the centre where people are trained to fit into any aspect of life, but if because people have got some degrees, they run away from the Education Department, I am afraid the future may not be all right with us. Perhaps, the Minister of Education may find out if other departments offer more attractive future than Education.

I would like to say, turning to the Ministry of Health, that I support every word

[CHIEF IHENACHO]

the First-class Chief of Owerri said in regard to Owerri Hospital. He truly represented the feelings of the people of the Division. At the moment the staff, especially the Medical Officers, manning the Owerri Hospital are the type of the people required for it although the staff is not enough; we require Government to augment the staff there.

I also associate myself with what Chief the hon. J. N. Nwansi said about the road between Owerri and Okigwi. That road, I think, has the heaviest traffic in the Region.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the President interrupted the business, and the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed on Friday, 29th April, 1960.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 9 a.m. tomorrow.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

#### Appointment of a Minister and a Provincial Commissioner

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** I would like to seize this opportunity to inform Members officially of the appointment of a Minister and a Provincial Commissioner from among the Members of the House of Chiefs in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. Chief the hon. S. E. Onukogu has been appointed to be the Provincial Commissioner of Owerri Province and Chief the hon. Douglas Jaja, the Amanyabo of Opobo, has been appointed a Minister without Portfolio.

It is not necessary to say that the two hon. Members deserve their appointments. Chief Onukogu, you all know, played quite a prominent part in bringing the Chiefs of the Eastern Region to the lime light. Before the appointment, he was a Member of the Eastern House of Assembly and a Parliamentary Secretary,

and Chief Douglas Jaja, the Amanyabo of Opobo, is an able leader of his people. At present he is a Member of the Antiquities Commission and the President of Opobo Urban District Council. He is the grandson of the late King Jaja of Opobo.

**The Provincial Commissioner, Owerri (Chief S. E. Onukogu):** I do not think I am worthy of all the good things said of me. My heart is full of joy and happiness at the elevation and recognition so accorded me. It is an encouragement and I can see no other suitable place than this hon. House to register my appreciation and thankfulness to the hon. Premier, his Government and that father of the African nationalists, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. I do not want to say much than to seize the opportunity to assure the Premier and his Government that I shall endeavour to give every satisfaction in my day-to-day services and God helping me, I will live up to expectation.

**The Minister without Portfolio (Chief Douglas Jaja):** I rise to express my gratitude to our young and beloved hon. Premier through whose recommendation His Excellency the Governor has appointed me a Minister without Portfolio. My gratitude also goes to the hon. Members of the Eastern Cabinet who must have endorsed my appointment.

I hope my appointment is a welcome news to all my hon. Colleagues of this House and the general public. It is an honour to my late grand father, King Jaja of Opobo, whose history is well known throughout the world. It is also an honour and respect for our Chiefs. I promise to live up to expectation always and to contribute as much as I can towards the maintenance of peace, order and good government in the Region.

I pay my tribute to our hero Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, our able Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara and his Cabinet. I pray that God may bless this hon. House of Chiefs and make it a stupendous success in the Eastern Region.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Friday, 29th April, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

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

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

Chief J. N. Wachuku

Chief Eket Inyang-Udo

Chief J. Mpi

Mr C. E. Amobi.

Standing Order 63 provides that a Committee of Selection shall be appointed at the commencement of every Session. The Committee shall consist of the Premier or his representative as Chairman, not more than two Ministers who are Members of this House to be nominated by the Executive Council, and four Members to be elected by this House. It is proposed to hold a meeting of the Committee immediately the House rises today.

**The Provincial Commissioner, Owerri (Chief S. E. Onukogu):** I beg to second.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

Chief J. N. Wachuku

Chief Eket Inyang-Udo

Chief J. Mpi

Mr C. E. Amobi.

ORDER OF THE DAY

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

(FIFTH ALLOTTED DAY)

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

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

*Question again proposed.*

**Chief G. O. Ihenacho, M.B.E.** (Owerri Division): I thank you for giving me the opportunity to complete my speech of yesterday which was interrupted due to time. I wish to express my sincere thanks to both Houses of the Legislature. In order to maintain cordial relationship between Members of this House and the House of Assembly, I suggest that when there is need for anybody to criticise or attack any policy or procedure which he feels is not to his taste, such criticism or attack should be directed to that particular policy and not to personalities or individuals. I have instruction from my people, the people of Ogwa Clan in Owerri Division, to express our gratitude to the Ministry of Works for having started laying pipes for water supply system in our area and to pray that this work may be speeded up more vigorously. I am also instructed to urge Government to see to it that all the villages that contributed to the quota allotted to us are considered. We feel that if a section is left out, the purpose for which this project was intended will be defeated and will do us more harm than good.

I would like to endorse wholeheartedly the sentiment expressed by the hon. Member from Brass Division, Chief the hon. Gordon Ascot Ikibah with regard to Staffs of Office for Members of this hon. House. I also share the same view as that expressed by the hon. Member from Orlu, Chief the hon. G. Agbasiere with regard to the life of this House. In supporting him, I would say that at the Conference where plans and arrangements were made for establishing the

[CHIEF IHENACHO]

House of Chiefs in the East, the two Houses were supposed to go side by side. It is not, I feel, the fault of Members of this hon. House that the present House of Chiefs did not start at the same time as the House of Assembly. I am therefore appealing to our good Government to see to it that consideration is given to the points raised. As we are racing for time, I do not want to sacrifice anybody's time.

I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Sampson B. Maeba** (Ogoni Division): Before I support the Motion of Thanks to the Governor for His Excellency's Speech, I will first of all thank the Government for all that they have done for Ogoni Division for the past years, especially for the Ogoni General Hospital where many are able to get back their lives which they could have lost had the Government not done their utmost best to build this hospital for inhabitants of the Ogoni Division. Since then, the death rate in Ogoni has been getting less and less than what it was in the past years.

Secondly, I wish to thank the Government for the pain they have taken to construct a good road from Omukunishi to Kono water-side.

Thirdly, I thank Dr Azikiwe, our former Premier, for the effort he has put in to establish a House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region, which we did not think that could happen in the Region; I also thank our present Premier, Dr Okpara, for his contributions in the same direction.

There is still one important thing that I would like to explain to this hon. House. Ogoni people are crying for more help from the Government especially in education. Our daughters are only trained up to Standard Six as the highest class. They cannot go further because of the absence of a Girls Secondary School. I am therefore pleading to the Government to help Ogoni Division by setting up a Girls Secondary School for our daughters who desire higher education.

There is one important road linking Bori and Obigbo which helps the people of Ogoni to send out their produce. This road is rather becoming bad because no care and attention

are being paid to it. So I beg the Government to take over this road from the Council and tar it for us.

Although we are . . .

**The President:** Five minutes more for the hon. Chief, please.

**Chief Maeba:** Although we are doing our best to improve the Division we still want the help of this Government in things we cannot provide ourselves. There is no wireless or telephone in the Division and these have kept us backward and in cases of accidents or emergency we cannot take prompt action. We cannot get these things without the help of Government, so we ask and trust that the Government will give us the assistance. We hope that the Government would try its best to see that we get these things in time.

The Division has six clans and as such there is sufficient land on which oil palm trees grow. Our traditional method of keeping the fruits is very poor. We ask the Government to help us by building six Oil Mills in the Division to help the people to get higher quality oil.

In Eneme Clan in my Division there is an abundance of sugar cane. I am asking the Government to investigate the possibility of establishing sugar cane industry in this Clan for the benefit of the people of Ogoni Division and the Region.

With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief S. A. Essien** (Annang Province): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Gracious Speech from the Throne. The Speech itself is a result of the active administration directed by our beloved and former Premier Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe and his Cabinet and the present Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara and his Cabinet. I am happy to be one of the Chiefs now debating the last Governor's Speech from the Throne before Independence.

I would like to draw the attention of this House to the fact that the Government of the Eastern Region is the Government of the "Red Cock". Looking round this House you

will find feathers of the great cock on the hats of our Chiefs. We will continue to use them as long as they indicate the emblem of authority, peace, order and good Government. I would like to point out that while the great cock is politically strong and healthy, thousands of our cocks are dying annually. I therefore call upon the Minister of Health to consider directing his experts to investigate the cause of the disease and how to cure it. I have to thank the Minister of Health for the grant given to two areas in Annang Province for the building of Health Centres. I think we need more of these Health Centres at least one in Otoro District Council area. The area is far away from the only Government Hospital at Ikot Ekpene.

I now turn to Provincial Administration. I wish to express the gratitude of my people and myself for the present Provincial set up. We in Annang are not prepared to join the Calabar Minority Council. Our stand was clearly indicated during the Minorities Commission. We do not want to be a minority in minority.

I have to thank the Ministry of Works for the few wells provided in Annang Province and to say that we want more. There are some areas in my Province where people have to travel for miles in order to fetch water. The worst of it all is that there are many schools all over the area, almost one in each village. So we want good wells, at least one in each village for these school children to use. We hope all our U.P.E. schools will run up to Standard VI in the near future, and good water is necessary for the children.

Then the Ministry of Commerce. We have two Secondary Industries in our Province: the Raffia Industry and the Piassava Industry. We want Government to help us in this connection. Raffia dealers in Ikot Ekpene have been applying for grants to help them establish these industries but they have never received any assistance. I therefore ask that the Government should consider helping them to establish these industries, one for Raffia in Ikot Ekpene and another for Piassava in Abak Division.

Coming to the Ministry of Education, I praise the Minister for his activities for the improvement of education in the whole Region.

We all know that about half the revenue of the Region is spent on education but I am suggesting that the Ministry of Education should try to appoint more Government Supervising Teachers to supervise the schools in this Region. When we had few schools the number of Supervisors was also few but now in our Division we have more than three to four hundred schools and we need more of these Government Supervising Teachers to be employed to look after the schools. After all, the Managers of these schools have little or no time to do the supervision. Some are Secretary-Treasurers and some are Managers of Missions who go about doing the Mission work and give little or no time to the supervision of schools. So we need more supervision in our schools. Some of these schools are headed by young teachers.

Coming to the Ministry of Justice, I have to say that we are still looking forward to seeing the Customary Courts being introduced in the whole Region. We were told that after the Budget Session of this year that the Customary Courts would be established throughout the Region. We hope this will not be delayed again after the completion of this Budget Session.

On the Ministry of Town Planning, I would like to ask that the Minister of Town Planning should consider extending the facilities provided by this Ministry to the rural areas, and not confine the whole activities to big townships. In Utu Etim Ekpo and other District Council areas in the Annang Province we are prepared to give land and some have already indicated that Government will be given land.

With these few words I support the Motion.

**Chief Joseph Onwudiwe** (Onitsha Division): I am happy that I have been called upon to say a few words. I rise to support the Motion of Thanks for His Excellency's Speech from the Throne. Looking through this excellent Speech it will be observed that it was cleverly divided into twenty-three items and ninety-nine paragraphs. It will be noticed that it covers all grounds; all sections and Departments under the various Ministries in the Eastern Region were properly dealt with in a nutshell. The Speech was intelligently divided so that if one reads carefully one will

[CHIEF ONWUDIWE]

observe that it is just like Dr Doan's pamphlet which says that every picture tells a tale. In all its items and paragraphs the Speech tells a tale about the Eastern Region. I consider it a sheer waste of the time of this hon. House if I begin to deal with the Speech item by item and paragraph by paragraph. However, I can say that this excellent Speech is welcomed by every Member of this House. In fact, in the words of His Excellency, history was made in the Eastern Region by the creation of this House of Chiefs. What was thought impossible and impracticable has now been possible and practicable. Our counterparts in other Regions thought it would not be possible to create a House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region. But now here we are as the Chiefs of the Eastern Region, and it happens in the year of Nigeria's destiny—1960. I have said that I should not waste the time of this hon. House in going at great lengths, but I want to say that though we hon. Members here come from different areas when we are here we should regard ourselves as people from one Division. We should forget all about our languages and customs and sit here as the people of one place. We are people who other Chiefs in other Regions are watching, just to see what we shall be able to do. I am sure our failure shall not be a surprise to them but our success, because they believe that the Eastern Region had never had Chiefs and therefore to talk of a House of Chiefs in the Region is highly impossible.

I wish to take this opportunity also to talk about my area. I shall not be ashamed to say that I come from a very backward area which is Anambra. This Anambra area is a District carved out of the Onitsha Northern District Council area. We are lacking in many things and I am now appealing to the Government to help to improve this area. We want development and improvement. We are about 109,000 people in this area but have no hospitals, no secondary schools and no colleges of any kind. I therefore appeal to the Government to see what it can do to help the Anambra District Council area.

I have read about the enormous sums of money earmarked for development and improvement and I hope that we shall not be overlooked.

Time is limited but I want also to mention that not much is known about what the Government is thinking about our Independence Celebrations. It will not be quite sufficient if only the people in townships like Enugu, Port Harcourt, Onitsha and other places will be benefited. I pray that all amenities be extended to all people in all areas and let not Government concentrate its attention on important towns with the result that the people in the rural areas may not know what is happening. Some may not even know when the Celebrations of Independence will begin and when they will end. Again, I call upon the Government, if possible, to try and build what may be called Independence Halls in many rural areas. Government may also build what we may call Independence Stadia and Fields where children could play. People would like to say: "Let us go to the Independence Playground", or "Let us go to the Independence Hall for our meetings". I wish the Government to consider this matter well. And when these things are being done I hope that my area, Anambra, among other places, will not be forgotten. I really do not know whether the Government has created any Committee responsible for the Independence Celebrations. I do not remember hearing in the radio or reading in the papers what arrangements are being made about Independence Celebrations in the Region. I read of Federal arrangements but what about our own? Whatever arrangements are being made should be in such a way that every part of the Region has a fair share.

Well, President, with this short speech I have to support.

**Chief F. N. Ogunoro** (Aba Division): Before supporting the Motion I have some observations to make. Hon. Members have said much on the Governor's Speech from the Throne. Hon. Members have also said a lot about the good work done by our Ministers and I am in agreement with them. But I have to add that if it will be possible, these hon. Ministers should continue in office for a longer period in order that the progress in this Region will be a steady one. I say this because we now have men of integrity and as such they have been able to work together for the progress of the Region. In addition to that I must extend my thanks to the Parliamentary Secretaries and the staff in the different organs of Government offices for the

efforts, co-operation and support given to the hon. Ministers through whom they have been able to bring this Region to the present position.

It is to be regretted that our able Governor will not be in our midst during the great day which is October 1. Indeed, I have to thank the hon. Premier and his Ministers for the arrangements made during the send-off of our obedient servant. It was a great occasion indeed.

I have to suggest that a date be fixed for both Houses to come together and have thanks-giving service in honour of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the great son of Africa. He has done a lot. He promised to lead us to the land of freedom. Now, we are about to attain our freedom which he has promised. We also pray to the Almighty God to guide and lead our present Premier to follow the footsteps of his predecessor.

With regard to the Aba-Umuaro-Umuahia road, I will be very grateful if the Government will tar it. Hon. Ministers who toured that area will agree with me that there is a great need for the immediate tarring of the road. Now it is being called a Trunk B Road, and it is very important because of the heavy traffic on it.

With these few suggestions I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Ika Ika Oqua II** (Calabar Province): I have first of all to ask the Chiefs in this hon. House including myself to thank God for He has brought us somebody to lead us as God sent Moses to lead His people of Israel. This person is Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

I have to thank the Government for establishing the House of Chiefs. Everybody knows that before the advent of British Government we had our own ways and laws. But the British Government came and amended everything, so that we feel that we have been forgotten.

I have to appeal to this hon. House that we should take steps to show that we are all one. I also appeal to the Government to forget what happened in the past, for a man may

have many children, and when he is going to his farm to plant yams, one of them may refuse to follow them, but afterwards he comes back and asks his father to forgive him. Some people have been opposing the N.C.N.C. Government unnecessarily but I appeal to the Government to forgive them for God's sake.

Everybody here is aware of the place he comes from; therefore, with regard to my area, I beg the Government to grant us a few thousand pounds to build a hospital and construct the Arochuku-Calabar road. With regard to the Arochuku road and the Calabar-Mamfe road, it is very important to tar from mile 6 junction to Atimbo.

I do not want to waste the time of this hon. House. I beg the Government to remember my people and all that we have done to support the Government and then give attention to our requests.

I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Michael O. Okongwu** (Udi Division): I rise to support the Governor's Speech from the Throne and in doing so I do not want to prolong my speech because the previous speakers have made many remarks about the Governor's Speech, and have touched many necessary points I had in mind to say. I thank them very sincerely for that.

I have to seize this opportunity to give immense thanks to our saviour Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the present Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara, our hon. Ministers and the hon. Provincial Commissioners for being able to spare their time and energy towards the development of this Region.

The creation of this House of Chiefs from the outset was a tough and puzzling problem, but these able thinkers solved the knotty problem and we the hon. Chiefs are now here today. Some hooligans who said it would not be possible are now dying of shamefulness.

I wish to be as brief as possible, still I wish to point out to the Government that the Ezeagu Grammar School which has been planned since 1956 has not received the approval of the Minister of Education. May the project receive the hon. Minister's approval.

[CHIEF OKONGWU]

I also request the Government of this Region to pay full award of Mbanefo's salary increase of 15 per cent to Local Government employees, and to pay some encouraging sum of money to the Local councillors. I humbly pray the Minister of Local Government to implement full award of the increase in the salaries and wages of the Local Government employees.

I humbly request the Minister of Justice to revise the salary of the Customary Court Judges, so that there may be less or no bribery and corruption in the Courts. I say this because a Judge who has not enough money to maintain his family, may fall to temptation. I would like also to beg the Minister of Justice to reopen a closed Court known and called Ugwu-anagba Court in Ezeagu District Council area, in Udi Division as it is one of the three Courts that constitute Ezeagu District Court. They are as follows: Owa Clan Court, Ugwu-anagba Clan Court and Oghe Clan Court. I pray the Minister to grant this my humble request.

To the hon. the Minister of Works, I beg to point out to the Government that Udi Division has no water supply and should be seriously considered. Candidly speaking, the citizens of Egede, Eke and Affa towns, travel up to ten miles to get water. These water supplies do not flow out well but come out in drops. Fighting takes place in these places because of struggle to get water—the sight that makes “angels” weep.

In addition, Ezeagu District is not considered along with others to have trunk B roads in its area of authority. May the Minister of Works consider this District along with others.

I am a farmer; I pay special tribute to the Minister of Agriculture, who organises his workers to work in our area. Our soil is poor and not fertile. The soil is improved with the application of various chemicals as recommended by this Ministry. I also congratulate the Minister who recommends the farmers to get loans from the Regional Government. It is also clear, that the Minister will use his good offices to see that such loans are given to those who will really use them for farming and nothing else. The senior officers of the

Ministry of Agriculture visited my farm. The visitors included Messrs A. F. N. Sheffield the then Director of Agriculture and D. R. E. Jackson, Deputy Director of Agriculture. The then Deputy Governor Mr O. P. Gunning also visited my farm on the 20th June, 1958 and described the farm as a model farm. I shall want the Minister to make time and visit my farm though I know he is always very busy, so that he may see for himself. I want the Minister to give this my request a serious attention.

Concluding, I humbly beg the Eastern Government to approach the Federal Government of Nigeria again so as to know the best medicine which will cure the present chronic disease in the Colliery Department, that is the constant retrenchment of its employees. This is causing great havoc in the country.

May the hon. President allow me a minute more to suggest that it would be better if our hon. Chiefs had flags of their own on their cars.

I support the Motion.

**Chief S. Wabara** (Aba Division): I rise to support the Speech from the Throne. Before I proceed, I have to thank our God-given son, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe, who showed the light for people to follow. Secondly, I congratulate our present Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara, for the position he merited by hard work, patience and obedience. I also congratulate our Ministers who have been able with their Premier to bring the Eastern Region to what it is today. Our outgoing Governor is worthy of praise, and we have to praise him for the peaceful way in which he administered the Government of the Region during his tenure of office.

We people of Ndoki and Asa are appealing to the Eastern Government to remember the long promise to construct a bridge connecting Azumiri and Asa. This matter requires an urgent attention as the bridge is in a very dangerous condition. We are suffering by travelling thirty miles from Azumiri to Asa instead of nineteen miles.

We the people of Ndoki and Asa have very large areas of land to give the Eastern Government to establish Rubber Industry in the Region. This will help to secure employment for the unemployed men.



In Aba Division, we have not enough secondary schools. We are also appealing to the Eastern Government for more secondary schools in Aba Division.

The Eastern Government has been kind enough to give Ndoki one hospital, but this hospital is still uncompleted. We are therefore appealing to our able Government to grant us more money to complete the hospital.

Many points have been made about the life of this House. I therefore beg our hon. Ministers to reconsider the position of Second-class Chiefs. Our humble Ministers know what it means to contest more than one election within twenty months. We are appealing that an amendment to this law be made within a short time.

I beg to support.

**Chief Ako Okwoli II** (Enugu Province): I rise to support the Speech from the Throne by the Governor. I wish the Governor good luck, wherever he goes. In supporting this Motion on the Speech from the Throne, I wish also to make some remarks. Before I make my remarks I pray that God Almighty will give our son Zik and all those who have struggled to make this House a reality in this Region long life. I have also to thank Dr Azikiwe for the light he has shown to our country Nigeria. I have also to thank our hon. Provincial Commissioners for all their good works throughout the Region. I also thank the hon. Provincial Commissioner for Enugu Province. As you know Nsukka Division is one of the largest in the Region. The people of this Division suffer too much when they have any court case. Sometimes a case hangs over for more than two years because we have no Magistrates. Thus, there is always quite a lot of work for any Magistrate. I wish to appeal to the Government to build a modern court in Nsukka Division and provide us with a Magistrate who will handle these cases.

I wish to appeal to the Government to consider increasing customary court Judges' salary. The present salary is too poor. Really an increase in the salary will help in the efficient discharge of justice in these courts.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Minister responsible for chieftaincy for the able way in which he has handled chieftaincy matters and removed them from the courts. Any

wrong choice can win a case in these law courts as long as he has a lawyer. I wish to thank the Government for appointing two Members of this House as a Minister and a Provincial Commissioner.

I beg to support.

**Chief J. A. Anigor** (Abakaliki Division): I rise to support the Motion on the Speech from the Throne. The outgoing Governor has worked well and now deserves the honour being given to him. He knows the aspirations of our people and has co-operated with our Ministers. I do not think that I can express my appreciation for the Speech from the Throne without bringing the work of the Ministers to notice. Their contributions have made the working of the Government successful. When the father of African nationalism, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, ceased to be the Premier of this Region, we felt very much concerned because we were not certain that his place would be so ably filled by our present Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara. Now events have shown that the choice of Dr Okpara was very wise. Our great leader Dr Azikiwe has done great things for us and for which we shall ever be grateful. His successor Dr Okpara has been very efficient and his efficiency has reflected in the creation of the two new Ministries which we very much desire. These are the Ministries of Information and Economic Planning. I believe the Minister of Information will help to bring the brighter side of our country's activities to the knowledge of the world.

Now, I come to the Ministry of Agriculture. I have to refer again to our own area where we have so much animal disease. We should try to stem the diseases affecting our cows in Abakaliki Division and we are asking the Government to help us to reduce the rate of death of our animals. We do not think that our farmers can carry on without the help of the Government to eradicate this disease. So we are asking the Government to come to our help and keep our animals alive so that we may be able to pay our tax and contribute to the Region's progress in the future.

I now come to the Ministry of Justice. We want the establishment of customary courts in our area.

**The President:** Five minutes more, please.

**Chief Anigor:** I suggest that more enlightened persons be appointed to these Customary Courts so as to raise the standard of justice and bring to light the integrity of the courts. This would help to curb the corrupt practices which are alleged to be going on in the courts. When we have responsible men as members of these Customary Courts they will do well.

It is necessary for some of our chiefs who are not here and who are not Members of this hon. House to be given responsible positions in their localities, because if they do not hold any such reasonable positions they are only chiefs in name.

The Ministry of Health has done very well in our area. Sometime ago there was yaws campaign and today the disease is not common, but we are asking Government to help us more so that just as we have stamped out the disease of yaws we can also stamp out the disease of leprosy and this can be done by helping the Voluntary Agencies who are hard at work in the area. Therefore, we are asking Government for more grants to the Voluntary Agencies to help in this work of mercy.

With regard to the Ministry of Works, we are very grateful for the good roads so far provided as these will help us to transport our rice and other crops to other places where such crops are not grown. Nevertheless, we are asking Government for more development in the way of roads as, no doubt, places like Calabar will have our rice crop and similar crops not usually grown in such areas. With the help of the Government we can assist other places.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief F. N. Ezerioha** (Orlu Division): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks for His Excellency's most Gracious Speech from the Throne. In doing so, I pray to God to grant long life to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the leaders and supporters of his great Party and the Government of this Region. I am very happy for the way our Ministers have been handling the affairs of the Region. For a long time we have been clamouring for the establishment of the Eastern House of Chiefs and now that we have it, we are grateful to the Government of this Region. Every Member, therefore, should have in mind that

Government has helped us to have the same status as is the case in the Western and Northern Regions and it will not be correct for any Northerner or Westerner—Chiefs or ordinary men—to say that the *Kobokobos* or the *Nyamilis* have no Chiefs or House of Chiefs. Now that we have this House of Chiefs, we are praying to Government to grant this House, the House of Assembly and the people responsible for good government, God's wisdom to execute their respective duties with the fear of God. May they reign for long!

The next point is that we should try, where possible, to advise the Members of the Government and tell them where we feel they have gone wrong and not merely criticise them unnecessarily. Afterwards, they are not God to know everything; they must make some mistakes and it is for us, as fathers, to call their attention to do this or that. Now that we are confidently marching towards Independence, it is necessary for all the hon. Chiefs to try to help Government so that this envisaged change from the Colonial system of Government to "self-respected and independent" government will be a reality, worthy of emulation and attracting comments of praise by other countries.

I would like to say something about the state of roads in this Region. I am happy that our President has long been a Legislator and should know what is good for this Region. During the time of the Imperialists, many things were not done, due perhaps, to one reason or the other, but now that we are to be blessed with independence, we hope there will be a change.

I would also like to touch the question of water supply. I have one sympathetic story in connection with water. Once a Chief and two people, in patriotic endeavour to serve their people, went to draw water from a well. In the course of doing this, very unfortunately though, they all slipped in and got drowned. I am humbly requesting Government to do their best in their attempt to provide water for the people.

I would also say something about the road from Orlu to Ihitenasa, Orlu to Okigwi. The state of the road is very bad and I am appealing to the Government to help.

The staff of the Native Courts and Customary Courts should try their best in the efficient discharge of their duties. Chiefs who are recognised by the Government should be given places as judges in these courts in order to ensure and maintain higher standard of efficiency. I am very happy that Chief Onukogu is now occupying a ministerial post and also Chief Douglas Jaja, Amanyanabo of Opobo. This will encourage us and has made us to understand that our Government have us in mind and want to support whatever we advise them to do.

With these remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief H. I. Akwitti** (Owerri Division): I will first of all thank the Government of Eastern Nigeria along with all the First-class and Second-class Chiefs in Owerri Division and also my clan through whose effort and consent my presence in this hon. House is a possibility. I thank the former Eastern Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe and the present Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara, for all the good work they have been doing for this Region and the country as a whole. We cannot just forget them. May God guide and keep them!

We have taken note of the excellent Speech made by His Excellency the Governor and have gone through same with satisfaction. I am referring the hon. Chiefs to page 6 in that Speech. Paragraphs 19, 30, 34, 55, 75 and 82 stand out very prominently, and the speech is a masterpiece. My observation and my experience have shown me that all Eastern Nigeria Ministries are excellent and that they have got qualified men to run the Government. I term our Ministers "red-witted Ministers", because they are men of high intelligence and great integrity.

I have heard that the Government have voted a sum of £100,000, if I am correct, to tar the road from Okpala Ovoru Mbaise to Ehime Okigwi. The people of Okpala want the same road tarred. But I wonder why the work has not yet been started. This work ought to be started right now.

The people of Mbaise in Owerri Division are suffering from lack of water and Government should do well to provide this very important amenity. The people of Mbaise

in Owerri want water supply, post office, electricity and oil mill. Imagine a big clan like Mbaise has no post office of any kind! While we thank the Government for the assistance given for the building of Mbaise Joint Hospital, that hospital has not been completed to the entire satisfaction of the people. It needs extension.

As the Government of the Eastern Region has found it very necessary to establish the House of Chiefs, I think that it is proper and advisable for Chiefs to do everything required of them for the smooth running of the Government of this Region and the overall happiness of the people of the Eastern Region.

I beg to remind the Government, especially the Minister concerned, of the announcement in connection with Customary Courts. It was promised in the past that the establishment of these courts would take place after the last Federal election, but nothing has yet been done. I would like the Government to use its good offices and do something about this.

With these submissions, Mr President, I support the Motion.

**Chief R. Oraelosi** (Onitsha Division): 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 of gratification that the Speech from the Throne is comprehensive and it is my earnest hope that this House will appreciate it. The Speech detailed the activities of the Government in the past and promised more in the coming year. I am personally grateful to the Government for the creation of the Ministry of Economic Planning in order to raise the standard of living in the Region. This announcement was made on the 8th of January when this House met for the first time and I hope that hon. Chiefs will support this Government in order to complete the activities detailed in the Speech.

The Public Service Commission is now headed by a capable Nigerian, and I think this House endorses the appointment as a very good choice. I hope it will not be long when all key positions in the Civil Service will be filled by efficient Nigerians.

[CHIEF ORAELOSI]

I have a few comments to make about the Ministry of Education. Good progress was made in this Department when the U.P.E. was raised from Standard I to Standard II; also in respect of the award of scholarships in the Region.

It is also essential to allow the opening of some Secondary Schools in order to cater for the number of children coming out of elementary schools in this Region. Time will not be very far when the opening of the University of Nigeria will take place.

A huge sum of money was voted for the Ministry of Works. I am appealing to the Minister concerned to construct a road from Southern Ogbaru District to connect the Oil Mill from Okija and U.A.C. Beach at Oseakwa in order to improve the produce trade in those areas because those places have a good deal of economic produce.

Considerable progress has been made by the Ministry of Health, particularly in the yaws campaign and Leprosy Control and research. Time will not be very far when all the corners of the Region will be stamped free of this deadly disease.

For the Ministry of Justice, I have to thank the Government for the appointment of our able son Mr L. N. Mbanefo as Chief Justice of the Eastern Region. We wish that such appointment will be made in other Departments in order that able Nigerians will man the important positions of the Government.

All the Members spoke of development in their areas. In this connection, I would appeal to the Ministers concerned to go round all the rural areas in the Region and see for themselves because all the areas require development and it is important that development be diverted to rural areas in order that congestion may be lessened in the urban towns. We have won political independence and we should work together as one team in order to gain our economic independence.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Paul U. Obodoeze** (Nsukka Division):  
I rise to support the Speech from the Throne.

To start with, I have to thank the Governor of the Eastern Region for the Speech made by him. I also extend my thanks to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, former Premier and the present Premier, Dr Okpara. I thank also the able Ministers we have in this Region who are doing well to use their common sense in working for the benefit of the Region.

In my area (Uzo Uwani), the area I am representing in this Eastern House of Chiefs, the people's belief is that Government has entirely neglected them. In that area, there is no good road at all. People there are in dire need of water. Even, Government promised that they would dig water bore holes at Umumbo but up till now nothing has been done. We have no good water to drink and it surprised me greatly that the people of that area pay their taxes as elsewhere and yet are neglected. I am not saying that there is no tarred road in that area. Government also promised that they would establish sugar cane industry at Doo River area. Until now nothing has been done to that Sugar Plantation. I am therefore asking Government to see how they can help the people of my area because they are very backward.

I come to the Ministry of Education: The number of schools in this area is not sufficient. We have been trying to help ourselves and it will be good if the Minister in charge of Education will look into it to know whether he could bring that area up to standard, educationally.

It will be good also if that road connecting the 9th Mile and their Council office be tarred, and thereafter the road from the office to Mkpologu. These roads are the major roads we have in the area and without these roads, there will be no outside communication. I purchased a new car as other Chiefs here did last time when advance was given to us but that my car is now in a bad condition due to bad roads—no good road to pass and I want Government to pity us. There are no good roads and without roads, no civilisation.

Another thing is about Courts. In our area, so many of the Court Judges travel twenty to thirty miles before they reach the Court and it will be good if the Minister of Justice will see to it that more Courts are built in that area. We do not want cases but we want Courts.

In addition, I praise the Government much for their efforts to establish the House of Chiefs in the Region and at the same time I am asking Government to be sincere enough and allow Chiefs to finish their term of office because it is not good that a father and son, as one Member said last time, should involve themselves in a very serious trouble at the same time. If trouble comes to the father directly the son will assist him and vice versa. We should be grateful if Government would also consider the Chiefs in this House as equal to their counterparts in the Western and Northern Regions, by giving our Chiefs their full rights—that is giving them Staffs of Office and allowing Chiefs to have messengers to go about with them always.

**The President:** Wind up, please.

**Chief Obodoeze:** The messengers will accompany the Chiefs anywhere they go and protect them because, as you probably know, I do not think everybody likes the Chiefs. And Government should pay these messengers too.

Another thing is to congratulate the Eastern Regional Government for appointing one of the Members of this House to be Minister and another a Provincial Commissioner. These appointments show that the two Houses of the Eastern Legislature will co-operate in the best interests of the Region.

With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief R. O. Orem** (Ikom Division): I beg to support the Motion of Thanks to His Excellency for His Excellency's Gracious Speech from the Throne. I thank the Eastern Government for all the improvements the people of the Region see today. We in Ikom Division are happy because now we have a hospital, and we are happy that a road has been constructed from Ikom to Obudu. We wish Government would continue this same road from Ikom to Obubra and a branch through Abijan, Nsofan, Itaka to Calabar road, near the Oban Rubber Estate. We want Government to take over the road from Ikom through Etome to E.R.D.C. Cocoa Estate at British Obokum.

Turning to Education, last year none of our children was offered secondary school scholarship. I feel that the Government should give us our fair share this year and compensate us for last year.

**Loans.**—This is most important because without money we can hardly do anything in this world. I am asking the Government to give more loans to our farmers to help them build up cocoa farms, oil palm farms, etc. Everybody knows that when we make a lot of demands from Government they will not have the funds to satisfy all the needs but I wish the Government will continue in the way they are doing to introduce various improvements in the Region now that we are on the threshold of Independence. Some of the Ministers who visited our Division during election campaigns would have realised after travelling through the Division in their new and big cars that it was necessary to send them for repairs as soon as they arrived Enugu because of the bad roads the cars plied on. If these roads are well tarred and maintained, their cars would not be damaged after touring these areas. I therefore call on the Government to do something about it.

I look forward to the time when we in Ogoja Province will have a Minister or Parliamentary Secretary. (*Some hon. Members: What of hon. Ogon?*) I know hon. Ogon is a Commissioner but you know what I mean.

**The President:** Wind up, please.

**Chief Orem:** I know that talking too much will not help our Government and so with these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief Joseph D. Agba** (Obudu Division): I rise to support the Motion that this House expresses its loyal and dutiful Thanks to His Excellency the Governor for His Excellency's most Gracious Speech addressed to both Houses from the Throne. The Speech itself—to those who have read it well—is comprehensive and for that reason we are not mistaken when we say that it commends itself as a masterpiece.

His Excellency is shortly leaving us for another country and though we have given him a rousing send-off we wish him luck wherever he goes.

[CHIEF AGBA]

While supporting the Motion may I make the following observations. I am not, and will not, make myself an exception to those hon. Members of this House who have gained the golden opportunity to express vocally and wholeheartedly their profound gratitude to our national leaders. These leaders deserve our greatest tribute for having successfully carried this country far through Constitutional means. Within the span of a lifetime of half a century, we have travelled a long way from the dark days of diehard colonialism to this year of rejoicing and our flag of Independence will be hoisted on 1st October, 1960. The journey, no doubt, has been short but by no means without thorns. But then considering our complexities, it is indeed a proud reflection that we have made it in such a record time through the unbeatable efforts of no less a personality than Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe.

It is a matter for regret that the people of Nigeria have not demonstrated their unreserved gratitude to this great son of Africa, without whom our national consciousness and rapid political awakening would not have been possible. I am very happy that we are all one in this House in crediting him with this outstanding achievement. To leave him aside in our memory at this time when the British Government is handing over the long, long looked-for power to manage our own affairs will amount to a height of national ingratitude. God forbid!

May I please say a few words also about the Ministry of Education. We all have expressed an abundance of joy and gratitude to the Minister concerned for helping to see that the charges which have been preferred on us by our opponents during the elections, that the U.P.E. schools have been a failure, are now proved abortive. These schools are no longer a failure but a success, in that we are gradually getting our schools to be fee-free. But then I will say that it is one thing really to leave off the payment of school fees in our schools, and another thing to provide adequate equipment for the training of our children in the schools. If you go to the U.P.E. schools you will find that the schools stand naked: they have no walls for pictures or charts to be drawn, and the teachers teach like parrots while the children cram up without knowing what they are

cramming. This is not thorough education at all. If the children continue in this way I do not believe that they are going to benefit from our proposed University which is going to be opened in October, 1960. Unless the Government equips the classes which have already been granted free education with the necessary materials to enable the teachers to impart knowledge to the children, we are not likely to achieve anything better. The remark has also been made that teachers have left schools or have gone out to play politics. I suppose there must be a reason for that. They have done this because they have not been strictly supervised. I remember that last year there was a Commission set up to review the Education System in the Eastern Region and I am sure that there was a memorandum compiled. In it mention was made that there should be more staff employed who would help to see to the thorough teaching of children, and to see that teachers really hold themselves fast to their jobs. This I have not seen. A Province like Ogoja has only an Education Officer who has just been recently brought there and there is nobody at all supervising the schools there. If we are really aiming at achieving something, and if the purpose for which Commissions of that nature are set up is to be achieved, it would be better if reports which are compiled and presented are implemented. If Voluntary Agency teachers also are given the full advantages that are given to other teachers in the Government service, I suppose they will give up the question of becoming Legislators or Councillors. I can remember that the Mbanefo Commission, which has recommended 15 per cent for all workers, does not at all bring that advantage to the teachers in the Local Government and Voluntary Agency schools. This is not fair at all. They buy from the same market; they drink from the same pot; if you tickle them they can laugh; if you prick them they can bleed; if you poison them they may die; if you leave them hungry they may die. Then what is the reason why these teachers in the Voluntary Agencies should not be given ample opportunity to enjoy the 15 per cent award? These teachers, because they feel that they have been deprived of the 2½ per cent, are right in looking for several means by which they can help themselves.

Now let us look at roads. We all know the need for roads in every country. They are very necessary, and a Division like Obudu is

one which I call upon the Minister concerned to pay attention to during one of his tours to that area. We have not got any road at all. When other areas are talking of tarring their roads we are only asking for mere roads to be made for our Division. Formerly we have been going through the Northern Region to our own Division but fortunately we have been able to put up a Bailey bridge which links us up today with Ogoja and eventually with the Eastern Region. Now we want a road made for us at least in such a way that we can manage until it is possible to extend the tarring scheme to Obudu.

Now, the Cattle Ranch is a place in Obudu which I hope all will be jealous and will long to visit. The Europeans have shown us that it is really an enjoyable place. It is a place also to which you can go and recreate yourself. You can go and enjoy your short holidays there. You can relax there and enjoy all that you can get from there. It has been forgotten but it is a place with such potentialities that our butter can be supplied from there.

Members have also expressed the fact that the Colliery workers have been retrenched. It is a fact, but I suppose the system of giving out loans will help us to stop any unforeseen events that may come up as a result. If loans are given, some of these people who are retrenched will go to serve under those people who have been given loans, work for them in their farms, and, in this way, help to increase productivity in the Region.

I beg to support the Motion.

**Chief Joseph Wobo** (Port Harcourt Division): I am thankful for the opportunity given me to speak in this hon. House. To begin with, I should like first of all to pay tribute to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. No true nationalist will fail to congratulate him for all he has done for this great country—Nigeria, and the Eastern Region in particular. God sent him on a mission to deliver all of us here and the people of Africa as a whole, and to this end he has always directed his efforts. We are greatly indebted to him.

Another point I would like to mention is about the land in which we live at Port Harcourt which is my Division. Government has

acquired all our land with the result that the people there have no space for farming which is their only means of livelihood. Worse still, the inhabitants of the area are asked to pay rents. I am the landlord of the whole area and the foreigners on the land pay rents to me, but the Government has acquired the whole land and we in turn are to start paying rents. This acquisition of our land by Government has made it impossible for us to continue with our custom of burying a noble member of the family in his own compound, i.e., the traditional home of the family.

**The President:** Chief Njoku.

**Chief Ike Okoroafor** (Bende Division): I support the Motion and send my good wishes to the outgoing Governor, his Deputy, the Premier, the Ministers and all hon. Members as well as all the citizens, who have contributed to make Nigeria in general and the Eastern Region in particular what they are now. Though everybody has done much to contribute to the progress of Nigeria, yet more contributions are needed in this time of Independence to make the Eastern Region what we want it to be.

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo** (Special Member): Point of Order. The President called Chief Njoku to speak, but the Chief who is now speaking is not Chief Njoku.

**The President:** Chief Njoku did not rise at the time I called him to speak, so let Chief Okoroafor continue.

**Chief Okoroafor:** It is very disappointing and nauseating to say certain things happening in the Eastern Region. If one goes out now in this township, the Headquarters of the Eastern Region, one will see so many limbless lepers, toeless and badly deformed lepers sitting about thus presenting an ugly picture of the whole place. So I am now appealing to the Government of the Eastern Region to do all that lies in her power to see that most of these lepers from the Northern Region are sent back to the North. The Government of the Eastern Region is doing all it can to stamp out some of these infectious and contagious diseases in the Eastern Region. There is no reason why the Government of the Northern Region should allow the lepers and people suffering from different kinds of

[CHIEF OKOROAFOR]

contagious and infectious diseases to come to the Eastern Region to infect people. They should be advised to copy from the Eastern Region by establishing many infectious disease hospitals in the North and to care for these lepers and those suffering from other diseases so that the health of the people in the Eastern Region should be safe.

Now coming to the question of roads, I must appeal to the Government and to the Minister of Works that it has now started to rain. We are made to understand that some contractors have been given the work from Umuahia via Bende to Ohofia and Arochuku; and Uzuakoli, Umuahia to Arochuku. We are now appealing that the contractors should be made to start the work before it is too late. Otherwise, we the Chiefs from that area will find it difficult to attend meetings and it will be difficult for traders and farmers to move out into the township. Government should do all they can to help us. The farmers have been crying for help from different angles. They want good transport system and they also want loans to be given to them. If the Government will do all these to help the inhabitants of the Eastern Region we shall all enjoy our Independence.

In view of what I have said and in order not to waste the time of the House, I support the Motion.

**Chief D. O. Njoku** (Aba Division): I rise to support the Motion of Thanks for the Speech of His Excellency the Governor from the Throne. Before saying anything I have to state that I am really very happy to see that a man of my type is standing among the noble men of the Eastern Region today.

First of all, I thank Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the founder of N.C.N.C. and former Premier of the Eastern Region. He is the most energetic nationalist we have in the country today and we should all be grateful to him for the various contributions he has made towards the advancement of our great country. I also thank Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, the present Premier of Eastern Nigeria and the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries for their efforts to see that the Region is developed.

There are various diseases worrying the various Divisions. In Aba Division we have a different one: our own trouble is in palm produce. Other Divisions have their own troubles; some of them suffer from difficulties in food production. The price of palm produce in Aba Division is rather very awful. I do not know if it is so in other Divisions. Unless Government comes to the aid of licensed buying agents of palm produce in Aba Division, the buying agents of the mercantile houses will continue to cheat us. These people have entered into a very bad agreement against the natives. So, we are asking Government to take steps to come to the aid of the people in Aba Division and see that the price of palm produce is raised. The Government should fix the price of palm produce with the natives and not allow the firms to reduce this price. This question has been a very big headache to the natives concerned.

Furthermore, I would like to comment on the road leading from Umuahia to Owerinta and then from Owerinta to Ogwe and from Ogwe to Port Harcourt. This is a shorter road to take than to travel from Umuahia, branching at Owerinta and then branching again at Aba before travelling from Aba to Ogwe which is more than thirty miles; whereas from Umuahia to Owerinta and from Owerinta to Ogwe is twenty-five miles. This road from Umuahia to Owerinta has been partially tarred up to the Owerinta Native Court. I am asking the Minister of Works to see that tarring on the road is completed very soon. During the last elections, we were told that the estimates have already been approved in respect of this road and since then our people have been waiting and watching when the road will be tarred.

I want to call the attention of the Minister to the question of headmasters in our schools. It is surprising that in a class of thirty-six pupils who sat the last Standard VI Examination, none of them passed and one wonders what the headmasters are doing; or would it be said that this is due to the stupidity of the pupils? I am asking the Minister to look into this matter and to take drastic measures to ameliorate the position. Some of these headmasters when promoted to the post will leave the business of schools under their care and start to contest elections to District Councils.



They forget about their work and the children entrusted into their care. These Standard VI children will remain for up to six months without being taught anything, and, unless another teacher comes, from say, Standard V or from any other class, these pupils will not learn anything. Even so, these teachers who come to help the pupils give them about two or three lessons in a week. The result is that when the examination comes all of them will fail woefully. And yet these headmasters receive their full salaries. I am praying the Minister of Education to take very serious view of this matter and see to it that such failures do not recur. In this connection, I have in mind two schools in Northern Ngwa in Aba Division. None of the pupils in these schools was able to pass the last Standard VI Examination.

In Owerinta area, in Northern Ngwa, we have to travel a distance of eleven miles before we could claim our letters. We have been complaining for a long time that, at least, Government should provide us with a Postal Agency from where we could be getting our letters. A letter sent to me from this House took nearly three weeks to reach me.

**The President:** Wind up, please.

**Chief Njoku:** Lastly, I pray that the time for payment of tax in Northern Ngwa area should be changed from what it is now to April or May every year. The payment of tax during the months of September and October has always proved very difficult for the people in Northern Ngwa area. We want our tax to be paid in April or May every year, as this time is our own season when we get money to pay.

With these few remarks, I support the Motion.

**Chief W. A. Obassy (Owerri Division):** I rise to support the Speech from the Throne. Before that, I have some remarks to make: that is that I give my whole-hearted thanks to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe who is now the President of the Senate; and the present Premier of the Eastern Region, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara and other Ministers for introducing the House of Chiefs for the Eastern Region.

Secondly, as far back as 1945, I could remember when the District Officer, Owerri, gave me a paper to visit the Eastern House of Assembly. When I entered the gallery, I could see more Europeans than Africans. But it is not so today and for this reason, everybody should be grateful to Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who made the White men to know that Africans could be able to rule themselves.

Dr Azikiwe's work brought about our looking forward to 1st October, 1960 as our Independence Day.

Thirdly, had it not been Zik and his colleagues, nobody would know yet that the hon. Chiefs of this Region are influential and have dignity. I therefore ask Government, through the President, to honour the Chiefs and not to disqualify them so soon because the various clans of this Region, after selecting their Chiefs, Clan heads and the Second-class Chiefs, will not like them to be Chiefs for only two or five years. They will not like to go into the difficulty of selecting other Chiefs for further training. Nobody will be able to learn the art of Government for five years and qualify as a good master.

I have also to thank the Regional Government for introducing U.P.E. Schools in the Region which will help everybody to have education in the future. While doing this, I have to thank the Minister of Education for approving Amumara Girls Secondary School in principle for Mbaize District Council in Owerri Division. May I still ask the Minister of Education to request the Minister of Finance, on our behalf, to be kind enough to provide the Mbaize District Council with some more money to help the Girls Secondary School, for which £2,000 has been agreed as aid till when the Government takes over the school.

In conclusion, I have to ask, through the President, the Minister of Works what action he has taken for a bridge at Itu Ezinihitte, Mbaize District under Owerri Division; the Council having resolved by a majority vote that the Imo River should be bridged at Itu. This resolution has been communicated to the Minister of Works for his information, with reference to Memo. No. M.T.P. 543/102 of 29th October, 1959. I humbly wish to appeal to the Government not to be deceived by

[CHIEF OBASSY]

one man's opinion. We live in a democracy and the voice of the majority is supreme.

I support the Motion.

**The President:** Order! Order! Chiefs and hon. Members, we are having a very important business on Monday and I know it is your wish that we should not mix up Monday's business with the business of today. I now call on hon. Ministers to wind up the debate.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (Mr O. U. Affiah):** I rise to support the Motion and in my capacity as the acting Minister of Works I will endeavour to answer some of the points made by hon. Members in connection with the Ministry of Works. But first, I would like to make a few points.

The 1958-62 Development Plan was published a year ago. Since then the Ministry of Works has been very busy in surveying the various projects listed therein, preparing contract documents and drawing up plans. I must point out to hon. Members that good engineering and good architecture are not subjects one can unduly rush. If you design in haste not only is the cost of an engineering work inflated but also the results often are very disappointing. So this last financial year has been largely taken up with preparatory work, but this financial year will see many projects materialising throughout the Region.

Arising out of this, hon. Members will be pleased to note that Government intends to spend £1½ million this financial year on new road works, over £300,000 on urban water supplies, including new urban water supplies for Uyo, Ikot Ekpen, Owerri, Okrika, Orlu and Nnewi. Work at the first three mentioned places has already started and when all the schemes are commissioned it is expected that ten million gallons of water will be supplied daily to over half a million persons. In rural water supplies even more money will be spent this financial year in completing all the pumped and piped supplies and well constructions which hon. Members can see going on all over the Region and which are listed in pages 140 to 143 of the Estimates.

**Buildings.**—My Ministry has had a very busy year on new construction, as the following figures will show. No less than 103 Regional buildings have been completed, and work has started on a further sixty-six. Add to this forty-five Federal buildings completed on an agency basis and a further sixty-nine under construction, and also if it is noted that my Ministry now maintains 1,986 Regional Government buildings and 734 Federal Government buildings, I think hon. Members will join me in congratulating the Provincial Engineers and their staff, who besides seeing to these buildings, have also had to look after roads and urban water supplies, and let me not forget the Architects and others in the Buildings Division who have prepared drawings and contract documents for no less than fifty major building contracts, comprising 104 buildings, the aggregate value of these contracts being £1,092,000.

Mrs Mokelu raised the question of the water supply in Enugu. I can assure her that now the delays occasioned by the objections of the Ngwo people to the acquisition of the Oche stream have been resolved, that improvements to the Iva Valley head works have been made and already there is an improvement in the supply and further improvement will increase the supply to 1½ million gallons a day. However, as Enugu is growing so rapidly the Ministry of Works is already starting design of a further scheme to supply further three million gallons a day. As regards the wells in Oraifite, I shall make enquiries from the Zone Engineer.

Chief Anyika mentioned a lot of roads in Onitsha Province and I would refer him to Page B 126 in the Draft Estimates from which he will see that most of the roads he has mentioned are included in the Government's Development Plan. Contractors are in fact already at work on the Abagana-Aguleri road and the Ozubulu-Atani road. These two projects are costing over £250,000.

The Ministry of Works is not responsible for telephone installations as this is a Federal Government responsibility; but the Chief's request will be passed on to the Federal Ministry of Communications.

As regards the water supplies the hon. Member has mentioned, the schemes at

Igbo-Ukwu, Ekwulobia, Nnobi, Awka and Amawbia will soon be completed whilst the other places he has mentioned will be noted and it may be possible to include them in the next Development Programme which the Ministry of Economic Planning is now considering.

Hon. C. E. Amobi has also mentioned the need for more roads in Onitsha Province. All I can say is that those that are not included in the present Development Programme will have to await their time. We cannot do everything all at once. As regards the Ogidi water supply scheme the Provincial Engineer is awaiting some electrical parts and he is expected to put the scheme to commission next month.

Chief Ofem mentioned Ugep pumped water supply scheme and I can assure him that the scheme will be completed this financial year. Presently the Engineer is awaiting delivery of the pumps for the scheme.

Chief F. B. Nduka mentioned electricity and I can assure him that it is the Government's intention to continue the electrification of towns in the Eastern Region. A survey has already been carried out at Okigwi and it is now only the question of finding the necessary funds for this development.

Chief John Nwansi mentioned the Owerri-Okigwi road and I can assure him that tenders for tarring this road have already been received and an announcement will be made shortly.

Chief Sampson Adoki mentioned the need for a water supply scheme for Okrika and the hon. Member will be pleased to note that an Urban Water Supply Scheme has already been designed and contracts are presently being placed for the work with the Eastern Nigeria Water Planning and Construction Company.

Chief J. N. Orizu also mentioned another Urban Water Supply at Nnewi. This has also been designed and contracts are being placed with the same firm and work will commence very shortly.

Chief Ako Okwoli II mentioned two roads in Nsukka Division. These are both included in the Government's Development Programme

and the Ministry is presently considering whether the bridges he mentioned on the Nsukka-Ogrugru road can be reconstructed in advance of the tarring of these roads.

Chief Akam Iteshi also mentioned water supplies for Abakaliki Division. It is very difficult to supply Abakaliki Division with water owing to the nature of the soil which is shale many thousands of feet thick, and wells are of no use and therefore U.K. technical assistance in solving the water supply problem in Abakaliki Division is being sought.

Chief Egbara mentioned the Ediba-Obubra road. Contract documents are presently being prepared and work will start on this road next dry season and I can assure the hon. Member that the contractors will be capable of doing the work satisfactorily this time.

Chief Okoroafor mentioned roads in Bende Division and he will be pleased to note that a contract will be let in the next few days for the tarring of the Umuahia-Alayi-Abiriba-Oha-fia-Arochuku road. This will be a great boon to that Division.

Chief Ikibah was complaining of the poor tele-communications in Yenagoa Province and I will make representations about this to the Federal Government.

Finally, may I thank all hon. Members who have complimented the Ministry on its achievements.

The Amanyanabo of Nembe asked for an improved water supply and I have noted his remarks for the next Development Programme. I can assure all hon. Members that the present rural water supply projects being carried out are only a start and Government will continue to provide funds for improved supplies until everyone in the Region has good water supply.

As regards a road to Nembe, this would be an enormously expensive project, running into millions of pounds. At the moment Government is building a road from Ahoada to Yenagoa. This is costing over £18,000 a mile.

Chief Eket Inyang-Udo was complaining about the lack of roads in the so-called C.O.R. area; but this is not true. Ikot Ekpene-Itu road is presently being constructed as well as

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one through Nkana, connecting Ikot Ekpene and Arochuku Divisions. Further south, Eket-Oron road has been surveyed and contract documents are now being prepared, and the same applies to the Abak-Uyo road, whilst others including Eket-Uyo, Itu-Uyo, Ekparakwa-Etinan-Uyo and Eket-Ukam-Opobo and Aba-Utu Etim Ekpo are all shown in the Development Programme. See page E 126 of the Estimates.

Chief Michael Eze of Awka was complaining about the embankments across the Mamu River at Ebenebe. This road is also in the Development Programme, but in the meantime, the people are advised to get the embankments made by community efforts.

As regards water supplies also mentioned by the hon. Chief, the present Programme is set out in a White Paper which was published over a year ago. It is the Official Document No. 5 of 1958 and it could be seen that the list of places for water points was compiled from applications sent by Local Government Bodies.

Chief Silas Ezenwa complained about the drainage at Fegge Layout, Onitsha. This is Urban District Council responsibility.

Chief Onyeneho was enquiring about the Umuahia-Emekuku-Owerri road and Umuna-Owerri road. Tenders for the latter have already been received and contract will be awarded in a few days. As regards the former, contract documents are presently being prepared and the same to the Eket-Oron road mentioned by Chief Akpabio Udo Ukpa.

Chief Onuaguluchi was inquiring about the Achi pumped water supply. I am pleased to inform him that Executive Council has now agreed to extensions of the scheme.

Chief Michael Kanu asked about the Umuahia-Aba road. He is assured that the Tenders Board are presently considering the award of the contract for tarring this road from Umuahia to Ahoada to Abiriba to Ohafia and eventually to Arochuku.

Chiefs Ashirim-Unosi and Richard Ukwu asked about the Oguta-Ahoada-Degema Hulk

road, and I can assure them that work will start on this project next dry season.

Chief Nwagbara has asked that Azumini River be provided with a bridge. I am happy to inform him that contract has been signed for the construction of that bridge.

All the other remarks for tarring of roads, construction of bridges and supply of water are noted and will be implemented as far as funds can permit.

I am happy to announce to this hon. House on behalf of my colleague, the hon. Minister of Commerce, that the authorised capital of the Nigerian Lead Zinc Mining Company Limited has been increased to £600,000; this Government intends to invest £50,000. A capital issue of £300,000 in Nigeria will shortly be approved for subscription by Nigerians.

With this additional capital the company will be able to start the mining of Lead Zinc in a big way and on a productive basis. I hope this is good news to all of us.

As regards the payment of £400 to all Second-class Chiefs who are not here in this hon. House, as suggested by an hon. Member here yesterday, I would say, as I did a few months ago at Owerri, that this request is at the moment financially impracticable and to implement this request would tantamount to closing down some schools, non-tarring of many roads, non-supply of water to all the people of this Region, and so on.

Many hon. Members have suggested that the life of this House should not be co-terminous with the life of the Eastern House of Assembly. It is not possible to grant this request as the granting of it would be going contrary to our Constitution which lays down specifically that the life of the Eastern House of Chiefs must be co-terminous with that of the Eastern House of Assembly. It is, however, possible that after dissolution most, if not all, Members of the House of Chiefs will return to this House as Members.

Some Members have also asked for supply of staffs of office to all hon. Chiefs of this House. This request is noted but I do not want to commit the Government on this issue now. It will be examined.

Regarding specific duties to be performed by some Chiefs, it is proposed that some will be traditional members of Councils and some will be presidents of different councils and others will go into Customary Courts.

Finally, I thank all hon. Chiefs who have again and again showered praises on Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara and his Government for the able and proper way in which chieftaincy matters have been handled. I wish to assure the hon. House that Government will continue to handle chieftaincy matters with care and tact so that justice may be done to all concerned.

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** Many hon. Members who spoke made mention of the Ministry of Town Planning as well as the Ministry of Finance. I am now in-charge of these two Ministries. If I do not comment on all the points raised by hon. Members as regards these two Ministries, it does not mean that the points are not important. All the points raised are interesting and they have been noted, but the time at my disposal will not allow me to comment on all of them now. I may be able to do that later. But I think I can comment on two.

One is the point made by Mrs Margaret Ekpo about open spaces. She called upon this Government to preserve open spaces. I can assure this hon. House that when an area is laid out, one of the important considerations is to make provision for open spaces. In fact, we make provision for all the necessary amenities; we make provision for schools, churches, etc. In all the well-planned areas in this Region you can see that these are provided. Now to take Aba, for instance, where the hon. Member who has made this point comes from, there are open spaces all over that town. There may be confusion when we see a piece of land not built on and later on you see a building erected there; then you may conclude on your own that this is an open space. Open spaces are gazetted; we cannot regard an area as an open space mainly because there is no house on it. A place which is officially declared an open space is usually indicated in the gazette. Now, I want to say that when the U.P.E. Scheme was launched at Aba it was not possible to get sufficient land for all the schools

which the Local Authorities wanted there; they wanted schools well spread all over the town and it was necessary that time to encroach upon some of these open spaces.

That is the only occasion on which it has been possible for us to make use of open spaces. Apart from that, open spaces are well provided for in every scheme and that will still be the position as long as areas are laid out for development throughout the Region.

The second point I have to comment upon is the point made by Chief the hon. Joseph Wobo. The hon. Chief painted a picture which is very pathetic, but I am to say now that most of what he said were not as gloomy as he presented them. Perhaps the fault may lie in the medium through which the hon. Chief spoke. The position is that the place we call Port Harcourt, was acquired by the Nigerian Government of the old days. That was not done by the hon. Chief himself, it was done by his grandfather. When the hon. Chief came and met the situation I think he accepted it because he had no other alternative. This Government met that situation so—calling certain places Crown Land, and we had to accept them as Crown Lands. But when the area where the hon. Chief himself lives was not touched nobody bothered. They were all allowed to stay on there as squatters, and in spite of that the Crown paid the rent which the Agreement said must be paid. They are being paid this annually. The hon. Chief will agree to that. He is the one who signs for it every year; but when the area where he and his family live was being planned two years ago the hon. Chief met me and we discussed and agreed that he should send a list of all the members of his family. This was done; he sent a long list of people. I did not care to know whether some of them were minors, but a long list was submitted, and all of them were resettled after the area had been planned. I cannot understand what the hon. Chief means by saying that "If you hear your brother crying you go away and by the time you come back your own house is gone". Gone where? I cannot understand this sort of expression. I can understand when facts are presented properly, and if there are problems we can put our heads together and solve them. If you go there now you will see the house of the Chief. Apart

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from collecting this rent, all the members of his family have their own houses. The same thing happened to Chief Amadi. When we reached his area the same thing was done for him. The Government was very generous to the Chief and to his people in the village, having regard to the circumstances of the case.

Mr President, thank you very much.

**The Minister of Internal Affairs (Mr I. U. Akpabio):** I have only a few remarks to make. I wish to thank hon. Members for the appreciation they have shown of Government's activities and achievements especially in regard to the creation of the House of Chiefs, the commencement of work on the University of Nigeria and the creation of the Provincial Assemblies. I would like to inform Members that steps are being taken for the election of members to the Provincial Assemblies in the near future. Arrangements are practically completed with regard to the siting and, where necessary, the building of Provincial Assembly halls.

It is very pleasing to note that hon. Members appreciate the great contributions made by the Leaders of Government in the Eastern Region. I am happy to note that honour is being given where honour is due. The hon. Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara, has been congratulated for the able way in which he is tackling the problems of the Eastern Region. This appreciation of the genuine efforts which are being made to maintain a good Government will serve as an encouragement for him to continue the good work.

The remarks made by many Members about the great contributions of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the father of nationalism, continue to reflect the general views of the whole Region. The Government of the Region is fully aware of this and of the great love which the peoples of the Region have for him and the Government has decided, in keeping with the best traditions, as well as in order to meet public wishes, that a full size statue of "Zik" will be erected in a prominent place in the Eastern Region by 1st October this year when the country will become independent. This, we feel, will be a

modest way of expressing gratitude to the man who has spent most of his life fighting for the Independence which will be achieved this year. The hon. Premier will complete arrangement on this matter during his present absence from the Region.

The setting up of the Ministry of Economic Planning was raised by an hon. Member. It is needless for me to speak at length on this matter since an announcement has been made that a Minister has been appointed to take charge of the Ministry. I will only add that hon. Members will note that provision has been made in the Estimates for a high-powered Economic Adviser to assist the Minister. A suitably qualified Nigerian has already been appointed to fill the post and it is expected that he will assume duty shortly.

Finally, I wish to assure Members who expressed some anxiety about the arrangements which are being made for the celebration of Independence, that I shall make a public announcement in the near future in this connection. Detailed programmes are being prepared and some funds will be made available for the celebration. It is proposed that the celebration will extend to every part of the Region.

I beg to support the Motion.

*Question put and agreed to.*

**The Address to be presented by Members of the Regional Executive Council.**

**The President:** Order! Order! Hon. Chiefs and hon. Members, after adjournment there will be a meeting of the Committee of Selection in the Committee Room. On Monday all Chiefs, if possible, should meet in the Committee Room to discuss and decide on those who will speak on Monday so that others who do not speak might not complain.

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 o'clock a.m. on Monday, 2nd May, 1960.

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[Adjournment]

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May I remind the hon. Members of the Committee of Selection which will meet immediately after the rising of this House.

The members of the Committee are:—

Chief J. N. Wachuku.

Chief Eket Inyang-Udo.

Chief J. Mpi.

Mr C. E. Amobi.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Monday, 2nd May, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF SELECTION

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to report that the Committee of Selection has met and has agreed upon a Report. The nominations to the various Special Committees of the House are as follows:—

- (i) **Standing Orders Committee**  
Mr President (*Chairman*)  
Deputy President  
Minister of Town Planning  
Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E.  
Chief S. C. Nkwor  
Chief A. U. Ukpa.
- (ii) **House Committee**  
Minister of Internal Affairs (*Chairman*)  
Chief Angus Ilonze  
Chief J. Mpi  
Chief S. A. Essien  
Chief J. E. Ikeogu  
Chief Emmanuel Eze.
- (iii) **Public Petitions Committee**  
Minister of Information (*Chairman*)  
Chief R. J. Onyeneho  
Chief F. N. Ezerioha  
Chief N. N. Anyika  
Rev. and Chief Effiong Utit, M.B.E.  
Chief Joseph D. Agba  
Chief G. A. Ikibah.
- (iv) **Committee of Privileges**  
Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (*Chairman*)  
Chief Edward Nnaji  
Chief D. Onuaguluchi  
Chief Kanu Oji  
Chief F. N. Ogudoro  
Chief Akpan Enang  
Chief Ogba Ekirigwe  
Chief Sampson B. Maeba  
Mrs J. N. Mokelu.

(v) **Statutory Corporations Committee**

Minister of Commerce (*Chairman*)  
Chief N. U. Ofem  
Chief J. U. U. Ebong  
Chief W. Obassi  
Chief Silas Ezenwa  
Chief Gregory Agbasiere  
Chief E. Ashirim-Unosi.

(vi) **Public Accounts Committee**

Chairman (to be nominated by Mr President)  
Chief J. N. Wachuku  
Mr C. E. Amobi  
Chief Eket Inyang Udoh  
Mrs Margaret Ekpo.

**The President:** Chiefs and hon. Members, under Standing Order 79, I nominate Chief the hon. J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E., to be Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee.

ORAL ANSWER TO QUESTION

Women Representation in Local Government Councils

**13. Mrs Janet N. Mokelu** asked the Minister of Local Government, whether he does not consider it desirable that women should be appointed or elected to each Local Council with a certain number of seats allotted to them.

**The Minister of Local Government:** Since women can be elected to any Local Government Council in the Region if they are qualified to be councillors under the Eastern Region Local Government Law it is not considered necessary to make any special arrangements for their representation. It is neither necessary nor desirable to have a number of places in Councils' membership reserved for women as those of them who are capable are not precluded from contesting and winning election.

**Mrs Mokelu:** I know that women like men can contest elections into Councils. But what I am saying is that these elections are too "hot" for the women. So, arrangements should be made to reserve certain number of seats for them in Local Councils.

**The President:** Hon. Member, I am sorry that is no supplementary question.



## ORDER OF THE DAY

The 1960-61 Eastern Region  
Appropriation Bill

(FIRST ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Question (25th April): That the Bill be now read a Second Time.*

**The President:** Chiefs and hon. Members, before proposing the question again, I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Standing Order 77 (2) and to say that the debate on the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill shall be confined to the financial and economic state and financial policy of the Eastern Region. Three days are allotted for the debate on the Second Reading. Hon. Members will have the whole of today and tomorrow to themselves to debate the Bill but, on the third day, Wednesday, 4th May, the day the debate will conclude, the hon. Ministers will have the greater part of the day to wind up the debate. And may I add that we all are aware of the fact that all the Members wish to play their part in this Bill by making speeches. Is it your wish, so that we may be as democratic as we are, to confine ourselves to 15 minutes for each Member?

**Hon. Members:** Yes.

*Question again proposed.*

**Chief J. Mpi** (Port Harcourt Province): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. Before doing so, I wish to congratulate the Minister of Finance as well as the Government for their team work and co-operation. I have personally gone through the Estimates from the first to the last page and saw nothing bad in it. Each Ministry has outlined its future programme. After going through, I saw what would be the financial balance. I concluded that the Government of the Eastern Region know what they are doing. Yet I have one or two remarks to make. Such a big sum of money, over £22,000,000 to be spent for the services of the Eastern Region—I would ask the Government to take care this time, this year of our destiny to see that the people in the rural areas get their share. I know that they have been getting their share but at this time

when we are expecting our Independence within the next six or seven months, our roads from one place to the other and other amenities which will make the people to know really that they are entering another world should be embarked upon. Now we are here, whatever Government is able to do in the constituency where we come from goes a long way to help those of us who are representing them. We ask our Government to take a serious view of all the things that we are saying though we know that they cannot give us all that we want but still I would ask them to try to give us just half. We want better bridges, we want better roads. In my Division, I want more roads to be opened. People have been coming from Yenagoa to Ahoada. That road has been there though money has been allocated for it but Government is not as speedy as it should be.

I say again that those from my area—I think the Minister of Town Planning is here—there was a demonstration the other time. I do not think that I am criticising the Government or the Minister but I will advise the Minister to make negotiation with the people of Diobu whose lands the Government is now acquiring for the two industries to be put up in Port Harcourt. It is lack of proper understanding which at times used to make people agitate. I think the people were not properly informed. I think also that the Minister should make time to see them and to try to appease them. I take this opportunity to thank the expatriates who have remained in the service of the Government of Eastern Region up till now. I know that many of them have gone with the Lump Sum Compensation allowance but yet there are those of them who are still with us. I have to emphasise that we will still need more of them who will be friendly with us to come and help us. Those of them who still regard us as their boys as it used to happen when Adam and Eve were still babies, should now begin to find their ways as we will not regret missing them. Another thing I would like to say is that mention was made of Staff of Office several times here. It may be repetition or something like that, I do not mind; but we want to say this to our Government: that they should try to see that Staffs of Office as requested were ordered, and that we should receive them before the date of our Independence. That is a very important day in our history. That day once gone, will never come back again.

[CHIEF MPI]

Everything worth the dignity of a Chief must be completed on or before that day so that it will not be like somebody getting a ticket after the train had gone. The Government should try and see that we get the Staffs of Office before that time.

Having seen all the recent developments and progress being made by the Eastern Regional Government I would like to take this opportunity to say that all Ministers who intend to resign from politics after their present tenure of office—in case there are any—should change their minds and continue in politics so that they will reap the fruits of their struggles after Independence. During the election, I am sure they will all be returned to the House even for the next twenty years.

I will not take the time of hon. Members and as you said, Sir, I wish to give other hon. Chiefs an opportunity to speak. So with these few remarks, I support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief Zumoh Efeke V** (Yenagoa Province): I rise to support the Independence Budget ably prepared and introduced by an African for Africans. In order to show the importance of this Budget, I wish to add one more word to it so that instead of calling it "Independence Budget" it will be called "Independence Material Budget". This Budget destroys the shameful "Colonial Experimental Budgets".

Before I go further, with your permission I would like to put on record my appreciation of the most excellent works of our most respected and dynamic son in the person of Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the undisputed political God of Africa who aroused the political consciousness of Nigeria and Africa as a whole when politics was regarded as a most dangerous epidemic and contagious disease in Nigeria.

I also thank the present Premier, Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara and his able Ministers, for the even distribution of developments throughout the Region in order to make the Region a heaven on earth. I wish to advise the hon. Premier and his Cabinet, in my capacity as a political Chief, to fight relentlessly and indefatigably without grumbling and without fear or favour, for the course we are advocating. I would also advise them to keep away from gossipers who want to satisfy their whims and caprices at the cost of other people's good name and reputation.

Another advice that I would like to give is that our Ministers should be submissive to the hon. Premier and advise him when necessary and they should not frown when criticisms are levelled against them—especially constructive ones—by someone like me who is a political Chief and a Whip. I must assure the hon. Premier and his colleagues that the Members of this historical House are prepared to work with them co-operatively in all angles. Last, but not the least, I have to thank our able President and political father for the classical way in which he is conducting the affairs of this House.

Coming to politics, I must say that the Government should not regard Yenagoa Province as a C.O.R. State area because we failed them during the last Federal Elections. The disappointment was caused by our so-called big party men including a Cabinet Minister who threw our seats to wrong persons because of selfishness. (*Interruptions: Several Members: Are you sure?*) Yes, but I must assure the Government that the seats will be regained in future.

Now, I come to other observations I have to make. In the first place, I once more thank the Government for the various development works done in Yenagoa Province which are too numerous to mention within so short a period that this Government assumed office in 1951. Before that time the experimental Imperialist Government deliberately neglected the area, giving the impression that there was no land for development works. In fact, they regarded the area as belonging to a world of darkness.

**The Minister of Local Government (Mr P. O. Nwoga):** Point of Order. May I refer this hon. House to Standing Orders 30 (2) and 77 (2). Standing Order 30 (2) says:

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

Standing Order 77 (2) says:

"After the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill has been made and seconded, and the question thereon has been proposed, the debate shall be adjourned for one day and when resumed shall be confined to the financial and economic state and financial policy of the Eastern Region . . ."

While not intending to embarrass hon. Members, we, as the Government, will like to have their good advice on our financial and economic policy.

**The President:** The Point of Order raised is upheld. Thank you.

**Chief Efeke:** In Agriculture, I would like the Government to encourage farmers by granting them loans for the cultivation of economic crops; deep sea-fishing in the Region needs encouragement and better price for palm produce and cocoa will help to boost our economy.

*The Ministry of Commerce.*—I would like the Government to establish State Lottery so that we can raise revenue out of it. At present a huge sum of money goes out of this country on football pools. We want this money to remain in the country.

*The Ministry of Education.*—Government has done a lot in establishing Primary and Secondary Schools in the Region but I am pointing out to them that the whole of Yenagoa Province has only one Secondary School in the Northern Ijaw District, and I earnestly appeal to the Minister of Education on behalf of the Southern Ijaw District Council to provide funds to put up a few blocks in order to enable the Council open a college for its teeming children at Amassoma. This Council has been able to put up a storey building at a cost of about £11,000 to house this institution initially.

*Communication.*—Means of communication in Yenagoa Province is the worst in the Federation of Nigeria. A letter posted at Enugu would take not less than three weeks to reach me at Amassoma and a telegram will take almost the same time to reach its destination. Therefore, it is my humble request that the Minister concerned should convey this our suffering to the Federal Minister of Communications. There is only one Post Office at Nembe and there is no telegraphic communication.

The Government should also make all necessary arrangements to put up the Headquarters building at Yenagoa Province and

also building for the Provincial Commissioner. At present there is no building for the workers in the area.

I come now to the Ministry of Commerce. The U.A.C. in Nun River is becoming very stubborn, incorrigible and uninterested in produce trade, since they removed the District Headquarters from Akassa to Abonnema without convincing reasons. They discourage most of our producers, who, as a result, have to sell their produce to the U.A.C. and John Holt at Patani in the Western Region. This decreases our produce tax from Amassoma Station. Again, they removed with provocation the only iron crane, which was built about forty years ago, and sent it to Yenagoa for no just cause. This was about two years ago, and there is now nothing to carry or crane the casks of oil from the river to the beach. As a result of this, most of the traders and producers who were afraid and unable to carry their oil in tins to fill the casks or drums, remove their produce to Patani to sell. This automatically reduces our produce tax. Many a time and even before I left Amassoma for this House on the 16th of April, 1960, there were no bags with which to buy produce at Amassoma. This has been for over one month in this produce season and the clerk in charge, in the person of Mr Georgewill, was worried and was continually writing them for bags, but there was no action taken. When the Agent was fed up, and in order not to allow all our produce to be carried away to the Western Region, this able agent started to purchase the kernel and heap it indefinitely in a store. But mark you, there is a great suspicion in this, because the clerk in charge used to give an allowance in weight against deficit when bagging the kernel. To this the traders who know the scale have always objected, and every now and then, there have been troubles and quarrels and in many cases they have come to me and I advised that if they were not satisfied with the weight they should remove their kernel and bring it back to sell whenever bags were available. In some serious cases I used to go to the scale and examine it myself. I should like to mention an important case of this nature between one Saltbeni Kolu (Producer) and Mr Georgewill (Agent) around the 14th of April this year in the presence of the Produce Examiner in my place, Mr Udensi. Again, many tons of cocoa bought at Amassoma since September, 1959 have not been evacuated and the Produce

[CHIEF WACHUKU]

to the Shell Company. But I am disappointed in the B.W.A. I have not come across any scholarship awarded by this firm. We have been patronising them all along, but what have been gained from them? Not even a scholarship has been awarded by this firm to the sons and daughters of this country.

Another point is in regard to the pensioners, the old men who worked and suffered for the Government and have now retired. Everybody is asking for increase of pay and increase of allowance, but what about the pensioners? I am suggesting that consideration should be given to them.

Turning to the Secretariat, I have to say that if you go there now you will be banned from entering. You will keep standing for several hours; and the funniest thing is that while you are standing out, Government officials from the Provinces and elsewhere are allowed to enter. You cannot go in to see whom you desire to see unless you have a ticket.

Another point is in connection with the police. Many of us have been insulted. They have no regard for the Chiefs of this country in connection with the parking of cars during social functions.

*Ministry of Justice.*—There has been a sort of petition from Aba Division that Customary Court should be established in Aba Township. So I am advising the Government to be very careful to see that the Court will be manned by Ngwa people. We have Magistrate's Courts with full power and with limited power. Any non-Ngwa man who wants his case tried in a foreign way should go to the Magistrate Court. But for the purpose of Native Court matters, the Ngwa people should be the judges in the Court and no more.

The last remark I want to make is about what I read concerning an address made by the Premier to the A.D.O.s coming out of the Training Centre where they went to study Elementary Survey and Elementary Construction of bridges and houses. But there is something which was omitted in these A.D.O.s training, and that is courtesy. These A.D.O.s do not show any courtesy when writing letters to Local Government bodies. Some of them show courtesy when writing letters to other people but they do not extend this courtesy to

Local Government bodies. Government should look into this matter and see that this attitude on the part of the A.D.O.s is changed; otherwise, there will be no harmony.

With these remarks, I support the Appropriation Bill.

**Mrs Janet Mokelu** (Special Member): In supporting the Appropriation Bill, I have to express how deeply impressed I am on the hard work done to get up the Bill which covers the Estimates for the Region. I thank the Minister of Finance and the Government.

The points I noted with the greatest interest are: Firstly, that nearly half of the total revenue of the Region will go to Education, that is 45.86 per cent (page 10 of the Budget Speech). This heavy expenditure on Education shows the degree of importance which the Regional Government attaches to Education. We who are now on the know of this fact should take it home, and thus, show the fatherly care the Government has over her children. Parents should be made to realise that quite apart from the paltry amounts they pay in the form of school fees in Standards Three to Six, and in the Secondary schools, Government spends such heavy amounts on Education. They should be made to impress it on their children so that the children may pay back by hard work at school.

Criticisms have been levelled on the teachers and blames for poor results in Standard Six examinations have been theirs. To some extent these may be correct. But, I would like to say that there is a menace of care-free attitude taking grip of school children these days. It is for the home and the school to combine and fight this menace.

Secondly, page E 126 of the Estimates, Head 802—Road and Bridge Construction. I went through the list of roads and bridges to be constructed, and felt I should congratulate the Government on the Estimates. I happen to be one of those who are affected by bad roads, having come from Oraifite. One of the bad roads in Oraifite is the Idemili—Oraifite—Ozubulu road. During the last Federal Election campaign tours which took us to all the parts of the Region, I witnessed fully what bad effects these bad roads have on our people especially the women in the rural areas. To evacuate their produce which is their main

source of getting money, they have to carry the produce on the head for long distances. This is bad enough. These roads and bridges, when constructed will bring untold benefits to the Region. Travels will be facilitated and good relationship fostered. It would make us feel we are one people. Fair balance in the distribution of what the Region has will be maintained because through good roads, whatever is needed in one part of the Region will be quickly supplied it by the other.

The total amount estimated for roads and bridges is £3,500,000. This is colossal enough, but, if I had been asked to give the estimate, I would have made it double the amount, and that is £7,000,000, judging from the importance road has in my mind. These roads and bridges when constructed will bring more money to the tax-payers, and they will pay more tax without difficulty, as I think that everyone would like to have more money, and pay more tax.

Thirdly, Colonial Development and Welfare Programme—page 15 of the Budget Speech. The Minister termed it the “Backbone of Nigerian Development”, and stated that it has lasted for fifteen years; and further stated that Her Majesty’s Government in the United Kingdom has generously agreed that the balance of the allocations to the schemes will be handed over in form of free grant to enable us carry on the schemes.

At page 18 the Minister continues to say that this Region will get £1 million out of the £3 million that would be loaned to Nigeria under a special arrangement. I think that Britain by these gracious acts of financial assistance has so highly endeared herself to this country. If I may do so, I should say that the British should be looked upon not as foes but as friends, and as friends in need who are friends indeed.

With these few remarks, I support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief E. Inyang-Udo** (Uyo Province): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. There is one thing in the estimates of which I am very proud. During the years gone by and during the time of the old Imperialist Government, we used to hear about estimates of £2

million, £3 million or £4 million for the whole Region. But now we have proved that the black man is capable to run the Government of his country. He is helped by some of the expatriates who are loyal; there are good expatriates and there are bad ones; some of them do sabotage the Government and some say, “I get my pay and I do my work”.

I thank the Premier and his Ministers. I have also to thank the brain behind this Government. In years gone by, few believed that the black men could hold high offices but some cynics did not believe it. In this connection I refer with due respect to the capable Chief Secretary to the Premier who is the brain behind this Government. So we shall continue to promote those who are capable to do their jobs.

I now come to the question of who may be the next Governor of the Region. I feel the post attracts very good pay and that it is not too much for the black man.

The other day I had some visitors from India and I showed them round the old Secretariat buildings and pointed out to them a lot of improvement made by our people. I told them that we have been able to put up these buildings since we were in power. So that when you get Africans in power you are sure to get fine buildings and cities.

*Ministry of Finance.*—Reference was made of pensions and gratuity in the Budget Speech. I got my pension several years ago and with it I maintain myself. There is no need to call upon the Government to give us money for everything. We can plant cassava and other crops.

We call upon the Regional Government to create technical schools. This is what made Britain and the United States powerful nations.

Many people in this country today want stenographers. You cannot get them because our girls do not train for it. I now call upon the Government to create institutions for this learning for boys and girls so that we can get clerks for about £5 or £6 to do our typing for us. When the expatriates come to work they demand £500 or £600 for this work and they get it quite all right.

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*Ministry of Agriculture.*—I want to point out that the Government and the Corporations should not control the Pioneer Oil Mills. Give the people a chance to run these mills because the economy of this country depends on ourselves. Mention was made about the establishment of factories by the Ministry of Commerce. I want to see the factories going on.

*Ministry of Economic Planning.*—There is a challenge for this Ministry. Every year our boys and girls come out from school and they have no work. This Ministry should plan for such things in the future.

The Ministry of Town Planning should plan for farm settlement. We have land in this country but the land is not yet explored. This will be the work of the Minister because the Constitution tells us that once the other House has passed a Bill and it comes to the House of Chiefs which is equivalent to the House of Lords, it only becomes law if we pass it.

*Ministry of Education.*—If I were educated up to the Cambridge School Certificate level or even to the University level I expect to get a job. Years ago people told us that American education was not good. Today they hold American education as one of the best. So I am advising the Minister of Education as a Chief that whenever he wants to employ people outside this country, people who are graduate teachers should be given the pay for graduates. He should not put a barrier to stop employing qualified people from outside the country.

*Ministry of Health.*—We have so many quack doctors in the Region. We have illicit injection being administered to innocent people. The police should do their best to make arrests. I am advising this Ministry which is the most important Ministry in the Region to approach the Commissioner of Police to help to stop this illicit injection. We have able and qualified doctors and they should come and work together. We should like to have a research section in the University of Nigeria for experiment on various diseases.

The Estimate is a very good one and it is an answer to the C.O.R. State agitators. Everything for the C.O.R. State is here. You do not need to remind somebody who knows better for anything. What I want for my Province

is the completion of the waterworks at Uyo. We do not want this sort of P.W.D. business. Nigeria cannot afford to have lazy people and everyday they would be asking for more money.

*Ministry of Information.*—I am very happy that my hon. Friend—I will not mention his name—is the Minister of Information. I know he will handle that Ministry very well. Only last week I made a speech querying the attitude of some people. I discovered that the staff of the Ministry of Information were chasing me since that time. They should not chase me like that. After all, I am above that. If the police cannot send me to prison, they too cannot. I did worst things than that when the Governor was sitting here. I wish to ask my Friend the Minister to see that when people are sent to his Ministry he will check them. They have given me a new name. This is my complaint. They now call me ‘Inya’ and it was printed at the first page of the News from Eastern Nigeria. This portfolio is a very important portfolio and I ask the Minister to see that all his printing will be done in the right way in future and I know he will do that through the pressure from this House.

The portfolio of the Minister of Internal Affairs is heavy but I know that the Minister is a capable man and that he will be able to hold it; so I have nothing to say about that Ministry.

The President of this House should have a house here in Enugu. This is the business of the Minister of Town Planning.

**The President:** The hon. Member has five minutes more, please.

**Chief Inyang-Udo:** Onitsha is now a London and that is due to the efforts of the people there and that of the Minister of Town Planning. We should be grateful if the Minister will try to make everywhere a paradise.

**Chief E. Ashirim-Unosi (Ahoada Division):** I rise to support the Appropriation Bill and to thank the Minister of Finance for his excellent Budget Speech.

Before proceeding with my speech, I should like to crave your indulgence, on behalf of the hon. Members, for relaxation of our Standing Order 77 (2) for one or two reasons. Firstly,

most of us at this initial stage of our time in this Legislature have not adjusted ourselves to the practice or procedure. Secondly, it is not the intention of the hon. Members of this House to "pick out bones" either with the Budget Speech or the Budget itself.

They would like to make their speeches without much formality and with particular reference to the needs of their areas.

Our Budget for 1960-61 has been described as the "Independence Budget" for its exceptionally broader provisions in the Development Programme covering all aspects of social services, for the people of this Region. I entertain the hope, and I dare say, as well as every Member of this hon. House, that the Government should pay special attention to distributing the amenities to the fullest benefit of every section of the communities in the Eastern Region. There had been the tendency in the past, to apply the Development Schemes to expanding or improving existing amenities in urban areas to the exclusion of the rural areas where the bulk of our population is domiciled. I should like to refer to the Budget Speech of the hon. Minister of Finance, pages 12-13. With your permission, Mr President, may I read:—

"In this year of Independence, Government attaches great importance to establishing the Legislature, and the services of Government in buildings and quarters which, without being extravagant, are worthy of the enhanced status of this self-governing Region."

We, the Members of the House of Chiefs have placed on record our feeling of gratitude to the N.C.N.C. Government for their laudable achievement, in establishing the Eastern House of Chiefs. This establishment, we realise, has created a new Head of Expenditure for all that it entails. We thank the Government for honouring this hon. House with the appointments of two of its Members as Minister without portfolio and Provincial Commissioner, respectively. It would add more to our pride and above all, to the dignity of this hon. House to see that our President is accorded full status and privileges of a President of the Upper House of the Eastern Region Legislature. He is a worthy personality and the right man in the

right place. Unfortunately, when I arrived in Enugu, I was shocked to find the President in a local hotel. One would have thought that the Government should have provided the President with a house of his own as the Government has done in the cases of the Speaker of the House of Assembly and the Government Chief Whip. For the President on arrival in Enugu for the meeting of the House to carry his baggage from one hotel to another looking for accommodation is a shame and an insult to this House. No doubt, it is an insult which the Government does not quite intend. The situation nonetheless is certainly derogatory and humiliating to the high office of the President of this hon. House when you consider that this is the Upper House of the two Houses comprising the Eastern Regional Legislature.

We are made to understand that Government has earmarked a grant of £48,000 to poorer councils for maintenance of the Customary Courts. We welcome the introduction of the Customary Courts. We regard the Customary Courts as a reformation of the Native Courts for better administration of justice. The great mass of our population depend on these courts for justice. With the changing conditions, we need to examine carefully the machinery for their successful operation and you would find that it is old-fashioned. Our people should be qualified or trained for the management of the offices which they are to hold and should be paid adequate salaries for their services. Knowledge of local customs is not enough in all cases. This is a department in which the servants—clerks and messengers—receive higher salaries than their masters, the judges. The excuse is that the judges are not worth their salt. That is a deplorable condition which must be looked into.

With these remarks, I beg to support the Appropriation Bill.

**Mr C. E. Amobi** (Special Member): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. The Minister of Finance should be congratulated for the work done in bringing up the Bill, and all the members of the Ministry should be congratulated too for having done the work in such a nice way and in such a short time; also for the way it has been brought up to this House. I would join in calling the Budget an "Independence Budget" because I see in it

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considerable amount of improvement that will come up within a space of few months, with the adoption of this Bill.

Before I sit down, I wish to say that in many cases the Members of this House or the Members of the House of Assembly keep saying "Give me this, give me that". The Eastern Region is well known for its efforts in community development, and I feel that we should not just go and sit down begging the Government to do everything for us just as small boys do. We have to help the Government by community developments. As far as tax drive is concerned, I should congratulate the Government for its method in tax drive, and should suggest that the limited time given to tax drive is not enough, because in some Divisions many people do not pay tax, more especially the low income taxpayers. During the tax drive, they hide from one corner to another, mostly in hotels. I am suggesting that tax drive should be given a considerable length of time, so that those responsible could go into the houses and into the hotels and tract tax evaders. We do not want indolence in the Eastern Region. On this tax drive, I have to say that many women today (I am very sorry for our women Chiefs in this House) resort to living in hotels; instead of sticking to their husbands they go about jumping from one hotel to the other. I am suggesting that this type of women should pay tax. They make much money daily and they should not be allowed to go away with that money, lavishing it in buying lip-sticks. Government should provide in law that all licensed hotels should see that these ladies who remain there as "hotellers" pay tax.

The other day I heard over the radio that school leavers have started to demonstrate in Lagos about the Government finding them jobs. In this particular instance, I am suggesting that mechanised farming must be adopted at least in the Eastern Region. We have got the land. Government should do everything possible to see that we have mechanised farming. Our boys and girls will be willing to work, but not to work in the crude way that our fore-fathers did. Many of them would like to drive machineries used in farming. Most of them would like to be time-keepers, wearing their shoes and shirts. With the introduction of mechanised farming, I think this question of unemployment will be a bit settled.

I should suggest that in the economic interest of this Region, the Civil Service must as soon as it is practicable be Africanised, because that will reduce the inducement pay, the leave pay, going to Europe and coming back, children's allowance, etc.; but I still believe that all the expatriates who have the sympathy of the Eastern Region at heart should remain. We know them; and such people should be encouraged at all costs to remain with us. But those who feel that they are lords should be asked to go.

When we talk of economic planning, I feel that no Government will survive without trade. I have been an employee of Mercantile Establishment for over twenty-five years now, and I know what is trade. Government should see to it that traders form corporations, so that they will be able to put their resources together; loans should be given to such traders who are ready to put their heads together and form companies. I would suggest also that Government should consider that as soon as practicable people are sent to Europe to study trade. We have got many good lawyers in this Region and many other things. But people do not want to send their children to Europe to learn trade because it is just an intricate profession that poor parents cannot be able to sponsor their children. It does not pay so easily as other fields pay. Government should encourage sending people to Europe to learn trade. We talk of instability of our men, but at times it is due to ignorance. If you train somebody he will be ashamed of himself when he does not know his job; but if he knows his job he is confident of himself and will always be able to put up good performance.

As far as economy is concerned, I should congratulate the Government for having an Economic Planning Minister. In this economy, many aspects of our day-to-day life should be examined. If you go out in the shops, you see all sorts of cars and lorries. The Minister responsible for economic planning should go into many details. Many things must be discouraged at least in the Eastern Region for the economic stability of our Government. There are some cars which cannot give good service for two years, but people, due to ignorance or due to ambitious high life, more especially those who have motor-car advance, rush to the firms to buy



them. The firm tells them this costs £1,500. Why not buy a car of £800 or £600; afterwards both of them give you the same amount of service if properly handled. It is only a question of extra iron sheets being scattered here and there. The money of the Region is being ruined for nothing. After two or three years one may not be able to maintain such big cars and even cannot sell them. People cannot buy them for taxi. But if you buy a motor-car and it is properly used, after three years you can sell it; people can use it for taxi service.

The Minister of Economic Planning will see to it that, if possible, those who receive advances for the purchase of motor vehicles should be encouraged to buy special types of cars.

Another point which I would like to touch is connected with the Onitsha Urban District Council, and the Onitsha Town in general. Many hon. Members do say that Onitsha is developed. But in Onitsha there are only two gutters which were built in 1928. Both the Magistrate's Court and the High Court are still in a very poor state. I think that what people regard as the development of Onitsha is nothing but the efforts of the people living at Onitsha. It is the indigenes and the people who do business in Onitsha that develop Onitsha. In this particular case I am asking that efforts should be made to see that a sufficient loan is given to the Onitsha Urban District Council for the purpose of drainage. (*Interruptions*). Members are shouting but I can assure you that the Onitsha Urban District Council is repaying its market loan more regularly than any other Council in the Region. Members should also note that Onitsha being the centre of commerce and trade is being used by all the people of Nigeria. The Onitsha market is beneficial not only to the Onitsha indigenes but also to everybody in this Region, those hon. Members who are now shouting not excepted. Onitsha is the centre of education and some of the hon. Members here have their boys and girls attending schools in Onitsha. So it is clear that everybody in the Region stands to gain in any development in the town. I am therefore appealing to the authorities concerned to see to it that a sufficient loan is given to the Onitsha Urban District Council for drainage.

This brings me to another point. The Onitsha police is doing excellent work in the

control of traffic in Onitsha which has constituted a serious menace to the school-going population in Onitsha. Police constables are posted to strategic places from 7 o'clock to 12 o'clock and these constables control the movement of children going to school.

Concerning the question of health, there is no Region that will survive without good health. In this instance, I am reminding the Government of the possibility or the necessity of building an orthopaedic or physiotherapeutic hospital somewhere in the Region. It is very important. We encourage sports in the Region and it will not be unreasonable to expect that at one time or another some of our children will emerge from the sports fields with broken hands and limbs. In some parts of the Region especially in the riverain areas, rheumatism is prevalent and the establishment of an orthopaedic hospital will go a long way to solve some of our health problems.

I wish to congratulate the Minister of Education for what he has done in improving the standard of education in the Eastern Region. I wish to point out, however, that the Minister responsible for education will have to discourage mushroom secondary schools. I will now explain myself to you. There is a tendency in this Region for some people to build secondary schools without having the interests of the Region in mind. Rather they build secondary schools merely for gain. There is a case of one secondary school whose foundation was not up to two feet deep with the result that when the storms came the school was badly damaged, and nearly all the lives of the school children could have been lost. It is this sort of secondary schools to which I am now drawing the attention of the House that I want discouraged.

I would also like the Eastern Regional Government to pay more attention to the opening of technical schools. In Europe and other parts of the world, technical schools are regarded as more important than secondary schools. We have boys and girls who are anxious and willing to avail themselves of this wonderful opportunity. At present our children pay more attention to shorthand and typing and they believe that that is the best way of standing on their own. We must train our children in the technical fields and any Government which cannot boast of providing its own

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technicians is not worth its salt. More emphasis should be placed on technical education and this should be borne in mind when awarding scholarships overseas.

The last Government—known as the Eyo Ita Government—gave out some loans to people and these loans have not been recovered. Government should now make every effort to confiscate the property of those people who are now unwilling to pay.

Turning to the Posts and Telegraphs Department, I wish to point out some irregularity in the paying of bills for telephones. Although I have no telephone myself, I have friends who have and complain about the method of assessing bills. Formerly, charges were made for each booking so that one could see at a glance which calls he had made during the month concerned. At the moment there is no such specification and all that happens is that a bill is sent to each person to pay any amount. This is very unsatisfactory and I am appealing to those responsible to see that this unsatisfactory arrangement is brought to a halt.

I know it is the Federal Government responsibility but I am saying it now through this House because I have no other way of putting it to the Federal Government. I know the Minister of Information will help me with that particular case.

Before I take my seat, I have to bring to the notice of the President that even up till now, the editorial staff of this House still refer to some Members as "Mr" and I think that since this Chieftaincy Bill was passed everybody in this House is regarded as a Chief, even the Special Members.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief Francis Nwizu Ezerioha** (Orlu Division): I do not see why this Bill should be further criticised. I had thought that all we are required to do is to come and endorse what has already been planned. The Bill has been drafted by well educated people but all I will observe is that the Bill should have been divided into twelve sections to agree with the twelve Provinces in the Region. We have come from different Divisions clamouring for bridges, roads and so on, but you will agree that not all the Divisions compare in population. My people in Orlu have asked me to bring to the

notice of Government their wish that the bridges connecting the following towns, Olasi-Orlu, Onitsha-Nwangele require permanent construction. Orlu is a very large place, but it is very surprising to know that since the Government came into being, it has not been able to build a good hospital for the people. We want the Government to give us a good hospital. We want also an extension of the telephone service. When Independence comes, what amenities will we say we enjoy? We should not be forgotten at this time when amenities are being distributed to Divisions. Anybody who is a son will one day require what he will use in remembering his father. I do not think that our request is out of place.

I have been a Chief for a long time. None of you knows what I suffered before I was installed a Chief. This encourages me to support Mrs Mokelu's request that women should be elected into the Council. Chief Njemanze will bear me out. In 1929 women were heavily taxed. They, the women, did not like the idea and had to send one Chief Ikijo to go and confirm the rumour. The rumour was confirmed and that brought about the Women's Riot. We are not foreign people. The Government is the Government of Nigerians by Nigerians. I did not buy Chieftaincy. I will ask the President to thank the Ministers. They are Nigerian Ministers. They suffered before they came in here and you should know that the sense they exhibited in preparing this Bill was well directed. We are marching to Independence and I think we should thank the Ministers in group rather than individually because it will seem as if we are asking for their favour.

We do not want to hear that the Eastern Regional Government has liquidated because of giving amenities to all the towns in the Region because I see here that every Member is asking Government to do this and that for them. We have a limited time to debate the Bill in this House and if we go on criticising every aspect of the Draft Estimates, I wonder whether we shall ever have time for other business of the House. If our areas have anything to request Government to do for them the people should put their needs in writing and send to the Ministers concerned and Members should not come here always to inundate the Government with innumerable requests for this and that.

I want the Government to share amenities and development among the twelve Provinces created because some people who are wise will always come to claim a lion's share.

**Chief John Udo Udo Ebong** (Abak Division): I have to thank the Minister of Finance for the pains taken to prepare this up-to-date Appropriation Bill. It is indeed the result of a carefully planned work. I also thank all the Ministers for their contributions to this Bill and may I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Government as a whole for the great relief given to the labourers by raising their daily wages by 20 per cent. It is a truism that most of these labourers face serious financial responsibilities; they have to educate their children and look after their families. The recent increase in wages have therefore solved their problems to some extent. I think that if the Government will advise employers in other fields of labour to bring the daily wages of their labourers to the same level that will be very helpful. For instance, in my Division, Abak, there is a sub-station of the West African Institute for Oil Palm Research where labourers are paid only 3s 2d a day. This rate is, in my opinion, quite inadequate for their living.

There is one thing which I feel I should put up for consideration by the Government. Sometime ago there was a proposal to construct a railway line from Aba via Oron and Calabar to the Cameroons. I do not know what has happened, but if this proposal has been dropped I feel it should be reconsidered, because the construction of railway lines, apart from causing more trade, both inter-Regional and domestic, will surely provide work for many people who are now unemployed.

I thank the Ministry of Agriculture for the mechanised method of farming now being introduced into this Region and at the same time I wish to draw the attention of the Government to what has been going on in this Ministry. The Ministry has for many years past confined itself to what is known as "experimental farming" leaving the practicable agriculture almost untouched. In view of the fact that our Independence is at hand I feel it is wise to look for the black goat when darkness has not yet come. The Government

should now introduce the real practical agriculture into this Region.

*Sitting suspended at 12 noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**Chief Ebong:** By this I mean that the Government should introduce real practical agriculture into this Region. All works and experiments should give way for practical agriculture. Efforts should now be made to employ well-trained agricultural officers on to the job. It is true that trained agricultural officers are scarce but Government should endeavour to take advantage of every opportunity to employ trained men available. For example, a well-trained agricultural officer, a Nigerian from Eastern Nigeria, arrived in this Region from the U.S.A. since December, 1959 but up to this day he has not been employed. He was interviewed by the Public Service Commission but nothing has yet come out of it. The fact that this man is at present being fed by his wife may force him to seek employment elsewhere or in other Regions. So I feel that I should appeal to the East Regional Government to see to his case, otherwise we lose this trained agricultural officer.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief Gordon Ascot Ikibah** (Brass Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill and before doing that I have a few remarks to make.

First of all, I have to congratulate the Minister of Finance and the Government as a whole for presenting such a comprehensive budget. It covers every aspect of the Region. It has passed through the other House without amendment. That alone is sufficient to regard it as a comprehensive budget. Once again, my congratulation goes to the Minister of Finance and the Government as a whole.

Now, the other remarks that I want to make are these: First of all, turning to Head 425—the Legislature, I notice that the difference between the salary of the hon. President of this House and that of the Speaker of the other House is very great and I have been wondering what is responsible for that. If all the floor Members are considered equal by the Government and they earn the same salary I would like to know why the Speaker and the President

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should not earn the same salary. Thinking over it I cannot arrive at any conclusion, so I feel I should make mention of it. I am not driving at the point that this should be amended but, if I am correct, because I am making this observation in good faith, Government should consider it and bring the salary of our hon. President into line with that of the Speaker of the other House. The same thing applies to the Deputy Speaker and the Deputy President of this House when their salaries are compared.

Now I come to Education. A reasonable amount of money has been voted for scholarship and I am appealing to the Government to give consideration to Brass Division, one of the under-developed areas. I appreciate what the Government has done for us but I still say that since Brass Division is one of the under-developed areas, special attention should be paid to the Division. In some places it has been argued that we do not have qualified men but I think that we have. We have qualified men in many cases and consideration should therefore be given to us. In the field of secondary institutions I believe all of you are aware that there is only one secondary institution in Yenegoa Province and that is the Grammar School at Yenagoa. This is the fifth year of the life of that institution and the first batch of boys will be passing out from it. But you will be sorry to note that these boys who are passing out from that school this year would not take Science subjects because the Laboratory is not well equipped and there is no University Graduate Science Master.

This is the problem. The poor parents will afterwards find another institution for these children and spend extra money again. Up till today it has not even been recognised. If that is not done, the parents will suffer and the children will suffer too. When I asked why they are not taking science subjects in the school, these were the two reasons given: the laboratory is not well equipped, and there is no University Graduate. University Graduates, as I understand, are difficult to get. But today if you go to the Yenagoa Grammar School, you will find that a son of the soil holding an Inter B.Sc. degree is in charge of the science section. I would like to call upon the Government to grant this young man a scholarship and he will qualify as a graduate and come back and work for us. At the same time I appeal to the

Government to give special grant to equip the Yenagoa Grammar School; otherwise the second batch of the boys will also suffer and perhaps the third batch too, and the blame will go to the Government. This is an appeal to the Government with regard to Education in Yenagoa Province. Apart from that, one secondary school alone is not enough for Yenagoa Province. We want more. If the Minister of Education can only travel around and see what is the position of things in Yenagoa Province he will be in sympathy with Yenagoa Province. We are prepared to co-operate with the Government by community labour; even to build houses for the sake of having secondary schools. We are trying and Amassoma has got a building. Odi is now putting up a building of eighteen class rooms, the headmaster's office, library and store and that building will soon be completed. Unfortunately, when the ex-Premier and the present Premier with their colleagues visited Odi in September, 1959, owing to the long programme they were not able to visit that building. They were called upon to do so, but they were tired and I do not blame them. Therefore, if Government will look into the matter, we really want more secondary schools in the area. At the same time, I fall in line with one of the previous speakers who said that technical education is more important for this Region. Self first, and therefore I speak for this Region, and not only for this Region, but for the whole of Nigeria; for we are fighting to see which Region will lead the others, and I quite agree. Technical education should be put forward by the Government. Furthermore, when we come to Head 802: Road and Bridge Construction, the question is already there and therefore I do not want to touch that point; but I remember that certain amount of money was voted by the Government for the construction of bridge in Nembe between Ogolomabiri and Basambiri. From investigation—I am not quite sure—I am told that Government has been kind enough to pay £2,200 to the Nembe District Council to carry out this project and up till today, nothing has been done. I will like the Government to investigate whether the money is still there, or spent for another purpose, and if for another purpose, why? Now, we from Yenagoa Province have both land and river. There are so many bridges to be built but the particular bridge I have mentioned above is what I feel I should make mention of so that Government will find out what has actually happened.

*Rural Water Supply.*—This has been touched by previous speakers and my colleague from Yenagoa Province. As far as Yenagoa Province is concerned supplies are to be made at Akodia and Amassoma; but to the best of my knowledge the work at Amassoma has not started, and I do not know why. I would like Government to implement this scheme. We really want this water supply; we know we have river, but there are strong reasons why we do not want to use the river water. Let me call attention to what happened when the ex-Premier and the present Premier and their colleagues visited Odi in September last year. They were kind enough and condescended to have luncheon with me in my house. Both the ex-Premier and the present Premier and two other Ministers were on one table with me. I noticed that during the luncheon instead of calling for water, which in most cases is usual with human beings, both the ex-Premier and the present Premier called for stout. I did not know the reason. Perhaps they suspected that the water on the table was river water not knowing that it was rain water. It was later on that one of the Ministers whispered to me whether it was river water that was passed on the table. Then it became clear to me that they called for stout because of the water. It is not only at Akodia and Amassoma that we want water; we want it all over the Province, but we cannot just ask for all at the same time. Therefore I am appealing to the Government to implement this water scheme at these two places and it will be carried on further to other parts of the Province.

Coming to general matters, I do not want to waste the time of the House; I wish to say something about smuggled goods. We have heard cases and stories that smuggled goods particularly from the Cameroons and Fernando Po, and so on, used to be destroyed. May I suggest to the Government that when such goods like Brandy are got, instead of destroying them, let them be sold to the public and money will be realised. After all we want some revenue for the Region. We want bridges and water supplies and so on and so forth; we therefore need money with which to provide these things. We need money from everything in the Region. (*Interruption: even from illicit gin?*). Yes, from illicit gin! (*Chief Z. Efeke: I support*).

Now Independence is in sight. Reasonable amounts of money have been voted for that

purpose. I would like the Government to see to it that a fair share is given to each Province so that everybody will enjoy it; particularly in the rural areas where most of the people do not understand what is happening and it is left to us who are their representatives to explain to the people.

Now, in conclusion, I want to say that we do not come here to quarrel among ourselves, but at the same time, I would like to make a comment. I am making this comment in good faith. One of the speakers had made certain remarks against the U.A.C. I disagree with those remarks. The U.A.C. has done a lot for this Region (*Some hon. Members: Because you are a U.A.C. man*). Well, I agree that I was in the U.A.C.; I served U.A.C. for 32 years. But that is not the reason why I say I disagree. We are talking of Yenagoa Province in general; never mind one station. If a man knows something is going wrong in that station, he should ask for explanation. If the explanation is not satisfactory, then, go to the Manager, either the Merchandise or Produce Manager at Abonnema or Akassa who is controlling the area. As far as I know, the U.A.C. will never remain in any station where they know they are trading at a loss and U.A.C. will never try to cheat the people. If it is found that U.A.C. is underpaying the price of produce, then bring it to the notice of the Government. After all, where there are two or three other firms trading, it is a competition. If U.A.C. is actually trying to stop other people from coming to the area to buy produce, does that mean that U.A.C. is disturbing people from coming to that area? I am not quarrelling with anybody's views, but what I am trying to say is: let us "call a spade a spade". When we all come here, despite all that the Government has done for us, we should tell them where we find that they have gone wrong. This is the opinion of everybody; that is why I am bringing up this matter. Otherwise, I do not quarrel with the views expressed by my hon. Friend.

**Chief Ntuen Ibok, M.B.E.** (Opobo Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. In doing so, I have a few requests to make from Government.

My people of Opobo Division would like Government to take over more roads from local government bodies in that Division.

[CHIEF IBOK]

We in Opobo Division also want Government to open Secondary Schools in the Division.

We want Government to sink wells in Andoni areas of Opobo Division.

We also want Government to give loans to the Andoni people to enable them to improve their fishing industry.

We request Government to ask the Federal Government to extend telephone services to Ikot Akan, Essene, Annang and the Four Group District Councils in Opobo Division.

We also request Government to make provision for employment of Third-class Chiefs and Clan Heads who are not members of the House of Chiefs.

We would like Government to establish industries in Opobo Division and other District Council areas in Ibibio land in order to find employment for young men and women who go to Fernando Po because of lack of job.

I thank the Government very sincerely for the recognition of Chiefs and I hope the hon. Members of the House of Chiefs will justify their recognition. I hope also that the Chiefs will undoubtedly support the Government on matters concerning the well-being of our people.

**Chief N. U. Ofem** (Abakaliki Province): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill and to thank the hon. Minister of Finance and the able staff of his Ministry for their work in preparing the Estimates, including the Memorandum for 1960-61. I doff my hat to the hon. Minister of Finance for his Budget Speech which he christened "Independence Budget", in keeping with the established tradition of christening any budget. The hon. Minister's Budget Speech discloses that the financial position of the Region is buoyant; to this end, we of the Eastern Region should be proud. We shall therefore enjoy our Independence with oneness of heart. Some of us were afraid of financial break-down when the Government was kind enough to give an interim award of 10 per cent to the civil servants of the Region, and, soon after the report of Mbanefo Commission was published, this award was augmented. It is

gratifying to know that the Eastern Region is not working on an unbalanced budget.

*Television Services.*—I am imploring the Government to establish television services in the rural areas of the Region because when any expatriate comes to the Region he does not want to see people in Enugu; he does not want to see people in Lagos; he does not want to see people in Onitsha; but he wants to see people in the rural areas of the Region. It is in the rural areas that he will take pictures and go home and say: "here are the people of the Eastern Region" (although people in Port Harcourt, Enugu, Onitsha and so on are also in the Eastern Region). Furthermore, in order to help educate school children, television services should be considered in the rural areas of the Region. I know that before this can be done satisfactorily, electricity is necessary. According to information—I do not know if my informant is in order—in a town with a population of 5,000 or 6,000, electricity should be installed for the town. For instance in my town, Ugep, according to the population census of 1953, the population was 17,567. These people therefore are justified to ask for electricity supply. I ask this specially for the stranger elements in that place; we have the head of R.C.M. at Ugep; we have a teacher training college there and there are two Reverend gentlemen—the head of the C.S.M. and the head of Roman Catholics.

I will now deal with the sitting of Magistrates Courts in Obubra. The Magistrates at present only sit at Obubra station. Taking the population census of 1953 into consideration the northern part of Obubra has a population of 47,000 and the southern part a population of 61,000 and from the south to the north is 44 miles, so that it will be difficult to trek 44 miles to hear cases. When will it be possible for the Magistrate to sit in two places in Obubra?

*Town Planning.*—It is stated that God helps those who help themselves. We the people of Ugep have for many years opened up town planning at Ugep. I am imploring the Minister of Town Planning to send up town planning experts to Ugep to replan that town as soon as possible. I take this opportunity to appeal to the Minister of Works for the tarring of the Ediba-Obubra road. I know that this is not in the Estimates but this can be done.

**Chief Ike Okoroafor** (Bende Division): I have pleasure in supporting this Bill and I have pleasure in thanking the Minister of Finance and his colleagues for the excellent work they have done in presenting this Budget. Many people are blessed for living in good areas and others are not and they live in remote and bad areas. I happen to belong to those who live in bad areas geographically. I live in Bende Division. The time has come when we should expect something from the Government. We have no roads. Our area is muddy. Yesterday I visited home. The road between Umuahia and Bende was flooded. I am now appealing to the Minister of Works, Internal Affairs and Local Government to help my Division in different ways. The Ministry of Works should help in the community development scheme by giving the people more caterpillars for road construction works. The Ministry of Internal Affairs should give more fund to the community development scheme in order to assist the rural men to pay for the cost of building these roads and the Ministry of Local Government to make more grants to Rural District Councils. It is by means of this community development that people in the backward area benefit and enjoy some amenities which people living in good areas enjoy. They have asked for some of these amenities from the Government but nothing has been done. Last week I met the officer who has been responsible for this community development work, Major Riggs, and found that he is suffering much for lack of transport to cover these rural areas.

I appeal to the Government to consider rural areas for Rest Houses at places like Ohafia and Abriba so that when Ministers and august visitors travel to such areas they will not be stranded. When this House begins to consider those who should be honoured, this officer, the Community Development Officer, should be considered because he has worked for the good of this country. Most of the Government's revenue come from taxes and rates. If the workers in the Local Government Councils are encouraged they will do more to collect these taxes. They have complained and appealed to the Government that they do not want to belong to two Ministries—the Ministries of Local Government and Justice.

They should do more by trying to open more Domestic Training Centres for women. I

also appeal to the Government to establish a Grammar School in Bende Division—in this case, not only for women but also for men. Education should not be one-sided.

With regard to the Ministry of Agriculture—well, that is the main need of the day—I should think the Ministry is doing its best; but I should appeal also to the Government to grant more loans to all farmers—big and small. Some people got loans sometime ago and failed to use them appropriately. This, of course, should not deter Government from helping these farmers because they are the supporters of our existence.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief P. U. Obodoeze** (Nsukka Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. The Estimate is in order. I will direct my thanks to the Minister of Finance in particular and to other Ministers in general. It is time now for us to imitate other nations. We are now expecting Independence. In England, there is no rural area; likewise, we here, do not want to have rural areas. Therefore, it will be a good thing if every place is developed.

Further, I will like to pay tribute to the Minister of Agriculture. I am still saying that that Ministry has a lot of work to do for the Region in order to speed up development. In so many places, in the rural areas, there are portions of land for industries. In my own area—I can say this, if the Minister tours the area, he will agree with me there are several portions of land that could be utilised for growing rice, sugar-cane, rubber and even other valuable crops. In a place like Omor in my area, the people there are generally known as rice producers. Onitsha people can confirm my claims. We have two types of rice—Omor rice and Ogrugru rice. It will be good for the Minister, therefore, to look into this and see that the people of this area are remembered in this respect.

In the case of the Minister of Commerce, I have to thank him for the good work he has done. He is an able Minister.

[CHIEF OBODOEZE]

Regarding the Ministry of Education—may be the present idea of education is forgotten in my Division because there is no Education Department there—it will be a nice thing if the Minister of Education will try to see that schools are set up in Uzo-Uwani area in Nsukka Division. I think before a person gets into a University, he will first know the simple "A.B.C.". This makes it very important that the Minister must do something in this respect.

With regard to the Ministry of Health, I would suggest that in places where it is not possible to put up hospitals, maternity homes should be put up to help pregnant women and even people who are suffering from diseases. With this idea in mind, I would say that a Health Centre is very important in Omor area and Nsukka Division in general.

Referring to the Ministry of Justice, I would say that Police protection—everybody knows that—is of vital importance.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief S. Wabara** (Aba Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. In the first place, I have to congratulate the Minister of Finance and the Regional Government for their carefulness in the management of the finances of this Region. As a new Chief in this hon. House, I have not been able to study the Bill properly as to criticise but I have to advise the Government to be very economical in its expenditure so as to have reasonable balance at the end of the year.

I beg to call upon the Minister of Education to consider deeply the question of teachers taking part in politics, thereby leaving their schools for council meetings in order to draw pay from schools and from the councils. Their absence from school every time is one of the reasons why we have bad failures—mass failure—in the Standard VI examination every year. Their main reason for insisting on going to council meetings is to promote corruption rather than discourage it.

Regarding communication, we the people of Azumini require a sub-post office for easy communication. In 1959, we sent a plan to the Government to approve but unfortunately,

that was not approved. If the plan cannot be approved by Government we shall build the sub-post office by community effort and ask Government to take it over as is done in many places.

I beg to support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief S. A. Essien** (Annang Province): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. In doing so I wish to thank the Minister of Finance and all concerned for the time taken by them in preparing the Appropriation Bill. I have to point out that there is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds of outstanding taxes in the Eastern Region, and it is true that some individual taxpayers and collectors are dead now. I suggest that the Government should appoint Local Councils as Agents to assist in the collection of the huge arrears of tax for the past four years from 1956–1960.

I wish to add that during the time of Native Administration, the staff that formed part and parcel of the Government were not given sufficient scale of salary, but since the introduction of Local Government into the Eastern Region, the Local Government staff have enjoyed better condition of salary. I therefore suggest that Government should consider giving the Local Government staff equal right in salary revision as is done to the staff in the main Public Service. They are buying from the same market and besides that they are on full-time jobs.

Turning to the Ministry of Commerce, I have noticed that for the past and present, licences are always issued to Licensed Buying Agents who are residing in big townships and Divisional Headquarters. I wish this were extended to rural District Headquarters so that traders who are able to obtain these licenses may be given privileges; for there are some applications that have not been answered merely because these people are not living in big townships or Divisional Headquarters.

I do not want to repeat what I have said about the provision of schools, but I am asking the Ministry of Education to consider extending the Adult Education services to Annang Province for there you find that there are so many people who cannot read or write, and our Independence is almost at hand.



I know my people need more water supply and I would like to know from the Minister of Works why Ikot Ekpene township which is our Provincial Headquarters for Annang has not been given water supply.

We are owners of oil palm trees, and we are farmers. We need more loans to enable the farmers cultivate their farms. I am appealing to the Government that we should not be forgotten when money would be distributed to farmers.

I wish to point out briefly that it has been noticed that schedules used for the working of gratuities during the time of Native Administration are still in force for the employees of Local Government staff, though the conditions of service have been revised. I am calling upon the Minister to consider revising the schedules thereby bringing them up to date.

With these few remarks, I beg to support.

**Chief Michael Eze** (Awka Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill and to congratulate the Minister of Finance and others concerned in the efforts made to compile the Estimates.

I have to make one point, and that is that the Local Councils are badly treated by this Government. They are suffering from all sides. They are not well paid yet they care for themselves. This is one of the most important things Government should consider. If the Government considers it, it will help in the collection of taxes because Local Councils never pay attention to tax collection because they gain nothing. Had it been that certain amount is given them, that would encourage them to assist in seeing that taxes are paid. Many people will see with me that many Local Councils do not pay proper attention to the collection of taxes because they are not recognised by this Government. Previously, when the Councils were collecting the tax, people were collecting taxes from their families and if anybody failed to pay the Council would prosecute him. If you have anybody who is unable to pay his tax you may pay for him in order that he may not be prosecuted. By that way collection of tax went on smoothly. But now, how can a stranger come to my town and find out who has not paid tax, except myself

who know my people. Therefore, I suggest that Government should take appropriate action in this respect.

Another point is the construction of roads and the provision of water supply. This is the need of everybody. Proper attention should be paid to it because road is very important. I would, in a nutshell, urge the Government to see that a lot is done towards the improvement of our roads and the provision of water supply.

I support the idea that the President of the House of Chiefs should get a good salary which is worthy of his high office because if the status of the President is raised it means that our own status will consequently be exalted.

There is one other point which I consider is important in this House. I am appealing to hon. Members of this House to add a little honour to the proceedings of this House by not interrupting Members' speeches. I have noticed on many occasions that so many people do murmur and heckle only to the utter inconvenience and discomfort of speakers. I have therefore to appeal to the President to use his high office to check this undesirable tendency so that the proceedings of this hon. House will always be conducted in an atmosphere that is compatible with the dignity of this House.

Sir, I beg to support.

**Chief Gregory Agbasiere** (Orlu Division): I wish to refer to the Ministry of Education in connection with the Standard Six examinations, which as everybody knows, have not been conducted with the maximum efficiency. The results of this examination had in the past been late in appearing to the utter disgust of many thousands in this Region. Many of us who oppose the delay in the announcement of the results of Standard Six examinations do so because a lot of inconvenience is caused to the children who took the examination in that they are stopped from taking up jobs in time. Also, many children have to wait to hear the results of their examination before proceeding to secondary schools and the delay of the results has unfavourable effects.

I think a way can be found to solve the problem of delay in releasing the Standard Six

[CHIEF AGBASIERE]

results. Government should consider the advisability of sending the examination papers to all the Provinces with a view to allowing the Provinces concerned to make arrangements for the marking of the papers. After the papers have been marked, they can be forwarded to the Ministry for, if necessary, re-examination. This will help the results to be released in time and our boys and girls will be able to get their results by, say, December. Those of them who wish to proceed to secondary schools will then be able to do so and as many as wish to take up jobs will be afforded an opportunity to do so.

Turning to the question of U.P.E. schools, I would like to point out that some of our U.P.E. schools are over-staffed. This results in a considerable sum of money being wasted which could have been more profitably used in building more U.P.E. schools so that more of our young boys and girls may benefit in the universal primary education being provided. I should therefore like the Government to look into this matter with a view to taking appropriate action. As mentioned by hon. Mrs Ekpo, many of our U.P.E. schools have no regulations to guide them with the result that our children in the U.P.E. schools do whatever they like. I think there should be some laid down regulations so that anybody breaking the regulations can be adequately punished.

I notice that the Government does not help the farmers in the rural areas sufficiently. This should not be so, as it is these farmers from the rural areas that grow our food and feed our teeming millions. I did speak several times on the floor of the other House pointing out that it is a wrong thing to neglect the poor farmers living in the rural areas.

I am asking the Government to consider giving sizeable loans to farmers. I think that will help them a lot. The Standard Six boys coming out of school could be employed in the farm for 5s per day. You know what that will amount to—about £6 a month. I think the boys could manage with that.

I support the Bill.

**Rev. and Chief Effiong Utit, M.B.E.** (Enyong Division): I wish to make one suggestion which Government seems to have overlooked in respect of tax collection. It is a fact that Government is losing every year considerable amount of money as a result of

under-collection of taxes. In my view one reason for this is often because young men, sometimes strangers in the area, are appointed as tax agents. Because these tax agents are strangers to the people from whom they are to collect taxes, they do not know all the people liable to pay tax in the area. There is nothing to stop people hiding and evading tax. We have village heads and local councillors who could serve as tax agents effectively. It is these people that I want to recommend strongly to Government for appointment as tax agents.

Our traditional leaders at the village head level are still important forces to reckon with. Without their co-operation it is impossible to expect outsiders to go into their villages and collect tax easily. In some places these local chiefs are also local councillors. These chiefs and local councillors now tend to think that they have been completely left out from the scheme of things. They are frustrated, because they are not given any work to do. In the recent past, these village heads and local councillors were serving as tax agents, and were paid certain commissions or rebates. In some areas such rebates were used in community development or even in the award of scholarships for higher learning. In my view, it will be in the interest of Government to re-introduce the practice of making village heads tax collectors. They should be paid commission which should be given to the different local councils for use in community development, since they have no other means of raising money with which to run their councils.

There is another point to be considered. I am sure Government is aware that demands have been made from different quarters that village heads and local councillors should be paid by Government. It is understood that Government does not consider such a request practicable, because of the number of the people involved and the amount of money which would be required to meet such requests. Is it not possible that the suggestion I have made for their appointment as tax agents would go a long way to meeting the desire of village heads to be given some work to do?

I should like to ask Government to consider my suggestion and give it a trial. If they do that, they will see that more tax will be collected, and more co-operation obtained from the village heads.

As a Minister of Religion I wish to say that in deep and warm gratitude to our Government, I do and will ever in this life make it my bounden duty to pray to God for His guidance and protection of our indefatigable leaders, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, our able Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara and his lieutenants. Our hon. President Chief Nyong Essien, his deputy and all other Chiefs and Members of the House of Chiefs have each high responsibility and I wish all God's blessings, abundant grace and guidance in their execution of the great task in our march to Independence in October 1st 1960. May we have progress and stable Governments in the years to come.

**Chief R. J. Onyeneho** (Okigwi Division): I rise to support the Bill. The position or the healthy condition of any society or Government is known by its Estimates—revenue and expenditure. The Eastern Region is very healthy indeed from what we have seen from the Appropriation Bill. There was a time in 1954 when I was at Ibadan, we were being mocked by the Westerners because they said we had no money and that we could not maintain our Region. Today, I am very happy to see that the Eastern Region is marching abreast with the other components of the Federation. With the healthy condition of the Eastern Region, I am making the following points on the following Heads and Items. (*Interruptions—Some Members: What are you going to say?*). Mr President, you are here; I do not know whether some of the people who are interrupting me are real politicians. If they are, they should be good enough not to disturb when I am speaking.

I am going to say something about education. I happen to belong to the Local Government set-up and in fact I happen to have been a Manager of some Local Government schools. I see now that the schools are growing very well but I am very sorry to note that after Government had introduced a thing Government became reluctant to follow it up. We had some grant to build the first school containing three or four classes. The school is now growing so much that the children are schooling outside. We know that Government has not got sufficient funds but I would suggest that we get little grant every year so that some extensions could be made to provide accommodation to school children who are now forced to take their classes under tree shades.

The point is that our children must be educated but I am understanding one thing from the Government. Government gives grant to Voluntary Agencies and the teachers collect school fees from the pupils in the school. They are all our children and the money paid is from us. But I am beginning to wonder that after the Government has given out money to the Voluntary Agencies for the payment of teachers' salaries and when they have collected fees from our pupils for the payment of teachers' salaries they tell us that the control of the teachers is not the concern of the Government but that of the Voluntary Agencies and for that reason teachers could play politics whether the children at school are taught or not. I am saying that it is necessary that if a teacher wants to play politics he should resign his appointment. He could be on leave without pay for such a period as he would like to play politics. When he has done with politics he could return to his office because no man can serve two masters at the same time. I want to substantiate my statement with this example. Government usually issues circulars saying that Local Government teachers should not play politics because Government gives grants to Local Government Councils but they also give grants to Voluntary Agencies and yet they are allowed to play politics. Government should consider this.

*Water Supply.*—This is very necessary because in my area, Etiti in Okigwi Division, all the water we have there is spring water in very deep valleys. Consequently it presents considerable difficulty going to draw water, especially for our old people. I am therefore asking Government to do something possible to see that we get water. If they can get out the water for us we shall be happy, instead of allowing our old men and women to take the risk of drawing water from a place almost inaccessible to them. (*An hon. Member: I support you in this*). I am happy I am supported in this request.

*Ministry of Justice.*—I have seen that Customary Courts are being established, all under Local Government but it appears the members of the Customary Courts want to go back to Government. I feel they can go to Government if Government agrees to pay them. But to be under Local Government while Government maintains them is not good

[CHIEF ONYENEHO]

enough. I would therefore ask that if Government has the money to maintain them, let them be taken over by Government.

Another thing is that I discovered that the salaries of the Customary Court members are too meagre, and I am suggesting that the salaries be increased so that they will not be tempted to look here and there for private inducement. If the number of Customary Court Judges is too many, let that be reduced provided the few serving are paid something that befits the office. Formerly Customary Court Judges were attending courts once or twice a week but now they have been asked to attend courts everyday. I therefore appeal to Government that they should be paid according to their work.

Some people complained about tax evaders and some citizens being hidden from paying tax. I am putting it to the hon. Chiefs that it is our duty to report to the Tax Office anybody who does not pay his tax. We should not, after conniving at such offenders, come to the floor of this House to make pretence of sincerity. In this connection, I am wondering whether Government could devise a way whereby it will be possible to know what is to be done about the tax receipts issued to tax-payers. I remember that during a tax drive in my Division, so many tax-payers lost their receipts because they were soiled by rain. When they are caught on the road without their receipts, it is generally assumed that they have not paid their tax. They are immediately dragged to the Court. But if the tickets had been such that the rain could not spoil, the poor tax-payers should not have suffered in the way they are made to suffer. I would suggest that they prepare plate receipts. (*An hon. Member: What of the duplicate?*). That is quite all right; the duplicate in the office means going back to the office to trace.

I am asking Members to agree with me that Government should see to it that when the estimates are being prepared the hon. Ministers concerned will consider the various Divisions. I do not like to see that one Division has got two or three amenities when the other Divisions have got nothing.

On the Table, I have seen what the President does. In the chart on his Table he has our names. He calls this man to speak, then that

man, and so on. Likewise I want each Minister to put the Divisions in his chart so that when he is distributing amenities he will look at the chart and thereby ensure that every Division receives due attention. I would not like to see that two roads in a Division are tarred while none has been tarred in the other Divisions. I am very serious about this and I hope my seriousness will sink into the minds of the Ministers.

Since I do not want to waste the time of the hon. Members, I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief Sampson B. Maeba** (Ogoni Division): Before I attempt to say something I have to thank our Ministers who have helped us to come together. I thank them because we never saw face to face like this before. They have helped us and I thank them. To see ourselves face to face is better than the various applications we have been sending to them.

I will now call upon the Government to have a look at her young Ogoni Division which is in need of more help from the Government.

There are four important roads in the Division and only one is tarred out of the four. I want the Government to tar the remaining three roads for us. One of them starts from Sara to Kalaoko water-side through which most of the trading activities are carried on with the people of Opobo. The last road starts from Sara to Baen, which also helps the people to communicate with one another. I want the Government to take these roads from the Council and tar them quickly for the Division.

It seems that the Government does not know that a big town has grown up in the Ogoni Division, which is known as Bori Township. Bori in Ogoni Division was opened since 1946 and there are now people in the town doing various types of work. There is always fear of danger in the whole town in the night in the event of people walking out from their houses, because of the absence of lights in the streets. I am now begging the Government on behalf of the township to give us electricity as other towns have got.

If the Government does this, it will be a great help to the town and the robbing of people's houses in the night will be less, and the people can walk out in the night without any fear.

I beg the Government to consider Ogoni Division because we are a very young Division. We need more help from the Government.

On the question of tax arrears, I think the cause is from the tax offices. When the tax collectors go to the tax office to pay in what they have collected the tax clerk will persuade them to offer him something. Because they have no other money on them except the tax they have collected, they simply dip their hands into that money and offer some amount to the tax clerk. The clerk will then give them receipt, with a note that a balance of such and such amount remains to be collected. But the fact remains that the tax collectors have got nowhere else from which to collect the said balance. Thus we have irrecoverable tax arrears. Again on the question of tax assessment I am putting it up to this hon. House that it would be better if the assessment was left in the hands of the Divisional Officers who will decide, after very careful examination, those officers who are to go out as tax assessment officers. This is necessary because those who have to pay income tax are generally the rich people who easily bribe their way through, and thereby pay less tax. The result is that the poor man, who has nothing with which to bribe, pays quite a large sum, comparing him with the rich man who has bribed in order to pay less. So I want this hon. House to appeal to the Government to look into that matter. I am to appeal to the Government also to help the Chiefs in this hon. House because without Chiefs the Government cannot go on smoothly. We are all for the Government.

I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief F. B. Nduka** (Okigwi Division): Although I hope to talk tomorrow, yet I have been given time to say something now. I support the Bill but will mention about three Heads. I will start from the Ministry of Agriculture; that is Head 427. On behalf of the Okigwi people whom I represent I call upon the hon. Minister of Agriculture to take heed that we are immensely indebted to him and to his subordinates whose untiring efforts and foresight have largely contributed to the progress of the pottery project in Okigwi Division. That this project occupies a vital place in the pride, culture and economy of our

country cannot be over-emphasised. Many articles of various moulds and values from this industry have not only circulated widely in our country, but have also infiltrated into many of the foreign countries. Most of the people that come across them have taken to them very well. I call upon the hon. Minister of Agriculture to do all that is within his power to ensure that this vital aspect of the country's future industrial power is steadily increased in scope so that large output would result in low cost per article. It is indisputable that a large portion of the population is still unaware of the existence of this pottery project. To stimulate and foster the desire and pride for such things made in Nigeria, I urge the hon. Minister to adopt all the necessary measures so that a wide publicity may be attached to the entire industrial output. As we are on the verge of Independence whatever we have as an enviable industry should be expanded so as to make it a "corner stone" in fostering national industrial projects. I am sorry to bring to your notice the fact that the fishery establishment in Okigwi Division is neither revealing immediate bright project nor prospect in the near future. The country is emerging in an era when it will be ridiculous to voluntarily or involuntarily arrest the inevitable hand of progress. We are now living in a period of growth and excitement and it will be worth while in the name of progress and speedy results to see to the satisfactory execution of any project undertaken.

*And it being 2.15 p.m. the President interrupted the business, and the debate stood adjourned. Debate to be resumed tomorrow.*

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until 10 o'clock a.m. tomorrow.

May I seize this opportunity to make one important announcement. The Eastern Nigeria Information Service camera-man will be shooting a film entitled "Government at Work" in front of this hon. House tomorrow, depending on the weather, after the House rises just about this time. Hon. Members are advised to be in their colourful dress for this purpose. Now, this is the order:

*Scene I:* The President himself.

*Scene II:* The President and his Deputy.

*Eastern House of Chiefs Debates*

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[Shooting of Film]

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[Shooting of Film]

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**Chief James Okosi II** (The Obi of Onitsha):  
I am sorry I will not be here tomorrow.

**The Minister of Town Planning:**

*Scene III:* Hon. Members chatting among themselves.

*Scene IV:* The President entering his car followed by his Deputy and other Members.

Hon. Members are asked to remember this and to put on the most colourful dress for the occasion.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

## EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Tuesday, 3rd May, 1960

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

## PRAYERS

(Mr President *in the Chair*)

## ORDER OF THE DAY

**The 1960-61 Eastern Region  
Appropriation Bill**

(SECOND ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Question (25th April): That the Bill be now read a Second Time.*

*Question again proposed.*

**Chief F. B. Nduka** (Okigwi Division): Thank you for allowing me to complete my speech which I started yesterday. Yesterday, I deliberated on the many projects undertaken by the Minister of Agriculture in Okigwi Division. Knowing how hard-working our hon. Minister is, I am confident that he would, in not too far time from now, take all the necessary remedial measures to produce satisfactory results.

Turning now to Head 434, Ministry of Health, I must emphasise that the Ministry has rendered inestimable service to our beloved country, and Mbano people are no less receivers of such services. However, there is a matter concerning the Mbano District Council Hospital which I must point out to the Ministry. The £20,000 promised by the Ministry to improve the Hospital and make it a 60-bed Hospital has been withdrawn and the Hospital has been handed over to a Voluntary Agency. We wonder why this should be so. The anticipation of Mbano people is that if the Government cannot manage the Hospital for them now, joint management would be preferable. The £20,000 would not only go a long way to improve the Hospital, but would also ensure efficiency and reduce the heavy burden on the people. Therefore, the sooner the Ministry of Health reconsiders this matter the better it will be for the Mbano people.

I will now deal with Head 441, Ministry of Works. Any fellow countryman who has travelled widely in the East will agree with me that considerable improvements have been made in our Regional highways. All the same, much remains to be done. In Okigwi Division, with the exception of the excellent road leading from Oji River-Okigwi-Umuahia, other roads known as Trunk "B" roads, are still under-developed and work on them is outrageously very slow. I beckon on the hon. Minister of Works, who has done a lot for the Region, to take into consideration the fact that a large portion of the Region's population make frequent economic, social and educational use of the bad Trunk "B" roads leading from Owerri to Okigwi and from Orlu to Okigwi. It is therefore hoped that work on these roads would be accelerated.

Lastly, on this Head, I would like to comment on the uncompleted £20,600 Water Supply Project which was started in my town Nsu in Okigwi Division more than a year ago. The long delay in providing the people with good water supply has nursed in their minds lack of faith and trust in the Ministry. In addition to this, the pipe water points have not been evenly distributed to the villages concerned. The Ministry has alleged that the amount of £20,600 allocated for the work would not be sufficient to enable the work to be completed satisfactorily, so water pipes will not reach some villages who, incidentally, contributed their quota in the amount. The Ministry has gone further to suggest that a further £400 should be contributed by the people before the pipes would be extended to those villages that have been left out. Since this suggestion, the people have not found it possible to contribute the amount. I would like to seize this opportunity to ask the hon. Minister of Works to see that Government augments this amount so that the work may be completed in a short time.

Lastly, I comment on Head 430, that is Ministry of Education. I will only say a little on this Ministry because my time is almost up. This Ministry has the greatest share in the Region's annual estimates. I hope nobody worries about this. My point here is that the voluntary agency teachers should be given the same status with their contemporaries in the Government service. They should be given the same 15 per cent Mbanefo Award and

[CHIEF NDUKA]

then prevent them from contesting elections. They are all Government servants since Government is responsible for the payment of their salaries.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief J. O. Njemanze, M.B.E.** (Owerri Province): I thank you for giving me the opportunity of saying a few words and to support the Bill.

This Appropriation Bill has been commented upon rightly and wrongly by hon. Members of the House. We all should congratulate the hon. Minister of Finance for being able to arrange his budget in his Ministry as he has done.

We have learned from the budget the huge amount provided for various projects. I am sorry that most of the Ministers are not present but I think they will read our speeches. The reason for our coming here should not end in smoke. The hon. Members of this House have brought out before you the needs of their people and Government should bear in mind that these needs are very essential. I am glad one of them is here now, that is our hon. the Minister responsible for Chieftaincy. The needs and the demands of the hon. Chiefs should be implemented; we know of the saying that "Rome was not built in a day". Many a time our budget depends on the hard work of our people, but as soon as there is money available to meet these demands, they should be implemented.

I call the Minister of Works' attention to the Post Office at Owerri. The congestion of people there has become too much; the Post Office is under-staffed. We were made to understand by the Federal Government that the Post Office will be extended, but since then, nothing has practically been done. I ask the Minister of Works to look into this matter.

The Posts and Telegraphs is under Federal, but, everybody here will agree with me that something is wrong with the communication of this Region; it goes off all the time. You take up the telephone receiver and ask for a number and you are told: "the line is bad". All the time you are told that the line is bad;

this is very disgusting. Government should do something to put the lines in perfect condition; the lines cannot be bad always.

The Owerri people, and the Region as a whole, are very grateful to the Shell-B.P. Company. For the few years they have been in Nigeria, they have done a lot for us and we have benefited from them in many ways. They give work to our children and we have a heavy revenue from them which will make the finances of the Eastern Region in time to come to be the brightest in the whole country. We are being called today the poorest Region, but I say as the Bible says: "The first shall be the last and the last first". We have many resources and these resources have not been tapped, but when the time comes for them to be tapped, I am sure that both the Western and the Northern Regions will come to borrow money from us. So our Ministers should be up and doing.

I appeal to the Regional Government to help Owerri Division which is the largest in population, to see that some sort of industry is established there. This will enable the boys who have come out from school and who are going about without work to get employment.

*The Ministry of Town Planning.*—I am grateful to Government for having extended the town planning authority to Owerri Urban. I appeal to the Minister for money; we have just started but our purse is empty. I am also calling upon the Minister to define or differentiate the work of the Town Planning Authority from that of the Urban District Council. These two forces always conflict in the work of town planning. I would like the Minister to define their work so that it will be properly done. The Town Planning Authority in Owerri will decide a case today, but when it comes to the Council, the so-called Building Committee will turn it down. Also when the Building Committee of the Council decides a case about town planning, the Town Planning Authority will set it aside. So I strongly appeal to the Minister of Town Planning to define the work of these two bodies in order to foster efficiency.

I now come to the expatriate officers in this Region. In fact most of the expatriate officers in this Region are far from being loyal to us and many of them too are good and are interested in Nigerians as a whole. I am



therefore appealing to the Government that they do their best to encourage those expatriates who are loyal to us and who are prepared to serve. Those who still believe that the black man is destined to serve should be repatriated.

May the soul of our dear African son in the name of the late Herbert Macaulay rest in peace and may God give long life to another of our dear son Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. These two great men have done great things and have shown today that the black man was not born to serve but to be served. Therefore these good expatriates should be encouraged. The young men in the civil service should be polite to them.

*The Ministry of Health.*—I am asking that the Owerri General Hospital should be considered along with other projects. Although the Medical Officer there is doing a good work we want a new ward to be built. We want the staff quarters to be rebuilt. The existing quarters are in awful condition and they are not fit for human habitation. The Minister of Health should consider this matter and take immediate action.

*The Ministry of Local Government.*—On behalf of the Owerri Urban District Council I appeal to the Minister of Local Government for an adequate grant. Last year a grant of almost two thousand pounds was allocated to the Owerri Urban District Council but that allocation was not granted. It was said that a few weeks ago he remitted the sum of £200. I feel that that is not enough.

**An hon. Chief:** You are lucky.

**Chief Njemanze:** *The Ministry of Education.*—We know that Owerri Division is thickly populated and there are schools here and there. I appeal to the Minister of Education to consider the Government Secondary School and make it a double stream. This will make so many primary school leavers in Owerri to be admitted in this school. I appeal to him to see that most secondary schools which are under Government supervision have graduate teachers. In most of the voluntary agency schools the qualification of most of the teachers is only Cambridge School Certificate. They go on studying for this and that examination leaving the students without proper care. How do we expect a

man who devotes his time to learning in order to pass examinations to teach the students properly? How do we expect that the boys would gain anything from this man who has not concentrated on any subject which he is teaching? Those voluntary agency schools who have no graduate teachers should be encouraged to employ graduates for most of the important subjects. It is well known that those schools that have not got the services of good graduates have not done well in examinations but the ones with graduate teachers have done very well in the Cambridge School Certificate examination. An example of this can be seen from the result of a school like the C.I.C. Enugu which enjoys the services of many Rev. Brothers. They always gain one hundred per cent pass in the results of the Cambridge School Certificate. The result of last December clearly shows this. The results of most of the voluntary agency secondary schools were very bad indeed.

With due respect, I beg that you allow me ten more minutes to wind up.

**The President:** Will the hon. Member, please, comply with the wish of the House? He has only five minutes more.

**Chief Njemanze:** As I was saying, I believe you are aware that the Supreme Court at Tinubu Square is being demolished. Remember these two great men and for the children unborn in Nigeria, who should bear them also in mind. I suggest that all nationalists make a contribution so that when the Tinubu Square is completed the statues of these great men should be erected there for the unborn Nigerians to know them and know what achievements they have made for the country.

Lastly, I think of the question of "Tit for Tat" and "Butter for Bread". It is often said and, no doubt, correct that "man is not God". Many of us who are here enjoying good salaries are here with us and not for us. I want to refer to the incident at Opobo and even Uyo. In the case of Opobo, the young Chief who has been appointed a Minister without Portfolio is probably an enemy of that area. The area is against the N.C.N.C. Government but they cannot do the young man anything. Two days after the appointment of the young Chief as a Minister without portfolio, an Action Group member was

[CHIEF NJEMANZE]

appointed the Chairman of the Local Council there. The intention of the people of that area was to give the Government bad impression so that the latter might withdraw the young Chief as a Minister. I am asking the Government to respect the young Chief. He is an N.C.N.Cer and nobody should think ill of him. He is with us.

I thank you, Mr President, for allowing me extra time, and with these few remarks, I beg to support the Bill.

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo** (Special Member): In rising to support this Bill, I have to render my thanks to this Government for the announcement made the other day to erect a life-long monument of our ex-Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the first President of the Senate. This monument will be there for our future off-springs to derive the spirit of nationalism from that monument.

I now refer to the first-class Independence Budget Speech of our young, able and smart Minister of Finance. I must say that when an expert has completed his job, it will be quite useless for a layman to tamper with that job.

I have one or two points to make in the form of advice: Firstly, I would suggest that in future, this Government will make a levy of 5s per non-wage earner. This will go a long way to help. We are about eight million people in the Region.

Secondly, I want to align myself with what Chief Amobi said the other day that all those girls whom I regard as parasites and who are roaming about the hotels, stealing out of the pockets of those who encourage them, should be asked to pay tax. I am a woman and I know how much I pay.

I want to thank the Minister of Finance for increasing the salaries of workers and this, I hope, will enable the workers to devote full time to their work thereby bringing in more money into the Region.

I would sincerely wish to refer to the Regional Legislature. In the past, I noticed that the *Hansard* was never ready until after a long time—that was when European ladies were reporting the proceedings of this House. I am

very happy now to notice that with our young Africans, as the Reporters, we receive the *Hansard* every morning. In fact, the Reporters are very alert in their job and every morning we are always happy to see our reported speeches in our pigeon holes. Considering that there are now two Houses meeting in succession I feel we should give them our sincere gratitude because if a servant is working very hard and his master does not encourage him, he becomes despondent. In this connection, I would like to see that they have their wages, overtime allowances and reporting allowances increased.

I now have to refer to the position of our President. In London, this House should be called the House of Lords and the other House will be called the House of Commons. I do not see, therefore, the reason why the President of this House—the equivalent of the President of the House of Lords—should not be given all the privileges given to the Speaker of the other House. I am appealing to the Government that the President of the House of Chiefs should be given some allowances like entertainment allowance, allowance for the upkeep of the House he might be allocated and also for the maintenance of the grounds; allowance for soft-furnishings and finally, travelling allowance as well as chauffeur's allowance. I feel that with all these, the dignity of the President of the House will be raised. At present he is not enjoying anything—none of the above enumerated—whereas his counterparts in the West and North are enjoying these privileges. I should also feel that these privileges should be retrospective as from the day he was appointed President.

I would now like to say something about the Ministry of Local Government. As a Member of the Aba Urban District Council, I am standing here on behalf of my Council to say "Bravo" to the Minister of Local Government for his help which has now enabled the Aba Council embark upon its 5-year development plan.

With regard to the Ministry of Justice, I would like to say that the Aba Urban District Council had sent in a petition that we want a Customary Court to be established there as the Magistrates' Courts are always very congested. It is also necessary in order to hasten collection of our taxes. Judgment is never obtained in time to enable us ask defaulters to

pay up their dues. I was very happy yesterday when our great Chief J. N. Wachuku supported this customary court in Aba Urban, but I disagree with him as far as his "sons of the soil business" is concerned. In this year of our Independence, we should put into practice what we know usually as "one Nigeria".

With the introduction of the Ministry of Economic Planning, I hope that Government will see to it that only able and well educated men will be absorbed there to work in order to maintain the standard which, I hope, the Government had in mind in introducing this Ministry—an important Ministry for that matter.

I now refer to the Ministry of Commerce. I would like to congratulate the Eastern Region Government through this Ministry, for taking an equally rigid stand to boycott all French goods since France has been so stubborn and stupid to carry on with her atomic works in the Sahara. A few weeks ago, the women of this Region had taken their stand with the Regional Government.

May I also advise the hon. Minister of Commerce to work out the possibility of sending some of our young men overseas on scholarship to do trade. The Government should organise seminars for our petty traders and teach them how to trade so that it would be possible for Government to stop this business of adulteration which is now rampant in every trading corner of the Region.

The Minister of Commerce will be good enough to invite all these petty traders together and emphasise to them the need to stop adulteration of goods which they sell. This will go a good way to safeguard the health of the people of this Region.

*Ministry of Health.*—I would like the school medical work which is being done here at Enugu to be spread to all parts of the Region. This will reduce the congestion in our hospitals because when the school children are there including pregnant women and the workers, it takes a house wife a long time to go back home to do her duty. This will also help to stop truancy from school children pretending to go to hospitals and then roam about the streets. They will have no excuse to take from the

teacher that "I am going to the hospital"; the doctor is there at the door of their school. I would like the Minister of Health, too, to give some more scholarships for some young men and women to go overseas and study psychiatry so that when they come back we may have a lot of these doctors to take care of all the mental cases which are overwhelming in this Region.

*Ministry of Information.*—I would like to register my gratitude to the Premier who thought it fit to reappoint this young Minister to take charge of this Ministry. Since he was appointed a few years ago you will all agree with me that he has been doing very well. I quite remember during our election campaigns the releases he used to issue took the young Minister's time but he was able to carry out his duties satisfactorily. But I would like to advise him as I said here a few days ago, when I was touring the United Kingdom and the United States of America last year, I came across so many pamphlets placed in different hotels, describing that country or town or village. When I read these pamphlets I knew which of the hotels were cheap and which of them were costly. By the help of these pamphlets I was able to decide in which of the hotels I should lodge.

One sees in those pamphlets too, things like films—where they are to be shown and how to get there—industries and so on. This is how to publicise a country. Therefore, I would like the hon. Minister to pay particular attention to publicity. Films and books that are written in English, Efik and Ibo should be taken right into the rural areas, so that the people in these rural areas may be able to acquaint themselves with the Governmental activities in the Region. I would like the Government to devote more money to the Ministry of Information because the Information Service of any country is the live-wire of that Government. A few words about the *Eastern Outlook*. Of recent I have noticed a very great change and I hope whoever is responsible for that would continue, but the paper will do well to interpret some contributors in our different languages.

*Ministry of Education.*—I would like the Minister to convert Aba Government School into a Secondary School. It is one of the oldest Government Schools you ever think of in the Region. Let it be converted into a

[MRS EKPO]

Secondary School so that when boys pass out from elementary schools they can go there and widen their education; also the W.O.T.C. at Aba, a part of it can be kept for those housewives who want to go and learn something about domestic affairs, but the greater part of it because it is a large place, should be converted into a Secondary School for girls so that when they pass their Standard VI they will not be forced into some of the hotels and become a nuisance to the community. They will then go in there and try to further their education in order that they can get reasonable work to do when they qualify.

Mr President, another point I would like to raise is an article published in one of the local dailies in Enugu. I know the editor to be a good journalist but I would like to advise him not to allow some disgruntled people to use the medium of his newspaper to sow seeds of discord in the present Government. With your permission, Mr President, I will read an extract from this local paper known as the *Eastern Sentinel*. It is dated the 25th April, 1960:

“In fact why should some Ministers of State, some Provincial Commissioners and a few other N.C.N.C. legislators join hands with the Action Group to attack the new tax and other measures of the Government”.

Another extract from this Newspaper reads as follows:

“The public of the Eastern Nigeria wants to support wholeheartedly the Government of the new Premier, Dr M. I. Okpara. Any attempt at self-advertisement, self-aggrandisement and self-inflation by certain political nonentities who thrive in borrowed minds in order to deviate public from supporting the excellent Okpara Government is doomed to ignominious failure.”

We are tired of crises in this Region. It is unwise for the author of this article, though he has the right to express his opinion, to suggest that certain Ministers and Provincial Commissioners are trying to overthrow the Premier. The Premier is not a fool; by appointing all his Ministers and Commissioners he shows that he has confidence in them. He should be allowed to work peacefully with his Cabinet instead of people trying to cry wolf, wolf, when there is no wolf.

Mr President, with these few remarks, I beg to end my speech.

**Chief Angus Ilonze** (Awka Division): I rise to congratulate the Minister of Finance for presenting a cogent and comprehensive estimate for 1960-61. It is so comprehensive that even members of the Opposition in the Lower House, have no axe to grind. I thank the Government for that.

The greatest difficulty facing this Region is mass illiteracy. Government should introduce adult education all over the Region, so that the number of the people in the rural areas to be benefited will increase. In return, those helped will be able to contribute their opinions towards the smooth running of the Government.

Government should also provide hospitals and maternities in the rural areas, because this will help to reduce the high death rate in these areas. For instance, in my own Division—Awka—there is no hospital at all. We were told a hospital would be built at Enugu-Ukwu, but since then nothing has been done, and the poor people are dying for nothing.

Considering the size of Awka, it is very sad to hear that there is no Secondary School. I appeal to Government to convert the existing Government School to a Secondary School.

There is great need for water supply at Nanka, Awgbu, Ekwulawbia, Aguata, Nneni and Ugwuoba, Abagana, Aba, Umuchu, Enugwu-Ukwu, Nimo and Agulu, etc.

The following roads in Awka need immediate improvement: Abagana-Enugu-Agidi-Isu-Ngbakwu; Awka-Achala-Igboariam-Aguleri.

The condition of the Ngbakwu-Ebenebe and Achalla bridges are too bad. The people who own these roads and bridges in these areas, do not feel that Government is giving them equal returns for their taxes.

Loans should be given to farmers in the rural areas. Also Government should give loans to well organised traders with good security and not to individuals. The Government must do something to encourage African businessmen and reputable firms of contractors. Our Government should control the award of

building contracts to foreign firms as there are able African firms that are capable to handle these jobs. Government should concentrate on giving foreign firms heavy road and bridge constructions. I must also let Government know that the jobs awarded to Africans are underestimated, e.g., the Parliamentary Secretaries' Quarters supposed to cost £4,500 were given to Africans for £3,200. The Provincial Commissioners' Quarters supposed to cost about £9,000, were given out to Africans for £6,000; the Provincial Secretaries' Quarters supposed to cost about £7,000, were given out to Africans for £5,000.

Immediately an African firm is given a job, they should be allowed 10 per cent at once to start the job. This would help African firms that have no landed property with which to get loans from Banks. Once this help is given, the African firm would develop and then compete favourably with Micheletti, Costain, Coastcon, Strabag, etc. The effect of this would be that instead of the money leaving the country, it will remain with us and will help to support our Government.

I must mention again that to pay the President of a Customary Court £120 per annum and the Customary Court Member £72 per annum is unreasonable. They should be paid well so that they would discharge their duties impartially.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Bill.

**Alhaji Chief Umoru Yushau** (Special Member): I rise to support the Bill. In doing so, I must say: "Long live Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe, long live Dr the hon. M. I. Okpara, Premier of the Eastern Region and his Ministers". The N.C.N.C. Government is a democratic Government; it is the Government of God-fearing people. It is so because the N.C.N.C. is working towards the policy of "one Nigeria". (*Several hon. Members: That's why you are here*). For this reason, my people in the Eastern Region are happy and I would like to bring to the notice of the Government a few difficulties that my people encounter here. Every Chief who has spoken here has made one or two requests on behalf of his Division or area. I know I belong to Onitsha Division in a way but I would like to mention something about my people from the North.

My first request goes to the Ministry of Agriculture. Hausas from the North are interested in the cattle trade and they bring thousands of cattle from the North to the Eastern Region everyday. Some of these cattle die in transit because of cattle disease. I am appealing to this Ministry to provide Veterinary Officers to look after these cattle so that their death rate will be minimised.

Another thing that helps to kill some of these cattle is lack of good enclosures where these cattle could be kept for safety. I am suggesting to the Government that they should build suitable enclosures at places like Abakaliki, Awka, Enugu and Onitsha.

The question of bad road is another thing especially near Ogoja just before entering the Eastern Region. The roads need to be repaired so that our cattle will not suffer with their rearers. Alternatively, I would suggest that a special road be constructed for these cattle. This will also minimise the trouble that cattle rearers get with farmers whose crops are at times, though not intentionally, damaged by cattle. It will also minimise the danger of cars, drivers and other road users picking quarrels with cattle men.

Difficulty in transportation of cattle also arises when cattle are being ferried from Asaba to Onitsha. There is always the danger of the canoes capsizing and all the cattle drowning in the Niger. These difficulties, I am afraid, affect adversely cattle trade in this Region and our people are not happy with the present position. I would therefore be grateful if the Government could look into this and come to the rescue of our people.

Another point I would like to raise concerns Councils and I am referring it to the Ministry of Local Government for their kind consideration. With the population of the Hausa Community in Onitsha it is difficult for the Hausa to win any election to the Council. We are only about 22,000. I would therefore appeal to the Ministry of Local Government to consider allocating at least one seat to the Hausa Community in the Urban areas of the Region where the Hausas dwell in good number. This will afford them the opportunity to air their feelings on any matters affecting their people.

**Mrs Ekpo:** If they like to contest elections in Aba we shall give them chance to go into the Council.

**Alhaji Chief Yushau:** The next thing is membership of Tax Assessment Boards. Some Hausa men are assessed wrongly simply because we have no representatives in the Board who can give first hand information about most Hausa people in the area. The Hausa man naturally does not believe in writing petitions and so it is important to consider the Hausa Community whenever membership to Tax Assessment Boards is being constituted.

On the Ministry of Local Government, I would like the Minister to appoint an Hausa Chief in every Division in the Eastern Region, particularly in Onitsha Division. A Chief is not the rich man who sits down in his house and says that he is a Chief. A Chief is a person recognised by Government and who can be of use to the Government both during elections and at all times. So in the interest of the Northerners in the Region I want the Government to appoint Hausa Chiefs in all the Divisions of the Region.

Now we have come here as Chiefs. Here is the House of Chiefs. I would like us to maintain our dignity as Chiefs. We had been ridiculed in the past because there was no House of Chiefs in the Eastern Region. But now we have got our House of Chiefs and I would like our Chiefs here to know that we should try at all times to maintain our prestige as Members of the Upper House. I like a Chief to act as a Chief in order to be honoured, and during the next elections I want every Member of this House to play a part. That will show that we are Chiefs. But I do not want a Chief to go and play politics outside; no, not outside but underground.

Another point is that in this our Region it is necessary for us to have a lady Minister and I want everyone to join me in appealing to the Government to appoint a lady as Minister. Why I say so is that the Eastern Regional Government is the first Government to appoint a woman as a Chief and I want the Government also to appoint a lady as Minister without portfolio. I remember in 1957 when I visited America and Washington, the first invitation to a cocktail party which I received was from a lady Minister.

Again, I want to appeal to whosoever is the Minister concerned to see what can be done to give Chiefs the power to decide cases of divorce. For us Hausas our Religion goes hand in hand with chieftaincy matters and it is really hard for other people to know what our custom is. So I want the Minister to consider this point.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief D. O. Njoku (Aba Division):** I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. In doing that I have a few observations to make. It has been roughly seven years since Owerri township, which was opened about twenty years ago, was inspected by one Mr Leach, the then D.O. Now, on the 25th of March this year, one A.D.O., Mr Inyang, and the Government Surveyor, Mr Okon, together with myself inspected the land too. The land is so wide that it contains about four square miles. So I am now asking the Minister concerned that the petition from the natives should be replied to, because without replying the natives, and without surveying the land, buildings will not be erected there. This is very important because both the natives and the stranger elements are suffering.

Secondly, on the Aba-Owerri road, sixteen miles from Aba, a sub-post office has already been put up by the natives and the stranger elements and they have repeatedly petitioned to the Minister concerned but there has been no reply. The building has already been completed and properly equipped. It remains for the Government or the Minister concerned to approve. I said it last time, that a letter can be sent to me today and I will not receive it for almost two to three weeks because the distance from my place to Aba is eleven miles. So for this reason I beg to ask the Minister responsible to take immediate steps about this.

Thirdly, about Customary Courts, it has been almost a year since we heard that the membership would be reduced and for this reason so many members and clerks have been misbehaving and causing a lot of confusion. If there will be no Customary Courts or if this reduction of members has to be effected, then let it be confirmed and immediate action taken rather than drag the matter on for so long, because if a man happens to know that he will be killed tomorrow the tendency is for him to

commit any offence he likes, having known that tomorrow he will be killed.

Some of these members in the hope that they may not be appointed to the Customary Courts suppress justice to satisfy their selfish ends. I am therefore calling upon the Minister of Justice to introduce the Customary Court at Aba forthwith.

*The Ministry of Education.* I believe we are imitating the British Government, but I see no reason why we could imitate them partially. The British Government have their women well trained and it is only reasonable that the Nigerian Government should also see that our own women are well trained. I am therefore asking the Minister of Education to see to it that more Teacher Training Colleges and Secondary Schools for women are established, so that our ladies may be well trained as well as men. (*An hon. Member: That is at Aba?*). It can be anywhere.

*Collection of Tax.*—It has been a bad practice in Aba township to transfer any staff who is found to be doing his work well and in the interest of the Government. Without revenue, I do not think that any Government will stand. It is surprising that at Aba township when it is found that a tax clerk is doing very well, a report is made to the Minister at once and that staff is transferred from the office immediately to Enugu or to any other place. I am therefore asking the Minister of Finance that whenever a staff is to be transferred from Aba Tax Authority, he should investigate carefully and know the cause of the transfer.

Lastly, I want to point out that I do not like to be a Second-class Chief today and tomorrow a floor member in the town. (*An hon. Member: You cannot help it!*). Protect me, Mr President.

**The President:** You have my protection.

**Chief Njoku:** Before our selection for this House, we were made to understand that we shall be Members of the House of Chiefs for ever. It is therefore surprising that we are now hearing that we will remain for five years; the information we had was that we would remain for life. But now we are hearing that the House of Assembly will be

dissolved in two years' time, or after one year and six months and also that the House of Chiefs will be dissolved at the same time. Are we the cause of the dissolution of the House of Assembly? I am praying that we should be allowed to remain for life according to the information we received when our selection was made. But if the Government decides to retire the Members of the House of Chiefs along with those of the House of Assembly, I am afraid that there might be crisis in the Region. I do not pray, however, that there should be crisis, but I am only afraid that trouble will start where there was none before. So, I am asking that we remain for life as we were told; let us be allowed to enjoy this privilege throughout.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief S. I. Adoki (Degema Province):** I rise to support the Bill, but I have very little to say. There is no gain in talking too much. What I have to say is this: I am asking the Minister of Town Planning to come to the aid of my town Okrika and to establish a Town Planning Authority there. Okrika is a very small island and we have extended so much that we have reached the boundary of the sea and there is no further space for extension. On behalf of my people, I am appealing to the Minister to set up a Town Planning Office at Okrika. We have a land known as the "Okrika mainland" and it is between the police station and the hospital. The town has become so congested that, at the slightest sickness, many lives are taken away. I am appealing to the Government to take a very serious view of this request from my people of Okrika.

Now to the Minister of Justice; if he comes to Okrika, he will see that the Magistrate's Court and the Native Court are in the same office. There are no separate buildings for them. When it is time for the Native Court to start their business, the Magistrate's Court starts too and when the Magistrate comes, the Native Court is brushed aside. Sometimes, the Magistrate will allow the Native Court to use his retiring room. So, I am appealing to the Minister of Justice to help us and put up separate buildings for the courts.

So many people have said something about Zik. They have said that he is a good man. I would rather say that he is good man even to a

[CHIEF ADOKI]

fault. He is so good that I cannot find any word to qualify him. He is a man of so many rare qualities. (*Chief G. Agbasiere: Too much of everything is bad*). That man has laid the foundation of the Nigerian Independence since 1947. I say this because he came to Okrika that year. He came to demand mandate from the people of Okrika to go to London. I gave him the mandate myself and we did not know that he was pursuing the Independence of Nigeria. It was then that he started to pave our way to freedom. Dr Azikiwe is an able son of Nigeria and we hope that God will bless him. He has done much for Nigeria so I thank him very much for his good work for the country. I give him respect. Although I am an older man yet I respect him as if he were older than I.

With these few remarks, I beg to support.

**Chief Prince Eugene William Dappa Pepple** (The Amanyanabo of Bonny): In supporting this Independence Appropriation Bill I have a few remarks to make. The hon. Minister of Finance has described this Independence Appropriation Bill in such a comprehensive way that I feel I should extend my appreciation to him. This Budget has been so much outlined by the hon. Minister in his speech that one would not find it difficult in getting at the figures.

Now, I find out from the whole Budget that the Ministry of Education has almost half of the whole expenditure. You will find that last year that Ministry had about 43.8 per cent of the whole amount and this financial year also it has been extended to 45.8 per cent. We agree that the Ministry of Education has a lot to do because education is the most important thing that we need in this Region now. However, I would like to say that this Ministry has so many difficulties and other development problems confronting it. I should like to mention that there is one very important issue which the Minister has promised to consider. I think some other hon. Members have hinted on it and it is the conversion of Government schools in the Region into Government Secondary Schools. This is a firm promise which the Minister has made and I think that the Minister made that promise in good faith. There is need for more secondary schools to be

opened in the Region and he has made it a policy that this will be done, that is, that these Government primary schools will be converted into Government secondary schools. But as I see things now it does not seem that proper arrangement is being made for the conversion of these schools. I have appealed for a Government secondary school in my area. It is hardly necessary to emphasise the need and the usefulness of converting these schools. I hope that the Minister will take note of this and make progress with any arrangement for the work in future.

I now come to Colonial Development and Welfare Scheme. Looking at the Budget Speech of the hon. Minister of Finance we find that the Capital Works which are being carried out have not been completed and the position after the 1st of October this year when we shall have achieved Independence may be that we would not be able to get any such Colonial help from Britain. But the Minister outlined in his Budget Speech that although this Colonial Scheme is expected to be stopped on the attainment of Independence, Britain has graciously promised to hand over the unspent balance of the allocation and, no doubt, this will enable the Government to complete the scheme. My point in this is that we in the Rivers area are cut off from the mainland and we need much amenities. We need contacts with the mainland people, water supply and other things. In fact, I found out that in the Budget Speech, it was only mentioned that about £9,000 has been used and I found out that that has been used in only one particular area. I hope that it is not the intention of the Government to carry out these things in this way.

Regarding water supply, there is a certain type of water supply which is not good in certain areas. I would like to suggest that we need water points where we can get big reservoir connected with big pipes for the supply of water. I also suggest that the type of water from hand-tap is not good and not satisfactory. I have seen some of this type in places like Abonnema—they are not good. I hope the Minister in charge will look into it and see that this type of water supply—hand-tap—is not supplied in my area.

I will now have to touch the Ministry of Justice. We have been promised that we will



have Customary Courts but there is nothing so far done. Rather, we have the old type of Native Courts where Chiefs go to victimise party men. If these Customary Courts are established, I am sure the Minister in charge will take great care to pick and appoint those capable Chiefs who will do justice in the way it should be done. We would like to know when we are going to have our Customary Courts. We need one in Bonny. We do not want anything like this N.D.C. Chiefs in the Customary Courts. As I have said before and I am still saying, these Chiefs should not be appointed.

Further, I would like to mention two things about loans. I feel loans should be extended to the people of my area. Of late not much loan has been granted to the Rivers area. I would not like this House or the Government to have the idea that people who live in the Rivers area are only confining themselves to fishing alone. I may tell the House that apart from fishing, people in my area are doing a lot of other things. They farm; and you know farming means a lot. It is not only the planting of cassava and yams but also planting of cash crops like coco-nuts and palm trees. I want the Government to think about giving loans to people in the Rivers area. The Rivers area is within the Eastern Region and is also under this Government. We who are in the Rivers have little connection with the mainland and sometimes we have difficulty in crossing the Bonny Bar.

*The Ministry of Education.*—This Ministry is the Ministry that takes the greater part of the Region's revenue. Last year, the Ministry took about 43.82 per cent and this year 45.86 per cent. In spite of this the Government primary schools are not converted to secondary schools. We all realise the difficulties in trying to meet the increasing demands of developments in the Region, but I request that the Minister should take up these conversions boldly—bearing in mind that there are numerous U.P.E. schools now existing.

**The President:** Time please!

**Chief Pepple:** I think I still have five minutes. Before I wind up, I would like to say something about this "one Nigeria" affair. The N.C.N.C. and the Eastern Government have been shouting and preaching about one

Nigeria. But I wonder how far the Nigerians in the North and in the West have copied this. I would like to ask the hon. Member Alhaji Chief Umoru Yushau to write and advise the Northern Government, because if this yearning for one Nigeria is generally accepted, there is no reason why the place which one deserves should not be given to him. I would like the N.P.C. and Action Group to copy and heed the preaching of the N.C.N.C. and the Eastern Government for one Nigeria.

**The President:** Order! Order! Sitting is suspended until 12.30 for recess. May I call the attention of the Members to the fact that vacant seats are increasing in this House daily. So I should like the Clerk to read Standing Order 82 to the understanding of the hon. Members.

**The Clerk of the House:** Standing Order 82—

"Any Member who is prevented from attending a meeting of the House shall acquaint the Clerk as early as possible of his inability to attend".

*Sitting suspended at 12. noon.*

*Sitting resumed at 12.30 p.m.*

**The President:** Order! Order! May hon. Members please be informed that today is the last day for all speeches to be made. After today there will be no further speech-making by hon. Members. Tomorrow, hon. Ministers will have to wind up so that we could adjourn *sine die*.

There was an arrangement for a full House photograph to be taken, but unfortunately the House is not full. Hon. Ministers and some leading Members of the House are out of the House on duty. We are therefore suspending the taking of the photograph for the time being until such a time when we shall have a full House.

During my time in the Legislative Council, in the opening of a Session we had to take a full House photograph. The same practice obtained also in the House of Assembly. There is no reason why this should not be done in the House of Chiefs. If we had taken a picture at the opening of this House we would not have missed in that picture the late Amanyanabo

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of Kalabari. But unfortunately, we could not take the photograph. May he rest in peace!

**Chief James Nwosu** (Orlu Division): I would like to remark that priority should be given to those hon. Members who have not spoken in this House rather than to those Members who have spoken many times.

**Chief William A. Obassy** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. Before doing so I wish to make some observations. Mbaise in Owerri Division has no easy means of communication with the outside world. For this reason I would like a telephone exchange to be installed at Mbaise. I do not know why Mbaise should be forgotten in such a project when it is realised that it is the largest clan in Owerri Division. Apart from this, Mbaise has three secondary schools, ten teacher training colleges, one hospital, police station, oil mill, six courts, six maternity homes and many schools. The presence of all these establishments makes the need for a telephone system very important and calls for urgent action.

With these remarks, I beg to support.

**Chief F. N. Ogudoro** (Aba Division): I rise to support the Estimates of the Eastern Region for 1960-61. In doing so I have some remarks to make. I wish to point out that in the Eastern Ngwa in Aba Division there are many adult education centres, but there are only a few inspectors who come all the way from Uyo. I am therefore appealing to the authorities concerned to post Women Education Officers to Aba Division so that the inspection and organisation of these centres will thoroughly be done.

*Telephone Installation.*—May I implore the Government to instal a telephone in the Eastern Ngwa District Council. This request has long been made and a deposit of £10 was originally paid, but up till this time nothing has been done. I am therefore asking the Government or the Minister responsible to take the necessary action to instal a telephone.

*Police Station.*—I am making this request, Sir, on the ground that many do not understand what is meant by Independence. Some

say that on the day of Independence they will do whatever they like. They can kill, harm, or wound anybody, for instance. In that respect, I am appealing to the Government to build a police station in Eastern Ngwa in order to guide the interest of my people against the careless and reckless movements of certain people.

They must be on the safe side and prevention is better than cure.

I beg to call upon the hon. the Minister of Health to use his good offices and see that our daughters who have studied Overseas whenever they return are encouraged by giving them fair salaries in order to retain and help this great Region than allowing them to be left stranded and scattered here and there. Secondly, we will lose their services even though this Region granted them scholarship to study Overseas. I am appealing to the Minister concerned to consider these people and grant them proper salary which will be adequate to their status.

May I beg to ask whether it is true that Government will extend Free Primary Education to Standard III next year. If the answer is in the affirmative, I would like the Government to check properly before taking over for I feel it is better to have a little than have nothing considering what had happened in the past. It is better for us to think well now before taking over the Senior Primary section. Presently, Government has completely taken over the Junior Primary section. Now, if we take over Standard III, it means we are trying to take over the whole of the Senior Primary. Therefore, I call upon the Government to be very careful and check and know that it means a lot on us to run the senior section of the Primary School fee-free.

A Member spoke on this matter sometime last week. I have requested, also, the Government to take a serious view about the prices of palm produce. That will be a sure way of helping the poor producers in the rural areas. The so-called middlemen, when the Government lists out the price of palm produce, could do anything and tamper with the price list. I am appealing to Government to take a serious view about this so that the poor producers in the rural areas may be encouraged.

*Secondary School.*—I must say that Eastern Ngwa is well over 73,000 in population and we have many Standard VI schools, but there is nothing like a secondary school either for boys or for girls. I am appealing now that a secondary school for either boys or girls be opened in Eastern Ngwa in Aba Division.

*Tarring of Roads.*—I remember I put up this appeal before the hon. House that Aba-Umaru-Umuahia road should be tarred. I am still repeating and laying more emphasis on this effect that this road requires an immediate attention. Already it is being called a Trunk B road. I am still appealing very earnestly that this road should be tarred. Without wasting the time of the hon. House, I beg to say, thank you *Ete* and with the few requests already made, I am sure that one or two will be granted. I support the Bill.

**Chief R. O. Orem** (Ikoma Division): I have to bring this to your notice that if step is not taken immediately, this Region will lose considerably in revenue. Last year, a large amount of cocoa was carried away from this Region to another because the price of cocoa here seems to be different from that of other Regions especially the Cameroons. A bag of cocoa at Ikoma is about £9 10s. In the Cameroons it is a different price. There a bag sells for about £11 10s. So that one effect of this difference is obvious enough. I am appealing to the Eastern Government to take steps to provide a solution to put a stop one way or the other either by legislation or equating our produce price with what are offered by other Regions.

*The Ministry of Health.*—Of course, I have thanked the Ministry the other day. They have done a very good work by giving us an hospital. All the staff there are working very hard. But there is one thing that remains for the Minister concerned to check up. There is no room to accommodate the patients. The patients sleeping outside the ward are more than those inside the ward. There are no beds in the room so when the rain falls, it always falls on those persons who are outside the ward and those who come to visit them also are often drenched by rain. For this reason, I should be happy if the Minister in charge could help and give them more beds and build more houses to accommodate patients. As I said, the staff there are very good to us and

the hospital is a very good one and I thank the Government for that.

*Loans.*—We always talk about giving out loans to cocoa farmers, palm oil and palm kernels producers but what about the yam farmers; what about the cassava farmers? The cocoa man spends money to maintain the cocoa plantation. I think the food crops producer spends equally on his farm. It does not matter how little the loan should be; I think Government should encourage these people. We cannot eat cocoa alone. Without the help of the farmers who work hard to produce yam, cassava and other food crops, famine would not be remote. Labourers need food before they can work in the cocoa farms.

Mr President, I would like to ask this simple question. When a project is started or supported by Government, why does the Government not take necessary steps to see that the scheme is carried out according to their plan? I do not know what obtains in other Divisions, but last year, in my area, a school of about 500 children went in for examination and only one out of them passed. This is very appalling. Government give regular grants to this school, but why do they not see that the school is well run. I am appealing to the Minister of Education to see that proper care is taken and attention paid to the schools that Government supports. Instead of spending much money on grants without good supervision of the schools, I think it is better to spend that money on road developments so that everybody will enjoy it.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief James Johnson Ogbulafor** (Bende Division): I rise to support the Bill and in doing so, I have an important question to ask. Is there any Ministry of Labour in this Region? If there is, what arrangements has this Ministry made in respect of about 40,000 Nigerian labourers in Fernando Po?

It is sympathetic to note that since two years now not even a drop of oil has been sent to our labourers in Fernando Po because of the Government's order that only special grade oil will be shipped to Fernando Po. I support the views of the Government that any

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oil shipped to Fernando Po for human consumption should be free from dirt and water. I appeal to this hon. House for consideration to be given to the Fernando Po traders in Calabar in respect of oil produced by the E.R.D.C. to enable the traders purchase part of S.P.O. from the E.R.D.C. Mills.

Much as I do not wish to waste the time of this hon. House in this matter I must mention that the Anglo-Spanish Employment Agency has done much for this Region by employing these 40,000 Nigerian labourers, who owing to lack of Industries in this Region, could have remained unemployed and could have done more harm than good to this quiet and peaceful Region.

In view of these remarks I strongly appeal to this hon. House to request the Government to co-operate fully with the Anglo-Spanish Employment Agency to enable them meet their demands.

*Ministry of Finance.*—It is with great pleasure that I note the advice given to traders and businessmen by the hon. Minister of Finance during his tour of Opofo regarding the keeping of books of their business transactions to enable them know exactly the financial state of their business and to assist the Board of Internal Revenue to make more accurate tax assessments for the economic development of the Region.

I believe that all the traders and businessmen in this Region welcome this advice by the hon. Minister, and I would appeal to the Government to assist the traders and businessmen by providing more officers to teach them how to keep books of account so that within a short time they will be able to record by themselves all their transactions and render accurate figures of their income.

I do not support the suggestion made by one of the hon. Members of this House that all those women harlots should pay tax so long as we do not want any trouble in the Region.

**Mrs Ekpo:** If the hon. Member wishes to incite the women against us, let him do so.

**The President:** Order! Order!

**Chief Ogbulafor:** In as much as we do not want any crisis in this Region—and I know we do not want any bloodshed during our Independence Celebrations—I appeal to the Government to overlook this suggestion.

With these few words, I support the Bill.

**Chief Akpabio Udo Ukpa** (Eket Division): I rise to support the 1960-61 Appropriation Bill. The Budget Speech delivered by Dr the hon. S. E. Imoke, our Regional Minister of Finance, in introducing this Appropriation Bill, has left nothing untouched. The fact that the Bill passed through the House of Assembly without amendment makes us believe that the Bill is excellent and well prepared. I therefore thank the Minister of Finance and his colleagues who contributed to the successful presentation of this Bill. I would also like to extend my thanks to the staff of the Ministry of Finance who in an able way have dealt with the Estimates now before this hon. House.

*Eastern Regional Legislature.*—My thanks go to the staff of the Regional Legislature for the way they are handling the work in this Legislature, especially the Clerk himself. I wish him happy stay in the United Kingdom and safe return to Nigeria. I also thank the President of this House for the able way in which he is conducting the affairs of this House.

I thank the Eastern Government for raising the remuneration of Members of both Houses of the Legislature.

*House of Chiefs.*—It is true that the amended Nigerian Constitution provides that the Eastern House of Chiefs should be dissolved at the same time as the Eastern House of Assembly. But the Government can make and unmake. It should be borne in mind that the Eastern House of Chiefs was not established until the 8th of January, 1960, after the Eastern House of Assembly was near the end of the Third Session of the Third House. To some of us from the so-called C.O.R. area who have got to fight in the next election to prove our true colours to the Eastern Government, it will be difficult for the Chiefs then to struggle through their own elections and also to assist the Government in the elections. We sincerely believe that our new Premier and his able Ministers will find a solution to this problem

which is completely within their competence. It is not for us to direct this issue.

The Eastern Regional Government has been taking a lead in all Regional matters among other Regions. There is equal pay for equal work. I am suggesting that in no distant date the Eastern Regional Government will provide quarters for whoever will be appointed the President of the Eastern House of Chiefs. I do now associate myself very strongly with the statement made this morning by hon. Mrs Ekpo to the effect that the President of this House should be given all amenities and allowances, and indeed I submit that the allowances and salaries should be retrospective to the date of taking up the office. Further, I am suggesting that since this is the Upper House of the Legislature it is considered probably mean that the Speaker of the Lower House should receive a higher salary than the President of the Upper House; same with the Deputy President and the Deputy Speaker. I am suggesting that the Government of this Region will give due consideration to this matter and place these men on the correct scales of salary.

On the Ministry of Education I have certain observations to make. With regard to the payment of teachers salaries, I would like the Minister to make a careful review of this matter. Voluntary Agencies do not pay their teachers' salaries in time. Some of them remain for two or three months before they are paid. During this delay of payment teachers do not work but Government has given grants to cover this period during which the teachers do not work. I would then suggest that the Minister should give a warning to the Provincial Education Officers to release grants in time and to see that the grants so given are utilised for the purpose. I have also observed that some primary schools remain for more than three years without being inspected by the Ministry of Education. I suggest that the Minister should appoint one Education Officer to each Division with at least two visiting teachers. There is a tendency that when these schools are not inspected the Headmasters and the other teachers move about and only come to collect pay at the end of the month.

Coming to the appointment of U.P.E. teachers, I am suggesting that the appointment

of U.P.E. teachers should not be left to individual Councils. The Government should either establish a Divisional Board or Provincial Board for the appointment of these teachers.

On the question of technical schools, I am suggesting that these schools should be established, at least one in each Province. You will observe that we have children who have passed Standard VI and when they pass out they are appointed to be teachers. Really, instead of teaching our children they are spoiling them. When boys and girls pass their Standard VI they should be allowed to have at least a year or two of preliminary training before they should be allowed to teach our children.

*The Ministry of Works.*—We have very many bridges in Eket Division. I am suggesting that consideration should be given to at least one or two of them during the current financial year.

With these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief G. O. Ihenacho, M.B.E.** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the 1960-61 Appropriation Bill now being debated. Previous speakers have covered enough points and I only rise to appeal to those responsible for spending the amounts budgeted to see to it that the money is as wisely spent as it has been wisely budgeted. By this I mean that while the urban areas maintain the amenities already established for them the rural areas should also be given some encouragement. Whatever little that is done for them will encourage them a lot. We cannot do all in one day but while this is so I suggest that they should not be forgotten. When I say "they" I mean the rural areas. They need some developments.

I have a word or two for the Minister of Agriculture. We come from the eastern part of Owerri Division where there is an acute shortage of land. I am asking the Minister of Agriculture to cause some soil investigations to be carried out with a view to improving the productivity of our crops. We have more people than the land available and I pray that anything that could be done to help us should be put into hand as soon as possible.

I agree with any Member of this House who said that women of loose character should be

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asked to pay tax. They should, because they try to corrupt our good youths. The result is that a lot of people prefer to remain unmarried since they can at any time satisfy themselves.

Mr President, if I am allowed to say, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of Members of this House to Standing Order 30 (1), and to say that anything is done well if it is started well. While I give allowance to the fact that we are all new in this House, it is time the President should remind Members about this particular section of the Standing Orders. I do not in any way intend to embarrass anybody, but I think if people only come here and hold up written papers, perhaps not in their own language or construction, I feel that this is not only contravening that section, but it will also help to underrate the capability of some of the Members of this House. I am therefore asking you, Sir, to see that we make more use of this section than we have hitherto done. (*Hear! Hear!*)

Mr President, as everybody wishes to speak, I do not intend to embarrass anyone; I think I support the Bill.

**Chief J. Nwosu** (Orlu Division): Before supporting the Appropriation Bill, I have to thank the Minister of Finance for his genuine Estimates for 1960-61 which will lead us to Independence. I hope the Minister will make a very good use of the money to be spent during this financial year, and see that our roads are tarred and other various amenities provided.

**The President:** Order! Order! The hon. Member who spoke last has drawn the attention of this House to Standing Order 30 (1) and the whole House carried that with applause. I think we should adhere to this Standing Order.

**Chief Nwosu:** I am also appealing to the Minister to see that amenities are distributed on divisional basis, and, of course, priority should be given to the more thickly populated areas to avoid ill-feeling by our people.

I also seize this opportunity in thanking all our hon. Ministers who, in fact, in spite of various criticisms and accusations from many people, have devoted their time, energy and honesty for the good and efficient service of this Region. Furthermore, my congratulation goes to our Regional Government for all its

achievement in all aspects of the life of this Region, especially, for the implementation of the House of Chiefs.

**Mrs Ekpo:** Point of Order, Mr President. Standing Order 30 (1): "A Member shall not read his speech..." The hon. Member is reading his speech.

**Chief Nwosu:** I have a few more points to make. In my area, we have a bridge called "Nwangele" bridge. That bridge carries very heavy traffic...

**The President:** Three minutes more.

**Chief Nwosu:** We appeal to the Minister of Works to see that this bridge is constructed; nothing has been done about this bridge yet. The bridge connects Port Harcourt-Onitsha road and Aba-Umuahia road and also Owerri road.

**The President:** Your time is up.

**Chief Nwosu:** The Ministry of Town Planning...

**The President:** Your time is up.

**Chief Nwosu:** Let me finish my speech.

**The President:** Order! Order! Chief Ikeogu.

**Chief J. E. Ikeogu** (Bende Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill, which was well prepared and brought to this House. Government has done its best about this Bill and it only remains for us to see what we can do.

I appeal to the Government to find the way and means to mobilise the labour system of this Region.

I am appealing to our Ministers to try to check our Labour system. I feel that the labour code is very much on the side of the employee. Even in the Local Councils, if you ask a labourer to do his work well, he will not care about anything but will tell you that the labour code is there to protect him. The time has come when we should mind our business. This is not the time when we were working for the white man. We must change our system of work. As an example, if you send a

letter on any date from any place in the Region to this Headquarters and if you do not come to Enugu here to meet them, you cannot get anything from it. Not all of us have money to come up to Enugu to pursue our papers and documents. I think the government will think more on this.

*The Ministry of Agriculture.* I have very few remarks to make because my co-member from Bende has said much about our roads. I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture when it will be possible to erect a cocoa drying mill. I do not mean the type the Cameroonians use. I mean the one which produces high quality cocoa. The pioneer oil mills have helped so many of our farmers here.

Secondly, I want to ask the Minister of Agriculture what has happened to a plot allocated to the Federal Government for the erection of a research centre for agriculture at Umudike. The Minister of Town Planning acquired that land for long now and nothing has been done in that respect. They have got this Agricultural Research centre in the West alongside those of the Western Region and also one in the North alongside that of the North. Here in the East nothing has been done. Does it mean that the Eastern Government is not part of the Federation or does not want to do anything about this?

Look at our Airport in Enugu. It is a disgrace to this capital city of the East. If you go to other Regional Airports you will be highly impressed with all the amenities provided in them. I am appealing to our Government to approach the Federal Government to see about this. I do not want to go further with our complaints. I hope that the Government will bear them in mind because it is a democratic Government. I appeal to the Minister concerned to see about the completion of the Umuahia-Ibeku Sports Stadium for I feel that the completion of the Stadium is overdue.

I support the Bill.

**Chief Ika Ika Oqua II** (Calabar Province): Mr President, before I go on, I will ask this hon. House to appeal to the Government to remember Calabar. We all know what Calabar is and so many people: Ministers, Doctors and so on, have visited Calabar several years ago.

What I want for my people is the construction of Calabar-Mamfe road and the Calabar-Arochukwu road. If these roads are constructed, we can go from Calabar to any place, even to Enugu here. I can come to Enugu with car if these roads are completed. If the Government can assist us in this respect, I will be very happy indeed.

We are suffering very much for lack of water.

I have been thinking of a man who came to us in 1947 to demand a mandate to go to London. Then I did not know his name but now I have known that he is Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe. I am very proud about what he has done for this country.

I thank the Government for the appointment of Chiefs and the election of one of us as the President of this House.

I support the Bill.

**Chief Solomon Chima Nkwor** (Afikpo Division): I rise to support the Bill with a few remarks. My remarks are in respect of the Afikpo Division. In the 1957-58 Estimates £7,000 was voted for the construction of the Isu-Amagunze road and later withdrawn for the construction of Ozara road. In the 1958-59 Estimates money was voted and was given to the "We We" Company. Instead of using the money for the construction of these roads they purchased cars with the money and employed direct labour and sub-contractors and the work was not done properly. I am appealing to the Minister concerned to look into this matter. It is unfair to Afikpo Division that suffers a lot due to lack of such amenities. If you travel from Abakaliki to Afikpo, the amenity given to Afikpo Division, as regards roads, is a complete shame. Costains started the work from Abakaliki and maintained a good work until when they came to Afikpo they did a bad work. I am appealing to the Minister concerned to appoint people to supervise the Isu-Amagunze road and to look into all other works that concern the public welfare.

With regard to the Ministry of Health, I would like to say that in 1958, a request was made for a Health Centre and the Minister announced before the Council that the Health Centre in Afikpo had been approved but up

[CHIEF NKWOR]

till now, nothing has been done. I am pointing it out to the Government that Afikpo is the only Division that has returned its members unopposed for four times.

I now turn to Agriculture. I know that in the Eastern Region of Nigeria, everybody claims to be a farmer but in the real sense, the only farmers come from Abakaliki Province, who can use their hands to produce the famous Abakaliki rice and big yams. If anyone doubts it, one may go to Abakaliki road to see all these things. Abakaliki Province is the Province that supplies other places like Port Harcourt, Orlu and Aba and even Enugu with the things I have already mentioned.

Coming to the Ministry of Education, I would like to know what steps that have so far been taken by the Minister of Education towards the proposed Secondary School (proposed by the District Council, Afikpo) to be built at Afikpo Division. Through community efforts, sand and stones have been collected and the site levelled.

I would now like to refer to the Ministry of Justice. I would also like to know what steps have been taken by the Government to erect Police Quarters at Okposi. If nothing has been done, I would like Government to take immediate steps to see that the quarters are completed without delay.

**The President:** Please wind up.

**Chief Nkwor:** I am now making some remarks for the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries about arrears of tax. The Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries and hon. Chiefs should help in this question of arrears. I should like the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries to go to their Divisions to educate their people to know what is the essence of paying tax; that without tax there will be no good roads. With tax, we can have developed roads.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief H. I. Akwitti** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill which is an Estimate prepared by Government in order to carry out all its important works in the fields of Agriculture, Social Services, Personal Emoluments and so forth. Having gone

through the Estimates for the services of the Region for this current financial year, 1960-61, the year of Nigeria's destiny, I am grateful to the Premier and his able Ministers, especially the Minister of Finance, for the wise manner various sums of the estimates have been allocated to cover all fields. From the Estimates one could see so much money allocated to Health, Education, Agriculture, Capital Works and so on. I hope that those charged with the responsibilities of controlling these sums of money for the services in their various Ministries will see to it that no one area or division gets too much while others are not benefited from them. I mean that, for instance, in using the huge sum allocated for Health Services or Social Services or Capital Works in the Region this financial year, greater attention should be paid to the areas that have not had any hospital or tarred roads or secondary schools or colleges or water supply provided at all. Those areas that have been already supplied with some of these amenities should be left out for the meantime rather than give them more while others have nothing at all.

The second point I would like to touch is this: in the past people were not so keen about girls' education as they were of boys' but today people have grown to regard girls' education as important as boys'. In Okeuvuru in Mbaise, Owerri, my constituency, the need for girls' education has become so great in the minds of the people that recently my people have through communal efforts raised a total sum of £3,000 towards providing a girls' Secondary School, and not only that, they have also gone further in acquiring seven acres of land for the project. Work on the scheme has begun in full swing by the people getting the ground now ready for the buildings. I hope that with the interest shown by my people so far they will be encouraged by Government coming to their aid in giving them some grants to complete the work.

Thirdly, the people of Okpuala Ngor Clan in Owerri Division, have asked me to convey their gratitude to the Government of the Eastern Region for providing them very recently with water and also request the Government to include them in the distribution of other amenities, such as Hospital, Post Office and telecommunications which they now lack.



Another point to which I would like to call the attention of the Government is that which concerns the masses of unemployed people in this Region, more especially the school leavers. Since it is said that an idle mind is the devil's home, I therefore appeal to the Government to speed up its scheme of establishing various industries in the Region in order to absorb these unemployed boys and girls including also the recently dismissed Colliery workers who are now moving about our streets without jobs. I am sure Members of this hon. House would not feel very happy if these our brothers and sisters go about looking for their bread and finding none, while we ourselves remain happy. I feel compelled to say that if that would be the case, we are indeed, not a happy lot: for our so-called happiness is never complete without them.

Another point I would like to remind the Government is about the award of scholarships to promising young men and women of this Region. In this respect, I would appeal to the Government to see that in awarding these scholarships for various branches of studies, more attention should be paid to the need of those applicants with good brains who come from poor homes rather than those from well-to-do homes or those with rich parents or relatives who can afford to train this class of applicants without Government aid.

Lastly, I would like to remind the Government that the institution of traditional rulers had been in existence in all the parts of the Eastern Region long before the white man entered the country. We had and still have, natural rulers throughout the old Owerri Province, Onitsha Province and so on.

It was not only in those areas where the Government has now accorded recognition to a few that we found traditional rulers. What actually happened was that the white man knew only of traditional rulers of the areas where they carried out trade with their people, while the traditional rulers of the areas whose people did not trade directly with the white man because of lack of communication were not known to them. I would therefore ask the Government to begin now to think seriously of according the same recognition to the traditional rulers of the areas not yet recognised, of course, after thorough investigation.

I beg to support the Appropriation Bill.

**Chief John N. Nwansi** (Owerri Division): I rise to support the Second Reading of the Appropriation Bill so ably moved by the Minister of Finance. I only pray that the money would not be spent only in the Headquarters of the Region but should be extended to the rural areas which are badly in need of improvements.

I regard "Staff of Office" as very essential and worth getting because I remember that in the time of old warrant chiefs, as far back as 1920, staffs were presented by the Government to those that merited them. In my humble opinion, I feel that Members of the House of Chiefs can be compared with the old warrant chiefs. I say this from experience as I have been in the administration for over forty years.

I would like to remind the Government again about my request as contained in my speech of the 27th April concerning the Owerri-Okigwi road which is overdue for tarring. The Minister of State in his reply assured me that he will take immediate steps. I am pleased to hear that. I realise that we should not overburden the Government with so many requests from the outset as "Rome was not built in a day". However, Government should consider matters of great importance and act immediately.

On the question of tax rebate, I am in sympathy with the tax agents formerly called tax collectors. It is a pity that their commissions have now been reduced considerably. I think their commissions should be raised at least to what they used to be so that they will be encouraged to collect more tax.

Turning to the question of the Customary Courts, may we know from the Minister concerned why the release or the announcement of the establishment of Customary Court in the Owerri Division has not been made.

I thank the President for the way he conducts this meeting with patience, and with these few remarks, I support the Bill.

**Chief Joseph Onwudiwe** (Onitsha Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill. May I pay tribute to the hon. Minister of Finance and his associates for the able way

[CHIEF ONWUDIWE]

they have presented the Budget. I cannot easily express my happiness and pride after I have gone through the Budget Speech and the 1960-61 Estimates prepared by our own men. By that I am really convinced that we can govern ourselves.

I thought our own men would not be able to do all that they have done but I have seen and "seeing is believing". The Appropriation Bill was so well prepared that it left nothing untouched regarding money or moneys on income and expenditure within the Region. I do not want to deal with all the Departments as have been done by many of my hon. friends, but I must express my happy thanks to them. I am happy that they know that the progress of the Eastern Region is their responsibility and I wish that they will actually lead us well. I would also like them to keep to the warning of the Minister of Finance that all Ministers should be rigid and economical in their spending. I wish to emphasise that warning given by the Minister of Finance. Ministers should practise the most rigid economy in stating their needs. This Appropriation Bill is very important to our Region and I wish our Ministers would do well to live up to expectation in the distribution of money to the rural areas.

If I may speak on these words, progress and development, our Government will realise that all is not well in the rural areas hence all Members often lay emphasis on rural areas. This will prove to them that the townships in this Region compare well but in the rural areas, they have been totally neglected. Hence we are mentioning rural areas every now and then. We want them to be remembered even though most of them are entrusted to the charge of District Councils. I can say, as many have said, that these Councils are not all functioning well. I say it is like a long tape that never goes straight. Care should be taken by the Minister concerned that District Councils should be checked now and again. My own area Anambra is also neglected. I do not say that Anambra should not be included in the checking but remember that I have said that Anambra is a newly created District and therefore requires the help of Government to bring it up to the standard like other Districts. My time is limited and I shall confine myself, briefly, to the relevant points I want to touch today.

The Minister responsible for District Councils should keep a close watch on all the Councils. I am not pretending to suggest to Government how it should run these Councils more appropriately, because Government knows better, but it would be a good thing if an inspector could be appointed to go round all Council areas to check up and make them understand what is really wanted of them. Many of us know too well that any time a District Council is dissolved and re-elected, people say we "bought" the posts of councillors. We know that and we cannot deny it. Therefore, close supervision should be given to them because "buying" of post means something. If the Government of the Eastern Region has not been wise to set a Commission of Inquiry at Enugu, we could not have been hearing what we are hearing now. The same thing is obtaining in all areas where District Councils are operating. If permission is given for a Commission of Inquiry to be set up in Owerri it is the same humiliation we are now having in Enugu that we will have.

*Health Centre.*—There are many areas, particularly rural areas that have been denied hospitals and have not even got Health Centres. My own town Ogbunike which is a few miles to Onitsha is also neglected. We have been denied almost every amenity. I know we have started to build a Maternity and Dispensary. Taking together, it is called Health Centre but we have not got funds to complete it and Government has never come to our aid. It is said that "Heaven helps those who help themselves" but Government has not seen its way yet to help the people of Ogbunike. I am glad the Minister of Local Government is here and I hope by hearing me, he will take the proper step to help the people of Ogbunike.

With these few remarks, I beg to support the Bill.

**Chief O. L. Odu** (Ogoja Division): I rise to support the Bill. First of all, I thank the former Premier, Dr the hon. Nnamdi Azikiwe who has shown the light for the people to lead today and also, I thank the present Premier for the good work he is doing for us. I also thank all the Ministers, Provincial Commissioners, and Parliamentary Secretaries. (*Interruptions*).

**Chief Egbe Areghe Egbara** (Obubra Division): Point of Order. Standing Order 32 (4) and (5):

"During a sitting all Members shall be silent or shall confer only in undertones. Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking."

Some hon. Members are making noise.

**The President:** The Standing Order referred to is in order.

**Chief Odu:** I now come to our neglected Province—the Ogoja Province. As the present Government want to raise it to a higher level, I take this opportunity to request them to raise it to the same standard as the rest of the Provinces of the Region.

I am grateful to the Federal Government for having started tarring the road to Ikom. I also ask the Government to consider the road from Ikom junction to Ogoja itself. I would also ask that the P.W.D. take over the road from Ogoja to Ikom junction (Oil Mill road)—a distance of twenty-nine miles. Our District Council has suffered greatly in maintaining these roads, and at present they are unable to keep the roads up-to-date.

Another road that was opened ever since is that from north Okeli to Idoma Division in the Northern Region but there is difficulty in crossing a certain bridge on this road. I therefore appeal to the Government to consider building up this bridge. A road from Iyache Igabo to Munchi should also be considered.

The people of Ogoja are in need of electricity and water supply and I would like the Government to remember us in their Development Programme.

*The Ministry of Health.*—A Province like Ogoja has only one hospital, and this has resulted in a considerable loss of lives because the people living in the remote areas find it difficult to avail themselves of the services of the hospital at the right time. I feel we need at least three more hospitals. The worst of it all is that we have no ambulance in the existing hospital so that in cases of emergency, means of conveyance of the patient becomes a great problem.

I would also be grateful if the Government will try and improve our markets in Ogoja Division.

*The Ministry of Local Government.*—Boki as a whole is divided into four parts. One part is under Ikom and one under Mamfe; one under Obudu and another under Ogoja. I am calling on the Government to merge Boki into one District Council. Boki has the richest land in the Province and has offered six square miles of land to the Government for the establishment of Cocoa Estate at Buje. Another part of Boki in my own clan has offered two square miles of land for the establishment of a Cocoa Estate. There is salt in Boki land, and in the whole of Boki we have three Oil Mills and this shows that we are rich in palm produce.

The people of Boki are in need of a Post Office; at present we have only three Postal Agencies.

The next thing is Government scholarship. We want more of these scholarships to be offered to our sons and daughters. I have in mind both Secondary and Teacher Training Scholarships.

*Ministry of Information.*—I want the Ministry of Information to open the office of Information at Ogoja. Many things have been happening without releasing the information. I had an accident on my way to Enugu, but people did not get any information about it.

Finally, I am asking the Government to pay attention to Ogoja Division because it has been a neglected place in the past.

With these few words, I support the Bill.

**Chief Michael Ogbuka Kanu** (Okigwi Division): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill for 1960-61. I have only a few remarks to make because hon. Members who spoke earlier have covered the important things I wanted to say.

My first comment is on scholarship award. I pray the Minister of Education that scholarship award should be on population basis so that every Division will get its full share and the people in the rural areas will also benefit from it.

I also suggest that something should be done about Standard VI Examinations—how they are conducted and how the results are released.

[CHIEF KANU]

The truancy of teachers has been responsible for the failure of most children in their examinations because some teachers leave their classes and attend Council meetings. These Councils hold meetings at least twelve times a year and this means that the school children miss about six lessons any day these meetings are held. It means that within a year the children will have missed about seventy-two lessons and what is the guarantee that examination questions are not set on the lessons that the children have missed? How do we expect them to pass? Education is one of the most important things for this Region and without education, we could not have been here today. To help us develop this country, the Minister of Education must do something about this irregularity.

*Medical Facilities.*—In my area in Okigwi Division, we have neither hospital nor maternity and I am appealing to the Government to help us not only in this connection but also to develop one school which has been built there. I am sure the children of some of our hon. Members are attending that school now. It is the Ovim Girls' School and I hope the Government will consider building a hospital in that area for the benefit of these young children who have no medical facilities unless they go to Port Harcourt or Enugu—a distance rather too long for them to do.

So we request Government to see that they build a rural health centre near that area, so that those children from far away places can get first aid treatment there.

Another point is that many villages are now asking for rural water supply. Happily, in Imeni, nature has provided us with water supply. Nevertheless we want that area to be helped. We have no road at all; only railway line, and no Post Office. (*An hon. Member: How did you travel to Enugu?*) I came here through Owerri road; I think you are happy to hear that! The tax-payers of that area need roads. The short road that leads from Okigwi to Ahaba, Isuikwuato area, and from there to Abiriba and Ohafia is the only linking road that leads to that side. We pray the Government to pay attention to that short road. Another one is the road from Okigwi to Afikpo Road. It is too bad

now and there are bad bridges over there too. The bridges are overdue for repairs. Some people cannot be enjoying their Independence while others remain in their rural areas without knowing what is going on.

The next thing I want to point out is the question of visiting schools. So many schools have been left without Inspectors to visit them. I am not reporting the Inspectors but I am telling the Government that it is better to try and see that some schools are being visited at least four times a year because that will make the teachers who are always absent from their work to be up and doing.

Another point is the question of prostitutes. I mean the harlots who are practising prostitution in the townships. I support the idea that those practising it should pay tax because they get more money than the workers. (*Interruptions*). I know that those who are shouting and trying to mislead me are the people from whose areas the prostitutes come. I am praying the Government to see that these girls pay tax, otherwise they should go home and marry rather than keep educating others to follow their footsteps.

With these few points, I support the Bill.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House do now adjourn till 10 a.m. tomorrow.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT DEBATE

##### Payment of Tax by Women

**Mrs Margaret Ekpo (Special Member):** I have a point of clarification with regard to my speech this morning about the finances of this Region. Knowing fully well the mentality of our people in this Region I would like to clarify that what I meant was not that women should pay tax. Of course, you know that women do pay tax: I pay tax, the other hon. lady by my right pays tax

and numerous other women in the Region do pay tax according to their yearly income. But some of the hon. Chiefs here are trying to go out of this House (I hope you listened to one, two or three speeches made here) with very wrong impression. I want to warn them that if they dare go outside this House and into the rural areas to incite the women against us, as women who are responsible for the Regional women whom we hold in one group—the N.C.N.C. Women Organisation of which I am the first Vice-President—we will put up a very strong resistance. We will resist any attempt by any of the hon. Members here to leave this hon. House and go to incite the women to the effect that I say that women should pay tax. What I meant is this: There are some men who illtreat their wives and cause them to leave their houses to go and find shelter in the hotels. And there are some other hot-headed, useless women who run away from their husbands just because they see *Miss Jack* in the hotel squeezing out money from useless men who cannot remain with their wives in their houses. These women persuade the

other women to leave their husbands. Because *Miss Jack* is working in a grand hotel and has two iron beds, radiogram, machines and other things, they run away and leave their husbands or leave their daily marketing through which they can sell things like potatoes. They run in there for prostitution. I am saying with responsibility that this sort of women and girls finding shelter in the hotels should be asked to pay tax. That was what I said, Mr President. I do not want the Chiefs from the rural areas to go back and collect their women and tell them, just because they want to win election into this House if the House is dissolved in two years time, that Margaret Ekpo said that they should pay tax.

With this little clarification, I beg to take my seat.

*Question put and agreed to.*

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

EASTERN HOUSE OF CHIEFS

Wednesday, 4th May, 1960

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

PRAYERS

(Mr President in the Chair)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Idemili-Akwukwu-Oraifite-Ozubulu Road

4. Mrs Janet N. Moku asked the Minister of Works, how soon he proposes to start work on the construction of the Idemili-Akwukwu-Oraifite-Ozubulu road.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (temporarily holding the Portfolio of Works):** The improvement of this road is at present the subject of negotiation with the Federal Government. Because it is a straighter, shorter route it is considered a desirable alternative to the present Nnewi section of the Onitsha-Owerri road and the Federal Government has already carried out a detailed survey. In the event of the Federal Government agreeing to construct it as a Federal Trunk "A" road, financial provision would, it is hoped, be inserted in the 1962-63 Federal Estimates. If the Federal Government decides not to take it over but to reconstruct the existing Trunk "A" road then it will be constructed under the present Regional Road Development Plan.

Wells in Okija

6. Chief O. Oraelosi asked the Minister of Works, why some wells sunk by his Ministry in Okija have no covers in order to prevent loss of life.

**The Minister of State (Establishments and Chieftaincies) (temporarily holding the Portfolio of Works):** Perhaps the hon. Member could enlighten me further. There is a standard type of well top which permits four people to draw water at the same time. It cannot be covered because, if it were, there would be no way to pull the buckets up and down. There is, however, a wall around and it

would be impossible for anyone to fall in accidentally. The hon. Member may, however, be referring to wells which have not yet had the standard well top constructed; if so, I will give instructions for these to be completed.

Treatment by Medical Officers in Onitsha Division

11. Chief O. Oraelosi asked the Minister of Health, the reasons why some Medical Officers in Onitsha Division send patients to local Chemists to purchase medicines for treatment; is this an indication that Chemists stock more medicines than the Government.

**The Minister of Local Government (temporarily holding the Portfolio of Health):** Patients are sent to Chemists with prescriptions when the particular drugs are not obtainable in the hospital.

Chemists do not stock more drugs than hospitals, but the demand on hospital drugs is heavier.

Free Medical Treatment

12. Chief J. J. Ogbulafor asked the Minister of Health, why do Joint Hospitals charge fees for the treatment of school children, whereas treatment is free for children in Government Hospitals.

**The Minister of Local Government (temporarily holding the Portfolio of Health):** Joint Hospitals are, strictly speaking, not Government institutions as such. They are quasi-private. As private institutions they are not bound to abide by Government regulations. It is therefore within their right to charge school children if they wish. The same thing applies to Voluntary Agency Hospitals. Arrangements are, however, being made to introduce free medical treatment for school children in Joint Hospitals.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Adjournment Sine Die

**The Minister of Town Planning (Mr E. Emole):** I beg to move that this House at its rising Today do adjourn *sine die*.

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

*Question put and agreed to.*

Resolved: That this House at its rising Today do adjourn *sine die*.

### ORDER OF THE DAY

#### The 1960-61 Eastern Region Appropriation Bill—Second Reading

(THIRD AND LAST ALLOTTED DAY)

*Order read for resuming adjourned Debate on Question (25th April): That the Bill be now read a Second Time.*

*Question again proposed.*

**The Minister of Town Planning (temporarily holding the Portfolio of Finance) (Mr E. Emole):** In rising to reply to this debate I find that while there has been much of interest and importance to listen to, there is very little which hon. Chiefs have left me to say. It is very gratifying to the Government that this "Independence" Budget should have been received in both Houses in so constructive a spirit and that, in this House, while one speaker or another has had detailed suggestions to make, none has opposed the Motion.

If there are one or two general points which I feel called for comments, briefly they are the following: Almost all of the hon. Chiefs have spoken in one way or another about the importance of fair shares for the rural areas. Government is, of course, keenly aware of this and it will not have escaped the notice of this House that the Estimates reflect in various ways our efforts to make provision for increased rural amenities. I may mention that the allocation under Head 805 of the Capital Budget for Community Development has been increased by £40,000 and I would wish to echo the tribute which the hon. Chief Okoroafor paid to the organisers of our Community Development Programme. Then again the increase of £1 million in the allocation for road building represents a very real effort on the part of Government to stretch its resources as far as possible in this direction. The House will have observed that Head 802

of the Estimates mentions no less than 78 road projects and that we have contrived to introduce a flexible element into the programme by allotting only a token vote to 50 of these projects and reserving an unallocated sum of over a million pounds under Sub-head 79 which will be reallocated as and when particular projects are ready to be executed.

Another point which affects the rural areas was made by Chief Pepple, the Amanyanabo of Bonny, when he spoke of the Colonial Development and Welfare Schemes which must come to an end with Independence but which ought to be continued in some way or another from other resources. One of the most important of these schemes is that which provides rural water supplies. Government does not intend that this most important long range project of rural development should cease just because United Kingdom assistance in its present form is to be terminated. We are hopeful that the United Kingdom will in fact continue to support this particular scheme through its Technical Assistance Programme, although that will not by itself provide the substantial capital funds which are needed to carry out the drilling of wells throughout the Region. Our future development planning must certainly take account of this vital need.

A significant point made by the hon. Chief Wachuku was that this Government should mobilise the considerable sums of money which are held overseas in order to further the needs of our Development Programme. I can assure this House that the need to utilise to the full Nigeria's internal and external resources is very much in the mind of the Federal Government who have the sole responsibility for external borrowing. Great efforts are being made by the Federal Government to establish in Nigeria an effective capital market. As this becomes a reality, it is to be hoped that financial institutions and other private or semi-public bodies in Nigeria who hold funds abroad will feel encouraged to repatriate them and invest them locally. This, however, is a process which must proceed on an all-Nigeria basis and we must support the Federal Government in its efforts to this end if only because Regional Governments will themselves benefit directly from the success achieved by the Federal Government in raising loans both at home and abroad.





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SECOND SESSION, FIRST MEETING

15th March, 25th April to 4th May, 1960

## ABBREVIATIONS

(Adj. Deb.) = Adjournment Debate	Com. = Committee
1R = First Reading	E.N. = Eastern Nigeria
2R = Second Reading	Q = Oral Question
3R = Third Reading	

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