



PROCEEDINGS OF THE
NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

DEBATES

First Assembly

First Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OFFICIAL REPORT

VOLUME IV

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 14th January, 1980

The House met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Committee Work

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

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

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

Personal Experience at the U. S. Congress

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

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

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

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

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

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

An hon. Member : I have a question.

Mr Speaker : There will be no question.

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

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

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

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

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

The Speaker : Order ! Order !

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

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

Mr Speaker : That is a good one.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Plight of Nigerian Students in Overseas Institutions

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

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

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Yes, anybody seconding the Motion?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR NJOKU]

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Thank you. Please round up.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[ALHAJI MUSTAPHA]

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

Several Hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Round up.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MR OGWE

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

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

An hon. Member : He is also a Chief.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR. GAPSUE]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR AKPABIO]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to

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

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

Control of Drugs

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

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

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the Motion?

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

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

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

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

[MR SPEAKER]

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

Several hon. Members : Yes.

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

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

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

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

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

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Speaker : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

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

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

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

African Cup of Nations

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : No, make your point.

Three main Nigerian Languages on Television

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

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

[MR ATUWO]

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Round up.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Mr Uwandu, we have heard that.

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

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

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

The House adjourned accordingly at 12.25 p.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 15th January, 1980
The House met at 10.05 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

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

Military take-over in 1966

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

(One minute silence observed)

Committee Meetings

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

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

Presence of a Distinguished Visitor

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

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

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

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

Adjourned Debate on Question,
12th December, 1979

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

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

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

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

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

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

I beg to Move, Sir.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Motion?

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

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

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

[MR PRINCEWILL]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Several hon. Members : No! No! No!

Mr Speaker : Order! Order!

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

Several hon. Members : No! No!

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

Mr Princewill : Thank you Sir, for your advice.

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

Several hon. Members : Mention names. Mention names.

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

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

Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) : Point of Order.

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

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

Mr Princewill : Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

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

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

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

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

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

Several hon. Members : No! No!

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

Mr Princewill go on please.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR AKINBORO]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR UGWU]

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

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

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

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

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

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

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

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

An hon. Member : Then read it.

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

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

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

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

An hon. Member : Point of Order.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

An hon. Member : He is not properly dressed.

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Abutu : He is not properly dressed.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[PROFESSOR OLA]

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

Mr Speaker : That is all right.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker, I think I had better stop here.

Mr Speaker : He has finished. Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

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

Mr Speaker : Under what Order is that ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Yes, Mr Adigwe.

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! Round up.

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

Mr Speaker : Yes, Mr Uwandu.

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

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

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

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

Thank you very much.

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

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

[ALHAJI KONDUKA]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Thank you, Leader of the House.

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the Amendment?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Government Contracts

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

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

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

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

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

[MR ADAMU]

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

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

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

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

The Speaker : Yes, the Deputy Speaker.

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

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

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

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

Alhaji Idris Ibrahim : The Amendment reads as follows :

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

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

Mr Speaker : That is the amendment you have seconded.

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

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, the Amendment is :

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

Amendment put and agreed to.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you.

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

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

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

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

[MR AFONJA]

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

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

Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion.

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

I now move that the Question be now put.

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

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

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

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

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

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

Burial Arrangement for Deceased

Member, Mr S. U. Bassey

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

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

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

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

The Motion, with a little amendment, reads thus :

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

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody to second the Motion ?

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

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

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

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

Several hon. Members : Why ?

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

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

[ALHAJI KALTUNGO]

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

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

Thank you very much.

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Let somebody move that the Question be now put.

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

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

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

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

Members' attitude during Motion for Adjournment

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

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

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

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

Mr Speaker : Yes on Motion for Adjournment any comments ?

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

Employment in Federal Establishments

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Declaration of Assets

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

[CHIEF ODUNTAN]

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

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

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

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

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

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

Statements of some Governors and Leaders

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

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

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

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

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

Presidential System of Government

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Yes.

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

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

Control of Emotions

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

Mr Speaker : Thank you.

Nigerian Railway Corporation

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

Participation in Debates

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

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

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

University of Calabar

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

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

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

[DR UKOPNG]

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

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

Thank you.

Sittings of the House

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

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

Mr Idakula: Thank you, Sir.

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

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

President's Christmas Party for children

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

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

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

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

River Basins

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

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

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

Supremacy of the House of Representatives

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Yes, can we hear from PRP ?

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

Presidential Appointments

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Presidential inquiry into the First Military Coup

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

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

Mr Speaker : Order! Order!

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

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

Question put and agreed to.

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

The House adjourned accordingly at 1.00 p.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 16th January, 1980

The House met at 10.20 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

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

Resignation of a Member

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

Communication from the Speaker of the
House of Representatives in America

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

January 14th, 1980

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

Dear Mr Speaker,

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

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

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

Sincerely,
Thomas P. O'Neil

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

Return of Forms

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

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Opobo Boatyard Limited

Adjourned Debate on Question,
6th December, 1979

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

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

Yes, Mr Inoh.

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

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

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the Motion ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Inoh : Thank you, Mr Speaker.

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

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

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

[MR INOH]

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

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

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker : Amendment please.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Anybody seconding the amendment?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Chief. Omuruwa]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Is there anybody who wants to make another Amendment ?

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

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

I beg to move, Mr speaker.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Amendment.

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

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

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

Thank you Mr Speaker.

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

An hon. Member : He is not here.

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

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

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

Amendment put and negative d.

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

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

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

Amendment put and negatived.

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : No, we have finished with that.

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

Yes, Mr Sadiku ?

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

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

Mr Sadiku : Mr Speaker, my Amendment reads thus :

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

I beg to Move.

Mr Speaker : Is anybody seconding the Amendment ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR ASUK]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you.

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

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

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

Question put and negatived.

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

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

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

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

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

[MR AKINBISEHIN]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[MR AGI]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.

Several Hon. Members : No! No!

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

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

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

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

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

Yes, Mr Ugwu.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Thank you very much.

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

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

[MR WADA]

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

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

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

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

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

Several hon. Members : Aye !

Mr Speaker : Those against the Motion say No.

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

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

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

Several hon. Members : Aye !

Mr Speaker : Those against the Motion say No.

Several hon. Members : No !

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

Question put and agreed to.

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

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

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

Review of the Activities of the Price Control Board

Adjourned Debate on Question, 17th December, 1979

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

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

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

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

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

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

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

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

Mr Anukwuem : I want to complete my contribution.

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

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

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

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

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

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

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

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

Mr Speaker : Thank you.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Those of us from the rural areas of the country share the view that the Price Control Department has outlived its usefulness to the public. Mr President, instead of this arm of the Ministry discharging its functions in conformity with laid down policy given to it by the military administration, it goes on harrasing petty traders in the rural areas. Experience has shown that these petty market men and women sell articles like matches, milk and such other items that are not worth between twenty to forty naira. They are usually arrested and dragged to court, and a fine of ₦200 imposed on them at every appearance in court. This has contributed a great deal to the inflation in the country. If this matter is viewed seriously, it will be discovered that it is those items that are under restriction and which are sold at inflated prices that one sees daily. So, I think the time is now opportune for the government of the people and for the people to think seriously of how to eradicate this menace that is afflicting the people of this great country.

[MR ANUKWUEM]

Mr President, I believe that the Price Control Department should be scrapped or abolished and all its personnel absorbed into the Immigration Department. The continued existence of that Department has done the people of this country no good. For example, a visit to the big firms that sell cars would reveal that approved prices for cars are not adhered to. Even where the government wants to buy a car, it is asked to pass through an agent. (Interruptions)

On this note Mr Speaker, Sir, it is the duty of this honourable House to better the lot of the common people in this country. They have the hope that this country would rescue them and give them means of livelihood by protecting their interests at all levels. They have the hope and we also have the hope.

I therefore ask hon. Members to lift up their hearts and eyes to that bright hope of morning stars, within even the breath of human beings in order to assist and make sure that this particular Motion receives blessing. (Applause)

Mrs J. Eze (Uzo-Uwani): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion on abolishing the Price Control Unit.

The Mover of the Motion is very much concerned about the sufferings of the paupers of this country. For a very long time actually, people had been telling us that they were controlling this or that. Actually there is nothing like controlling anything other than that a group of people I believe, got themselves together and saw to it that licences only went to those people who were attached to them. A few that were attached to them called it control. On the other hand, they make the country suffer because something you should buy at ₦10 and you would pay ₦16 for it. This adds to the fluctuation of the value of our Naira. Before the control and ban on foreign exchange, our Naira had better value than it is now. And then they said they were controlling beer. Now we buy beer, say for ₦1.20 a bottle but when beer was allowed to flow into the country freely we were paying 70k or less for a bottle of beer. On the other hand, the only people I see that suffer for most of these items are the people in the low-income group. But the big ones have always found their ways either by getting these things through their big brothers that go to Europe or they get them through their big brothers who may be leaving Europe for other continental countries.

I therefore very much support the Mover of this Motion that the Price Control Board should be abolished. I pledge in this honourable House that it would be most beneficial to this country if it could look into these items of food that the general public consume a lot and also look into import licence for things that are edible.

We cannot control what we do not have. It is only natural for people to control what they have. For instance, if you go around villages you see women who are pregnant, you see children and they all have

what they call anaemia. Children have kwashiokor, you see their tummies protruding because they have no protein in their food. They put a ban on frozen food and on meat items. Formerly we used to pay ₦2.50 for a frozen chicken, but now you cannot buy it with ₦7.00.

I support the Mover of the Motion that we should control the items we have and not the items which we do not have. If we control the items which we have, then there is no need for the Price Control Board. Thank you very much.

Mr E. O. Chukwu (Okigwe North): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, I rise to support the Motion.

Ever since 17th December when the Motion appeared in the Order Paper, I have had the opportunity of going through Decree 33 of 1970. I saw the good intentions of the people who promulgated the Decree but unfortunately, from what we see in our daily life, the operators who are called upon to put the Decree into action have so polluted the Decree that it is now meaningless. Mr Speaker, Sir, I am in total support of the Motion. I have to give one or two examples of the abuse of office on the part of the Price Control men.

I was in a court one day. I happened to force myself to be a legal aider. A woman was brought to the court because of selling a bottle of Coke over and above the controlled price. What did she do? She sold a bottle of Coke for 35k and they charged her to court. Everybody was moved. People were asking the Price Control men what they normally did with the big business men who really sell goods above the controlled price. What did they do?

So, Mr Speaker, looking at the operation of the Price Control Unit, one can agree that it is meant to be for the benefit of the big business men. It is no more protecting the interest of the masses. Mr Speaker, I am urging all Members to support the Motion because the Mover of the Motion is calling on us to do one thing and that is, to direct the Committee on Commerce to investigate the activities of the Price Control Unit to show any justification or otherwise for the continuance of the existence of the Board. He is not asking us to scrap the Board here, but he is asking us to ask the appropriate Committee of this honourable House to go further and find out what is really happening and report back why the Board should continue to exist.

So, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion and I want every hon. Member here to support the Motion.

Mr Joseph Okoli (Ezeagu): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to look at this Motion from a slightly different perspective, and that is, from the view point of our responsibility in this House.

It appears to me that on a number of occasions when issues do arise as far as institutions or establishment in this country are concerned, we always think of banning or scrapping. I think that we should accept our responsibility to enact rules, regulations or laws to control these systems or those who operate these systems.

If we look at the Price Control System or Decree and there are issues or sections of this Decree that do warrant any amendment, I think it is our responsibility to amend those particular areas, and not think first of scrapping or banning as we are thinking of JAMB and other systems and institutions in this country.

I think that we should first of all accept our responsibility by studying the Decree properly, see how the operators have carried on, and identify whether the ineffectiveness of the system has been as a result of the inefficiency of those that we put there. If it is so, investigate and get rid of those who operate them, if they are guilty. The idea of wanting a system or a Board scrapped for the sole reason that those we put in-charge of these Boards are not effective or efficient is something that I think, we should look at again, and accept our responsibility in making laws, regulations or revisions of these Decrees so as to be effective as we want them.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

Mr A. Sunday (Song) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I support this Motion. May I appeal to this honourable House that the Price Control Board was formed with good intentions but the officials execute their functions to enrich themselves only.

I support the view of the hon. Member for Uso-Uwani (*Mrs J. C. Ese*) who said that the Board should be abolished entirely. There is no need to leave the Price Control Board to exist and continue to cheat the poor people.

I will give you an example. If the Price Control Inspectors go to a village to buy something worth ten kobo and the seller sells it at about twelve kobo they will arrest him. If you look at what the trader in the village has in his shop, they are all worth not up to ₦20. This is the type of people that suffer in the hands of the local *Alkalis*. The big men with bigger shops give them bribe ; so they do not worry this class of people.

I therefore strongly appeal to this honourable House to vote in support of the abolition of the Price Control Board entirely.

Mr Hamza M. Ngadiwa (Biu North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion.

Hon. Members we are once again reviewing the existence of a monster in the midst of our economy which is the Price Control Board. Right from its inception the Price Control Board became a sick baby and we are looking at it whether it should exist or not. The Price Control Board became a sick baby when it turned from Price Control Board to Price Contamination Board. It became an agent of oppression of the small scale traders. It became a secret agent of profit making for the small and petty manager. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Price Control Board as a monster, is eating deep and increasing the rate of inflation and recession in this country. I therefore implore this honourable House to vote unanimously for its abolition in its totality.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, a few weeks ago a man no less than a Federal Minister for that matter, in whose charge the Price Control Board is, spoke the indefensible, and that is, the continued existence of the Price Control Board. I think that the position the Minister took is condemnable. He is trying to support an agent of oppression. He is trying to support an agent that is being opposed for all sections of this country, especially in the rural areas where the Price Control Board has ceased to be a Price Control Board and has exhibited itself in the society as a Price Contamination Board.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members the Price Control Board should not be allowed to continue any day longer than is necessary.

With these few contributions, I beg to support.

Mr Aliyu Isa (Makarfi) : Thank you, Mr Speaker. I rise to support the Motion.

In the first instance, I do not think that the Price Control Board should have existed at all if there had been a standard government in this country. It existed because we had a sub-standard government which brought a lot of difficulties by protecting some people that they called industrialists. This protection should not have come up because the government by doing this is encouraging monopoly in our market. The so-called Economic Advisers had deceived our government in believing that these industrialists should be protected and that they could supply enough goods. But this has not been done. Even if the government wants to control the prices of goods, it should first of all make sure that it controls production costs and the government should give a small profit margin to the industrialists. The government should also have been in control of production and distribution of goods. So the Price Control Board should have been established to deal with the manufacturers and not the ordinary man in the street.

The establishment of the Price Control Board created the problem of hoarding. The manufacturers dictated what price they would sell to the people, thereby making at times, 300 per cent profit ; and the government approved of this. That is not all. They hoard these goods and the man who is being punished in the long run buys at more than the controlled price.

From the beginning the Price Control Board has been a corrupt organisation and a failure, and it should be scrapped. Thank you.

Mr Mohammed Shu'aibu Kaugama (Aliyo/Kaugama) : Thank you, Mr Speaker for giving me this opportunity to talk on this august occasion about the corrupt practices of this nefarious Board, called the Price Control Board. This is a Board that was established in good faith to serve the generality of Nigerians but unfortunately it happens to be a breeding ground for corruption. It serves no purpose other than helping the big guns to have their ways. It is only the small businessmen that suffer from the oppressive hands of this organisation.

[MR KAUGANA]

As contained in the Motion, this Board has long been under serious public criticism and thereby deserves no right of its existence. It is nothing other than an organisation that is responsible for the inflation that is facing this nation.

This affects the common man, the man in the street and the common businessman that sells his wares in the market. I honestly sympathise with the original Mover of this Motion. He should have brought this Motion in form of a Bill in order that we could really debate on this Bill and then pass a Resolution on it. This will be sent to the President for his assent and get this Board scrapped, not to have anything to do with it any more. The original Mover of this Motion has already been in sympathy with this Board in bringing this Motion in form of a Motion and not as a Bill. So, please in the future Motions of this sensitivity should be presented to us in form of Bills so that our powers can be exercised.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few words I beg to take my seat.

Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I seconded the Motion subject to the feelings of the Mover of the Motion. If I had been called earlier, I intended to suggest an Amendment and having listened to the views expressed by most hon. Members, I think there is no need to send this Motion to any Committee. It is very clear that most, if not all the Members, are satisfied that the Price Control Board is useless. There is no need to ask the Committee to go and find out—

Some hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Akande : That is my own view ; I am entitled to it. Mr Speaker, Sir, I seek your protection.

Mr Speaker : Yes, go on Debo.

Mr Akande : There is no doubt as I was saying that the Price Control Decree is one of the panic measures adopted by the defunct Military Government to meet some emergency situations. An hon. Member said if a civil government was in existence, there would not have been any need for such a panic measure. I believe that the new government has its proposals, which I am sure will soon come out from the Budget Speech—proposals that would be put to the House—for guarding against the economy of the country. The intention of the Military Government in promulgating the Price Control Decree was to guard against the economy but there is no doubt that it failed on all fours. I think the point we have to consider is : why did the Price Control Decree fail ? The grounds are so obvious. One, ineffectiveness ; two, abuse by the functionaries and thirdly, the consequences to the ordinary man in the street. These three points are so clear from the operation of the Decree and I would support the Motion that if the House finds it necessary, we should send it to the Committee. I am sure the Committee would come back here and tell us that there is no need to further retain the Price Control Decree while we wait for the new government to put its own proposals for guarding against the economy of the country.

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

Mr Dele Fayemi (Badagry) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Price Control Board and Import Restriction Order are two regulations that really went against the commoners of this country.

If you look very closely into the economy of the nation, you will see that the imported goods are so scarce in the country and the home manufactured goods are as well scarce and what you do not have you want to control. Who suffers ? The final consumers. When the final consumers are forced to go to the black market to buy the necessary goods, they buy these goods at very high prices. You say you have Price Control Board and this Board only drives into underground the people, the sellers who have very few commodities to sell. You do not have the commodities on the markets, the home manufactured goods are not enough, the imported ones are under control, then what do you have ? Nothing, but black market. That is why most of the functionaries in this particular Board make good of their positions to the disadvantage of the commoners in the country. The only way out of this is not only to scrap the Price Control Board but to look very closely into the articles that are placed under restriction when it comes to matter of import. Whether you scrap the Price Control Board or not, and you do not think about the restrictions placed on the goods, the final consumers will still be the final losers in the end. As we think of the Price Control Board, the Bill or Motion that will come up on the restriction of goods—

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member you will continue after the break.

Hon. Members the House is accordingly suspended until 3 o'clock this afternoon.

Sitting suspended : 12.55 p.m.

Sitting resumed : 3.05 p.m.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, the debate on Motion No. 2 continues. An hon. Gentleman was speaking before the House suspended sitting this morning. If he is not here now to continue his speech, another Member may wish to speak.

Mr Stephen B. Abodunde (Oyi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, speaking on the Motion on which we were debating before we went on recess this morning, I would like to say as follows :

The Price Control Board has outlived its usefulness. The original intention, of course, was to combat inflation. You will agree that the people who suffer from inflation are the masses. People like us and quite a number of civil servants can afford to buy things at high prices. For example, if we control the price of beer and say that a bottle should be sold for one naira, many people can afford to buy it. But if it is increased to, say, two naira, many of us can still afford to buy it ; but the poor man in the street cannot afford to buy a bottle of beer for two naira. This means that in the long run, the poor man in the street is denied the opportunity of a higher standard of living.

For this reason, we pray that the Price Control Board is no longer serving the purpose for which it is instituted. Who benefits from this control? As it is well known to us, it is the officials of the Price Control Board. They go about collecting money and thereby enriching themselves at the expense of the poor traders. I have seen some distributors who would charge very high prices for their commodities but on the receipts issued to those who buy from them, you would find the official prices that ought to be charged. They have agents who collect what is known as *back-money*. The actual amount so collected would not appear on the receipts. The society is aware of these goings-on, yet nobody has been able to curb them.

In this wise, I see no reason why we should continue to uphold a law which we cannot enforce. Therefore, hon. Members, I implore everyone here to, please, support this Motion so that we can get rid of this arm of the Government that is no longer useful to the society. Thank you, Sir.

Prince Lateef B. Kataiyeyanjue (Iwo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

I am in sympathy with the Mover of this Motion. Though I heard what other Members have said on this Motion before the House went on recess this morning, may I respectfully ask that this Motion, as important as it is, be referred to the appropriate Committee. This is because if we continue on this Motion from this afternoon till tomorrow morning, we shall come to the same point. We all know what is happening, and what is wrong with the Price Control Board. We know that the Board has outlived its usefulness; but if we continue like this, we would not achieve anything. If we want to get at the root of the problem of the Price Control Board, we had better refer the Motion to the appropriate Committee so that the Committee can look into the matter properly.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I suggest that this Motion be referred to the appropriate Committee. With this, I support the Motion.

Mr Damisa Jimoh (Okehi Adavbi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Mover of the Motion has said that this matter be referred to the Committee on Commerce.

I think all we have been doing is, probably, to collect enough materials for the Committee to work upon. We talk about the Price Control Board and talk probably about beer. I think what we really want is to satisfy the ordinary man. If you want to drink beer, that must come from part of your surplus. If you can live, have shelter, and educate yourself, then anything outside all those is in excess. So, if they sell beer for ten naira and you can afford to buy it, it is your own business. If the sellers do not get customers they would probably reduce the price to 25 kobo per bottle.

Our problem, as one Member has rightly suggested, is misuse of this Price Control Board. This is quite true. I am of the opinion too that there is no need to have a law we cannot enforce in our statutory books. It is better we refer this matter, as it is now

in the Motion, to the Committee on Commerce to review it properly and see if we really need this Price Control Board. If we do not want the Price Control Board, we should not forget that the Board was set up by a Decree which we cannot throw away by a mere Motion. It must come by a way of a Bill.

With this little contribution I beg to have my seat.

Mr Lakem Ofem Okoi (Obubra II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise most honestly to oppose this Motion.

I am opposing this Motion not because this Motion has not got any good intention but because of the experience which I, and quite a number of Members of this honourable House, had when matters were referred to Committees. When a matter like this is referred to a Committee, the Committee only sits there to observe certain irregularities. The Committee would rise only to refer the matter back to this House for more details.

Much as I sympathise with the Mover of the Motion, I am of the view that not enough facts have been fed to this honourable House to compel this House to be sympathetic enough to refer it to the Committee. The Mover should be requested to furnish more details on this matter. I have a feeling, Mr Speaker, that if this matter is ever to be referred to the Committee on Commerce, then the Mover of the Motion should come up with specific details of the notorious activities of the Price Control Board. For example, I do not see any justification whatsoever in saying that a Body that has been legally set up, and has been given specific duties to perform by a Decree which is still upheld, is not performing its duties properly without referring specifically to certain offences, or omissions, or acts committed by this Body. So, I am of the view, Mr Speaker and hon. Members, that if at all we want the Committee to be useful to this honourable House or to make certain useful recommendations, then the Mover of the Motion should give more details and not overwork the Committee on Commerce.

With that contribution, Mr Speaker, I oppose this Motion.

Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. (*Applause*)

In supporting this Motion, I have to refer to the speech of the last speaker. The last speaker said he would want some instances and specific issues quoted to support the Motion. I have to call the attention of the speaker to the cost of vehicles in Nigeria. Cars are under the control of the Price Control Board. There is no single car you can buy in Nigeria today at the actual control price. This is known to almost every Nigerian. If you go to any car company and say you want to buy a car, you certainly would pay the actual control price but you would pay an additional amount of maybe ₦500 or ₦1,000 which will not be included in the receipt. This is known to virtually everybody who has bought a car within the last two years.

An hon. Member : Hear ! Hear !

Mr Poloma : Now, another issue of control is the control of house rents. You find Government controlling house rents in this country, but if you go to a landlord and you want to pay for a house, the landlord, maybe will demand more than the actual control rent and give you a receipt for the control rent. This is known all over the place and it is a specific instance that the last speaker is quite aware of.

Now, I come to the question of control of all commodities that are under the Price Control Board. It is almost impossible to control the prices of commodities that are not available to almost everybody. This is the law of demand and supply. If you have one shirt and the control price is ₦5 and you have ten people looking for that shirt, they are prepared to pay any amount, whether it is controlled or not, and there is nothing the law can do about it.

Another vital issue here is that the Price Control Board is not aware of values. No Official of the Price Control Board knows the value of either the commodities manufactured locally in this country, or those imported. They just come and say they want to fix or control prices. How can you control what you do not know the value? There was a time they were controlling the price of beer in this country to the extent that they almost sent all the breweries out of production because they did not know the price or the cost of production of a bottle of beer. You have to consider the cost of labour, cost of raw materials, taxes and then the marginal gain. They never worked on that. Rather, they just went on and controlled prices of these commodities and almost sent all the breweries in this country out of production. We have to get an organisation that can work out the details of the manufacture of a commodity before arriving at a price and then control that price.

Now, on the question of importation, if you ask any price control officer to tell you the value of a commodity imported into this country, he will tell you that he does not know. He does not know the invoice value, he does not know the cost of freight and he does not know the cost of insurance. How do they arrive at the controlling of the prices? I will give an instance in this case. There are some vehicles that have gone out of supply in this country, for example, Range Rovers and so on and so forth, because of the controlled prices of these vehicles. The controlled prices of these vehicles are so low that if the importers of this type of vehicle import them, they will sell at a loss, and as such, they decided not to import these cars into the country. So, it is a question of somebody going into an issue he does not know about. He is just dabbling into it wrongly.

The next issue concerns the rules and regulations governing the control itself. If you want to buy a vehicle today in this country, for instance, you can go to a price control officer. The chances of your getting that vehicle easier are faster than you going to buy yourself because the price control officer is in

illusion with the company since whatever price they sell it (which is not going to be indicated in the invoice) may be shared between them and the price control officer. Otherwise why go through the price control officer before buying a car?

So, with these few points, Mr Speaker, Sir, and hon. Members, I beg to take my seat and support the Motion. Thank you.

Dr Emmanuel Y. Atanu (Idah South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in speaking about this Motion, I would like to say that there are two issues here. The first is the issue of the necessity for a price control system *per se*. The second is the efficiency or the effectiveness of the price control system as it exists in Nigeria.

I think it will be a sad affairs to say that there is no need to control prices. There is no country in the world where prices are not controlled. It is only when you have a perfect market system that it becomes unnecessary to control prices. Price control has several functions or several advantages. First of all, you have a commodity and you have to determine what price it is to be sold at. If you leave it to the whims and caprices of the manufacturer, his interest is to make profit and he will set it at a rate at which he will make a maximum profit. To protect the consumer, therefore, it is necessary that we impose some control, some regulatory system on the price of the commodity. Therefore, I believe that the existence of the price control mechanism in Nigeria is very necessary.

The second is the efficiency of the Price Control Board as it exists in Nigeria. Unfortunately, we have a sad experience of the functioning of the Price Control Board in Nigeria because as it has happened to many of our well-thought out ideas and proposals in this country, the implementation is a draw back. People who are called upon to implement good ideas destroy the purpose, destroy the meaning in which these ideas have been suggested and for which mechanism has been set to work.

I understand, and I sympathise with those who call for the abolition of the Price Control Board, but I believe that if we do that, the consumers in this country will lose mostly. There will be no means then of determining the price of a commodity and there will be no means of protecting buyers and consumers. Therefore, I think we will not be acting properly if we suggest that the Price Control Board should be dismantled. What I would suggest, however, is that the Price Control Board be re-organised in such a way as to remove the evils that now exist as a result of its implementation. I do believe that if we give the Ministry concerned sufficient opportunity, and if we give advice on how to go about this re-organisation, we can get a system which is both profitable to our economy and to the consumers as a whole.

Mr Speaker, when this debate was initiated, a few of us made a short visit to the Ministry of Commerce to try and investigate what was happening there.

We came out with a few findings. In fact, as at now, there are only seven items under full price control. Those items are matches, milk, flour, bicycles, motorcycles, motor vehicles and petroleum products. You can see that most of these things are imported articles from other countries. If we destroy the Price Control system, then we will allow people from other countries to come and exhibit their wares at any price they want and extort our people. I do not think we would advocate a position like that.

There are also some items which are under price maintenance. By price maintenance, it is meant that the Price Control Board sits with the manufacturers and decides on a price that should be charged for a particular commodity and it is the business of the manufacturers to police the implementation of the agreed price among the distributors. They have a source of power in the sense that they can curtail the amount of goods they supply to a particular distributor. They can in fact cancel his permit to act as a distributor. So, they have a very effective weapon in controlling these commodities. It is not true that every item on the market is under Price Control. They are very few and I have mentioned seven of them.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I agree and I support those who say that this matter should be committed to the Committee to investigate and that the Minister or his representative who is in-charge of price control should be called upon to come and give evidence and we can put our suggestions to him. But to call for the disbandment of the Price Control Board, I think, is a negative approach and it would not serve the purpose. (*Applause*)

Mr Charles A. Adoga (Ogoja): My contribution here, Mr Speaker, Sir, is that I do not support the idea that the Board should be scrapped. I think, there must be a reason why the authorities instituted a Price Control Board and the reason is that the middlemen or the dealers were responsible for making such items or such commodities which were available to the public very, very scarce. The system which they used was to collect so much and hoard. It was this act of hoarding which actually gave rise to the establishment of the Price Control Board. I do not think that the scrapping of this Board would actually help the exercise.

In most cases where these Board exist they are unable to cope with the number of dealers in the various commodities that exist. In each of the areas where we know that the Price Control Board exists, in fact when they are operating in one side of the town, you would see that one awful thing is happening again in the other area and they are unable to control such things. So hoarding is a way of increasing the amount of profits which every dealer makes, and every dealers actually gives a lot of weight to it. They are thus unable to control these things very effectively. I do not think that it is the Board itself which is responsible for this, rather it is we ourselves who are in a community that are so undisciplined. We cannot keep to rules, we make things difficult for ourselves and we also make things difficult for the people to operate the machinery

for control. We even go to the extent of tempting them, which is very bad and that is what is giving rise to the ills of this Nation.

So, Mr Speaker, I do not think it is necessary to belabour ourselves on this matter. It is right to refer this matter to the appropriate Committee to look into it properly.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South): I would like to say a few things about the Price Control Board.

The Price Control Board came into existence in 1969. Mr Speaker, I happened to be one of those who were appointed to this Board. I think and I believe that the Government had very good intentions about this Board itself. I had served on this Board for good six years and I believe that the Board was not established to encourage corruption or anything of that nature. We did all we could in that Board to see that the prices of commodities were controlled so that the poor people could enjoy Government control over these commodities. But unfortunately, Mr Speaker, being Nigerians that we are, we are all oriented capitalist type of people who like to exploit at all times. We are not really very disciplined to observe or obey the rules of this country.

When the Government makes rules or regulations that are expected to be obeyed by the citizens, Nigerians do not obey them. We make it very difficult for the Price Control Regulations to be effective. We do not help the law enforcement agency at all to make these things effective. If you know that a car costs ₦4,000 and a car dealer tells you that you have to pay him an additional ₦1,000, why do you have to agree with him and pay? You should take that man straight to the law enforcement agency, or report him. You do not have to buy that car. You have to agree and obey the rules of the country. But you as a culprit, you will not obey the law, you would pay him that additional ₦1,000 because you believe you can pay it. This is because you know that even that additional ₦1,000 which you have to pay him was acquired by you by exploiting somebody else. That is why it does not pain you to go and add an additional ₦1,000 to the dealer of that car. You know it would not cost you anything by paying the additional ₦1,000. So this is what is happening in our society. The same thing happens with ordinary milk. When you know that the Government control price of a tin of milk is 20k and you see it being exhibited in the market at 25k, because you believe 25k is nothing to you, you pay for it at that inflated price. Later on, you come back to complain that the Price Control Board is not doing this or not doing that. I think we ourselves are not helping at all to make these laws effective. This is one side to it.

As the hon. Member for Idah South (*Dr E. Y. Atanu*) has just mentioned if we insist on scrapping price Control Board, we would come here and begin to cry again that it would have been better if we had left it in existence. It is still helping the poor

[ALHAJI KALTUNGO]

people. Let me tell you hon. Members that even in advanced countries, prices of their commodities are regulated. In places like America, London and other advanced countries, they are still enforcing prices of their commodities. I agree they have a lot of supply to match the price control which we lack in this country. We lack them because we do not also want to produce. We rely very much on what we can get from outside up till today. It is not that we cannot produce in Nigeria but that we just do not want to produce. If we determine to produce today, I do not think Nigerians can drink all the beer that would be brewed in this country. Mr Speaker, Sir, having said these very few things about the Price Control, I am in support of what the last speaker, Dr Atanu, has said that we should not scrap the Price Control Board just for sentiment's sake.

The Mover of the Motion himself has requested that this matter be sent to the Committee to examine this case properly and very well. The Minister of Commerce made a statement recently which some of us were not happy about. This Committee has got the right to invite the Commissioner to come and place before it what will actually convince the Committee that the statement made by the Minister is correct because of the way he protected the Price Control Board and the National Supply Company. So, hon. Members, I hope we will be doing good service to this country if we can take our decisions on realities rather than expressing sentiments. I am, therefore, appealing to all of you to agree that this matter be taken to the Committee for their scrutiny. In this respect, Mr Speaker, Sir, if you allow me, I would move that the Question be now put.

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

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

Mr Speaker : We would now go to the next item which stands in the name of the Leader of the House, Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo.

Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward) : Point of explanation.

Mr Speaker : Yes, let us hear the point of explanation. Please Alhaji Kaltungo let him make the explanation.

Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed : Mr Speaker, Sir, it was not my intention to interrupt the hon. Leader of the House before he moves the Motion, but I think the information I have to give is highly relevant. We debated extensively yesterday and concluded that we were going to set up a Committee. I would like to inform the House of a few interesting points. First and foremost, I would like to warn

this House that the investigation we are about to set up is not an easy one. I have a reliable information that files have been removed.

Mr Speaker : Hold on Dr Muhammed. Are you debating a Motion that has not been moved? Why not wait until the Motion is moved then you can make your contribution.

Dr Muhammed : No, I want to make a point of explanation, Sir. It is important. It is absolutely relevant to what the Leader of the House is going to say and I feel the House should be informed.

Mr Speaker : Let him say it first. He has not said anything. Let him move the Motion.

Dr Muhammed : With due respect, Sir, what he is going to say is not subject to debate because it has already been agreed upon by the Leaders of Political Parties in this House and I am not going to challenge what he has to say. What I am going to tell the House is of enormous relevance to what is going to be investigated, not just what the Leader of the House is going to say.

Mr Speaker : No, this is not the appropriate forum. If you want to say anything about the investigation, then you go and say it to the Committee. We are not going to make use of any materials here. Please, Dr Muhammed, let us not waste time on this matter.

Dr Muhammed : All right, Sir. Thank you, Sir.

Mr Speaker : Yes, Alhaji Kaltungo.

Composition of the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the Motion standing in my name reads :

That in accordance with House Resolution 48 of 15th January, 1980 the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation should be made up of 15 Members to be composed as follows :

- 6 Members of the NPN
- 4 Members of the UPN
- 3 Members of the NPP
- 1 Member of the PRP
- 1 Member of the GNPP

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Yes, who is seconding the Motion ?

Mr Jimoh Damisa (Adabbi Okehi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Does this require any debate, because we have already agreed on this Committee ? All right, let us hear from Dr Muhammed.

Dr Muhammed : Mr Speaker, Sir, I hate to sound alarmist, but I would like to make it abundantly clear to this honourable House that the noble step we have taken in establishing a high-powered Commission of Inquiry to investigate all aspects of

the NNPC is not going to be an easy task. I say this with all seriousness because I have a reliable information that from the very moment this Motion was passed yesterday, there has been a flurry of activities in the Headquarters of the NNPC and in other Government offices of this country. Files have been removed and are being shredded. Vital documents which we may wish to ask for are being destroyed. I do not see how we can make a head-way if these documents are being either hidden or destroyed.

I have also to inform this House that some of the important personalities we may wish to question are not available. So, I think it is absolutely important for the Speaker to further inform the committee by using his discretionary powers to co-opt a few more people in his capacity as the Speaker, people who may have an information and who may be experts or otherwise to help this Committee do its work. I said at first that I did not want to challenge what had already been agreed upon in a very gentlemanly manner by Leaders of the various parties. I would have thought that the best thing would have been for parties to have equal representation. But now as things are, this has been agreed and it is not in my nature to challenge what has been agreed upon. It is absolutely important for people to realise that, firstly, if we do not have important evidence, this Committee will grind to a halt. Secondly, I think it is absolutely important that this National Assembly votes some money to bring in specialists, if need be, who could help us go into some of the vital files, those that are now available. Thirdly, the most important witness, as far as I see, will be Chief Feyide who has resigned as Chief of the Inspectorate Division. He knows more than anybody else.

Another thing is that we have to subpoena the Council Memo which was written and submitted to the Council asking for a transformation of the NNOC into the NNPC. These are very vital documents and vital personalities. Another person will be the former Chief Internal Auditor who has resigned and is now in Britain as the Representative of the Nigeria National Supply Company. We have got to summon some of these people. It is absolutely important, Sir, that you co-opt more people as the Speaker of this House in order to make this Committee's work succeed, otherwise, we are up against a very powerful clique. Today, Mr Marinho, the Managing Director of NNPC, was in this House and I understood he came to meet the Leader of the Senate. The Senate has been sitting on the Bill sent by the President to discuss and re-organise the NNPC. This gives us room for enormous suspicion and I think it is absolutely important we know the enormity of the task before us so that we do not deceive ourselves. Mr Speaker, Sir, we may find that the Committee with all its intentions may be a worthless exercise. I want to add that we take it with all seriousness.

Mr Speaker : Let us hear the hon. Member for Danbatta (*Mallam Sidi Ali*).

Mallam Sidi Ali (Danbatta) : Thank you, Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the point raised by the hon. Member for Kano Westward (*Dr Jinaidu Mohammed*) is very vital in this issue.

If we are going to be sincere to ourselves about the people involved in this case of great magnitude, I am sure every Member would remember when the Military Officers were asked to step down from their offices as Federal Commissioners and leave the various Ministries to civilians. The then Chairman of the Petroleum Corporation, Col. Buhari, who is now a Brigadier was transferred to Dodan Barracks and NNPC was taken to Dodan Barracks. Therefore, it was still being controlled by the then Chief of Staff and the Head of State. In this investigation, we need to bring the former Chief of Staff, Major-General Shehu Yar'Ardua, the former Head of State, General Obasanjo, as they will have vital information on this issue. In supporting the hon. Member for Kano Westward (*Dr Jinaidu Mohammed*), I think we should invite these people.

Chief Feyide is one of the most knowledgeable people on oil matters in this country. He was very important that he became Secretary-General of the OPEC and when he was about to return to Nigeria some sort of *coup* was arranged to prevent him from coming back to the oil Ministry. Therefore, I think he too has a lot of information which he will offer in this investigation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

Mr Speaker : Thank you very much. I can assure you that the House contains very distinguished people and I am also sure that the parties will nominate to represent them distinguished Members of this House, and knowledgeable ones for that matter, who will conduct this investigation. Please let the Question be now put.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, since this Resolution is just about the appointment of the Committee which will look into this issue, may I now move that the Question be now put.

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That in accordance with House Resolution 48 of 15th January, 1980 the Special Committee on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation should be made up of 15 Members to be composed as follows :

- 6 Members of the NPN
- 4 Members of the UPN
- 3 Members of the NPP
- 1 Member of the PRP
- 1 Member of the GNPP

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, it will be of interest to announce that NPN and PRP have already submitted the list of their nominees. So, we are waiting for the nominees of the UPN and the GNPP and as soon as we have them the Committee will start work. This is a very sensitive and important matter.

[MR. SPEAKER]

Motion number 4, Composition of the Special Committee on the Discipline of Members, stands in the name of the hon. Member for Tangale-Waja (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*) Leader of the House.

Composition of the Special Committee on the Discipline of Members

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion on the composition of the Special Committee on the conduct of Members reads as follows :

That this Honourable House set up a twelve-Member Special Committee on the Discipline of Members, to be composed as follows :

- 5 Members of the NPN
- 3 Members of the UPN
- 2 Members of the NPP
- 1 Member of the PRP
- 1 Member of the GNPP

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

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

Mr Speaker : Yes, hon. Member for Tangale-Waja (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*) have you anything to contribute ?

Alhaji Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this Motion speaks for itself. In a House of this nature we must have a Committee dealing with the conduct of the Members of the House. It is very important we have this particular Committee to maintain the prestige and dignity of the National Assembly in general. Our conduct either in the House or outside is subject to public criticism or public support. Therefore, if we are to maintain this type of dignity, we have to set up this particular committee which will be responsible for looking into the conduct of the Members of this House.

The practice is world-wide in any Parliament you know of. For example, Mr Speaker, Sir, in the United States, the country we visited recently, and the country we are trying to copy the type of democracy it is practising and where super-democracy is exercised, Nigeria wants to follow suit. Hon. Members, if the word *super* is too strong, I tell you it is the type of democracy we want to copy. When we wanted to copy the Presidential System in this country we did not take any example from anywhere else in the world. We said we wanted to copy the American system. So this type of Disciplinary Committee exists in the American Parliament. I know we are not copying America entirely. We do those things that suit our own condition in Nigeria but where we find some of the things which can be adopted in the American system we do adopt them.

Two days ago the Deputy Speaker presented to us some of the things happening in America. We were so happy about them. There was aloud applause about them. We thought we were going to do the same thing in Nigeria.

An hon. Member : Point of Order.

Mr Speaker : You are calling the Leader of the House to order ?

The hon. Member : Yes.

Mr Ambrose Gapsuk (Shendam East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to apologise to the Leader of the House for interrupting him on this Order 71. I beg to know the stranger sitting on the right-hand side of Mr Speaker. Perhaps he is one of the Ministers we saw some time ago.

Mr Speaker : He is a staff of the National Assembly.

Mr Gapsuk : Thank you very much, Sir.

Alhaji Kaltungo : Thank you hon. Member for Shendam East (*Mr Gapsuk*). I thought you were calling me to order for my contribution but I thank you that it is not for that reason.

Hon. Members, I cannot do without making reference, and I hope you will excuse me when I make references to other countries. We are learning a new system of Parliamentary Democracy and since we want to maintain the dignity of this country, I believe that our attitude in the National Assembly will tell much on the ordinary people of this country. Today I believe if we want this country to be peaceful it will be peaceful ; if we want this country to be destroyed today it will be destroyed. So, we are responsible for the things which happen in this country and I believe none of us will doubt this fact. I am saying this because if our conduct is not so good the same thing will apply to the man in the street. Therefore, if we behave ourselves here it will serve as a good example for the people of this country ; and that is what this Motion on the Committee on the Conduct of Members is all about. In America also it does not only apply to the Members of the Houses ; it even extends to the officials of the Assembly and the whole of this Book in my hand is about this type of conduct. Everything is written there. We are going to write our own. We are not going to follow strictly what others follow but it can serve as a guide to us.

Mr Speaker, Sir, two days ago some Members were called to order because they were not properly dressed to be in this House. This is the type of thing this Committee will have to look into. We would not like to see our Members, when they show their identity in any public place as Members of the National Assembly, Members who make rules and regulations for this country which people are supposed to follow, are being disgraced in the street. I believe everywhere our Members go to they should be given due respect. You have to respect yourself before an ordinary man can respect you as a Member.

I had seen in one of the States where a Member engaged in boxing in an hotel with somebody. This is a disgrace. It happened in Nigeria and not in the United States. It was not in the Federal House that this thing happened. I do not want to tell you something which had happened around here. I would not mention a very disgraceful thing which had happened in the place where we are living at Badagry Road.

This type of thing has to be checked and that is why we find it necessary to establish this particular Committee on the Code of Conduct for our Members.

An hon. Member : Point of order.

Mr Speaker : Yes.

Alhaji Hamman Dikko (Maiha) : Order No. 20 (1). The Order Paper reads—*Composition of the Special Committee on the Discipline of Members* and the Mover of the Motion is saying *Conduct*.

Mr Speaker : Order 20 (1) says :

Where under any Standing Order (or the practice of the House notice of motions or amendment is required, such notice shall be given on a day on which the House is sitting, by being handed in at the Table ; or by being received at the office of the Clerk within the hours prescribed by Mr Speaker for the purpose when the House is not sitting.

Alhaji Dikko : He has amended it.

Mr Speaker : Yes say it is amended ?

Alhaji Dikko : Yes. The Order Paper says Committee on *Discipline* and he is saying *Conduct*.

Mr Speaker : Oh, I see. What you are saying is that the notice of the amendment was not given. I can understand your problem. You are saying he has altered *Discipline* to read *Conduct*. That is what you are saying.

Alhaji Dikko : Oh, yes.

Mr Speaker : Alhaji Kaltungo, what you have on the Order paper is *Discipline of Members*.

Alhaji Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I consulted my lawyer before I began to move this Motion and he said *Discipline* seemed to be too strong on the Members and he advised me that the word *Conduct* would be better. That is why I said *Conduct*. It is not a question of amendment, Gentlemen. The other example I have here also says *Conduct*.

Mr Speaker, Sir, may I say that the presentation which I have just made must have convinced the hon. Members of this Assembly. I believe that this Motion which I have brought will have the support of every Member of this House as other Members whom I have consulted have actually agreed that it is not a matter to be bragged about. It is a straightforward issue and I have given all my reasons in support of this argument.

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to sit down for your support. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Oron II (*Mr Edet Bassey Etienam*).

Mr Edet Bassey Etienam (Oron II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I would like to make one clarification that the Special Committee which we are asking this honourable House to set up is quite different from the Code of Conduct Bureau

which is expected to be established under the Constitution. The Committee which the Leader of the House is having in mind, I am sure, has something to do with the general behaviour of Members within and outside this honourable House. Since we started about three months ago, quite a number of things have happened to give cause for the appointment of this Committee. If it were possible, I would suggest that we also ask our Colleagues in the Senate to set up a Similar Committee to oversee the conduct of their Members because the behaviour of some of them at the Badagry residence where we are staying is very embarrassing to some of us. (*Interruptions*)

With this observation, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that I support the Motion.

Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion. I do recognise that in an organisation like this, we could not perform properly or meet up some of the obligations imposed upon us without some degree of discipline. Again, I share the view very strongly that if we want to make rules for this country, we must somehow conduct ourselves in a way seemingly or otherwise to demonstrate to the public whom we take charge of, that we have internal type of discipline. But I would ask in order to make this Motion more palatable that we call it the Ethics Committee and that removes the obnoxious thing about discipline and other things because discipline comes when there is misconduct of any type. So, I think Ethics Committee could have been more savoury.

I beg to support this Motion with this little Amendment.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Idemili (*Mr J. C. Ojukwu*).

Mr J. C. Ojukwu (Idemili) : I rise to speak in support of both the Motion and the Amendment proposed by the last speaker. My reasons are that we should not give the impression that we are a bunch of vagrant school children who need to be followed with long strokes before we behave. Therefore, the word discipline does not connote something palatable.

An hon. Member : It connotes serious misdemeanour.

Mr Ojukwu : Yes, it denotes serious misdemeanour as a Member has just suggested to me. It will be better for us to insert ethics.

In supporting this Motion, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to say that what is more important for all of us is to realise the importance and need for self-discipline rather than to be frightened by the yellow book which the hon. Leader of the House has shown us. In saying this, I want to say that we must be wary of what some people refer to as Bible punching moralist. It is not enough to preach one thing and do another. It is also hypocritical to parade high-sounding morals in order to appear well-behaved whilst at the back of the House we do a different thing. Some day these things will reveal themselves, for it is said that there is absolutely

[MR OJUKWU]

nothing that is secret under the sun. I am, therefore, saying, Mr Speaker, Sir, that I support this Motion but we should address ourselves as individual Nigerians to the need for self-discipline which is a thing that is very seriously lacking in this Nation and when we attain this, there may even be no need for any written ethics.

Dr Eze Nwala (Ikwerre/Etche) : Mr Speaker, Hon. Members, I want to support the Motion on the Floor particularly the one that has been amended by the hon. Member for Bori I (*Prince Sangha*) in his contribution that we should rather call this Motion the Committee on Ethics or the Ethics Committee. I think that is a better and more refined nomenclature for this Committee. But something is not quite well defined and I am wondering whether the Leader of the House (this is being addressed to the Leader of the House) knows whether this honourable House has set up the Rules and Regulations governing the behaviour of Members.

Another thing that we should know is whether it is the duty of this particular Committee to set up the Rules and Regulations governing the behaviours of Members of the House. He has not told us really what he wants in this Motion. I think the Motion is not clear. It is rather ambiguous.

I am not sure the Leader of the House is listening to my contribution because he is talking.

Mr Speaker : No, go on. You are addressing Mr Speaker. You are not talking to the Leader of the House.

Dr Nwala : Before we set up a Committee on ethics we should at least address ourselves to the ground rules, a set of rules that will govern the behaviour of Members. It is my considered opinion that this Committee that is being called upon now will set up the rules. It is not the Committee that will enforce the rules. Based upon that explanation, I would support the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Thank you. Yes, GNPP.

Alhaji Iliyasu Hong (Hong) : Mr Speaker, Sir, while I support the Motion on the Floor, I oppose the composition of Members of the committee. Membership of the Disciplinary Committee should be on equal representation from the five Political Parties, otherwise it is just useless trying to discipline anybody with the composition as it stands. I therefore call on the honourable House to support the composition of the Members by equal representation from all the five Political Parties.

With that, I support the disciplinary Committee but not the composition of Members. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Isyaku Gumawa (Gabasawa) : Mr Speaker, Sir and hon. Members of the House, I rise to support this Motion on the formation of a Committee to take care of the discipline of Members. Any hon. Member who is really sure of himself and the way he behaves will wholeheartedly support the idea. But what I am afraid of is the way the Committee is composed of.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I personally have the fear that the ten Members from two parties, for example, the NPN and any other Party with more than one nomination, can sit together and decide on any Member from the other parties. They may victimise him for one reason or the other. So, therefore I support the suggestion by the previous speaker that this particular Committee should be composed of equal representation from the five political parties.

Another reason is that if a Party is represented by one Member only, there may be a situation where the Member may not be able to attend a meeting. What will happen if that particular Party is not represented? Therefore, whatever the case, I hope the Speaker would make sure that these two Parties with one Member each are given room for substitution.

Still another reason is that a particular Party Leader may be either selfish or may feel that it is only his Party that can do the job. In that case he may put himself on the Committee and use the opportunity to oppress either his people or misrepresent them.

With all these comments, I wish to emphasise that I support the idea but I urge the House to review the representation or the number of people representing each party. Thank you.

Mr Speaker : The Deputy Speaker wants to say something.

Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the Debates on the special committee for the conduct or ethics of Members, I wish to say that feelings had been expressed by the five Political Parties that there is a tendency that this Committee being a disciplinary committee for regulating the conduct of Members, may be used to victimise Members in the House. I quite understand that it is the responsibility of us to maintain peace and trust one another, and I do not expect that this matter should be controversial. So, it is important that Members do agree. When you talk of ethics in the House or conduct of Members there are laid down Rules and Regulations on how Members and staff of the National Assembly should conduct or behave themselves as long as we are here.

Now, this Committee is very powerful. It is very powerful in the sense that for example, an American Member of the Congress was sentenced to one or two years' imprisonment. I believe it was for the misuse of fund that was given to him for the employment of his staff. This Code of Conduct is very important. We have no objection that these things should be done on equal representation.

We have heard and we have seen what is going on in the different States of the Federation. There is the question of victimisation which has brought about fears in the minds of people, and we should try as much as possible on the National level to remove these fears from the minds of Members who think that the Conduct Committee can be used to victimise Members of the other Political Parties.

[ALHAJI IBRAHIM]

On that note, I believe, it would be helpful if the Speaker and the Leaders of the Political Parties could meet and decide who should serve on this Committee. Thank you.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as the Mover of this Motion I would ask this honourable House to agree that this matter be deferred until I have had enough consultations with other Political Party Leaders.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, the Leader of the House and the Mover of this Motion is asking for the Motion to be deferred.

Alhaji Kaltungo : I would ask, Mr Speaker, that this matter be deferred for the next two weeks.

Mr Speaker : Since the Leader of the House does not want to go on with the Motion, the Motion will be deferred for the next two weeks so that the Business Committee will now fix another date for the meeting after two weeks.

Motion by leave deferred.

ADJOURNMENT

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members may I now move that this House stands adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) : I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker, Sir, in doing so—(Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Have you seconded the motion ?

Mr D. Princewill : Yes.

Mr Speaker : Please sit down, hon. Member for Degema I (Mr Princewill).

Mr Princewill : I wish to make some contributions, Sir.

Mr Speaker : There are two requests here on Motion for Adjournment.

Low-income Group and Destitutes in Nigeria

Mrs J. C. Eze (Uzo-Uwani) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to seize this opportunity of speaking on Motion for Adjournment to express my feelings about what is happening to the low-income group in Nigeria.

Most of us who can afford three square meals every day in the country do not seem to appreciate what is happening to the other people around us. Since we came to this honourable House, I have been expecting that a number of issues would be brought here. When the issue of destitutes was brought to this House I was shocked when this

honourable House turned down the Motion that we should give support to the destitutes. If there are no destitutes in other States of the country, there are destitutes in my own State, but I believe that we have destitutes in the whole of Nigeria.

I am speaking on the care of destitutes because if we go round the villages and the urban centres there are little children who are not as fortunate as our own children. They do not know who their parents are. They are not being taken care of by any government, and there are no rehabilitation centre for them. I have found out that some of them are not really mentally unbalanced or handicapped as such. It is only that they have poor parents and they have no homes. They keep roaming about ; thus they grow up to become rogues and pick-pockets, just because there is nobody to care for them.

I am therefore appealing to this honourable House to please take this matter into consideration. We should once again re-open this issue of destitutes. There should be rehabilitation centres in all the States to take care of the destitutes and children of poor parental heritage.

Ban on Food Items

To continue with my speech, I would like to speak on what is happening in most of our urban centres. I said in the morning that if we went to most Hospitals and Health Centres we would see children who are sick, not because they are attacked by one disease or the other, but because of malnutrition. This is because they do not have enough protein in their food. Their means of having protein in their food is by eating imported food items like frozen meat, frozen chicken and frozen fish ; yet a group of people got up and put a ban on things that they know we do not have in this country. If the country has to ban any commodity, it should definitely not be commodities like food items that contain protein because every growing child, pregnant women and elderly people, have to live on protein in order to grow well and survive.

I therefore implore this honourable House to please put before the President of this country, the lifting of ban on these food items. Even milk was banned. I have never seen a country where milk is banned because children live on milk. I therefore, once again implore this honourable House to please put before the President the question of lifting ban immediately on food items that give us protein.

Thank you very much.

Cultivation of the Spirit of Nationalism in the House

Mr G. B. Sadiku (Epe) : Mr Speaker, I intended earlier than now to express a feeling of disowning a statement very accidentally made yesterday in respect of the very august visitor to this House, in person of Dr K. O. Mbadiwe, the Presidential Adviser of Parliamentary Affairs. After due consultation, I am constrained to leave the matter to a more co-ordinated body and a more appropriate time to make the correction. But I wish to say that that statement

[MR SADIKU]

was a statement of a single individual and it does not in any way represent the majority of the people on this side of the House.

That statement is a tag on what happened this morning. This morning, we witnessed another aspect of the one-sidedness, the parochialism, the partial and the unnationalistic way many of our Members behave and speak or react to Motions on the Floor of this House. Yesterday, a Party Member decided to ignore the fact of the contribution of a noble son of this country to the political development in this country. This morning some Members as well decided, because of partisanship, to deliberately go against the Oath which they had taken to serve the common man in the country, by refusing to support the Motion which was meant to bring amenities and comfort to the common man for whose sake they have been elected into the House.

I have made a write-up, which I hope would be distributed tomorrow, to appeal to Members to be more conscious in their reaction to matters on the Floor of the House. Candidly, everyone of us was elected to this House on Party platform; but once the election was over, we are individually and collectively acting as nationalists. The whole country is an area that should enjoy our patronage. The whole country is a constituency whose sufferings should touch our hearts. The entire country is entitled to our sympathy and the Oath of Office we took before we assumed sitting in this House was an Oath meant to serve every corner of the country.

Brothers and Sisters, I am not preaching a sermon. I am only directing our minds to the facts of history. In the sixties, the country broke into pieces because groups were intolerant of one another. It escalated out of proportions beyond which none of us could control. For good thirteen years we were trembling and quibbling, and we were suppressed by Military men. We were virtually, throughout the thirteen years, under the terror of machine guns. An opportunity has now been given to us. I think the whole sufferings of thirteen years, the bloody war we waged, the loss of property and the deaths of relations would be a waste if we, youngsters of today, do not learn to compromise, learn to accommodate one another, and learn that we are keepers of one another. Brothers and Sisters, I am asking that we cultivate the habit of more friendliness in the interest of the Nation.

We have set up various Committees since this House started convening. But one thing has been lacking, and that is that we have failed to give date-targets for the conclusions of investigations to be made by each committee. Today, if we go through the records, there have been Motions, not less than twenty, that have been referred to various Committees. If we ask how far each Committee has gone with the assignment given to it, we may discover that—(Interruptions).

Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central I) : He is giving a sermon on the mountain. (Interruptions)

Mr Sadiku : Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope I am protected. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Mr Sadiku, we enjoy what you are saying but do not forget that this is not a church. (Interruptions). This is a National Assembly and we talk politics here. (Interruptions)

Several hon. Members : Fire on! Fire on!

Mr Speaker : Yes, Mr Sadiku, Members say you should go on. So, continue.

Mr Sadiku : Thank you, Mr Speaker, for protecting me. I am commenting on some defects in some of the steps we have been taking. We have set up Committees. When we refer a matter to a Committee, it is important that we give that Committee a date-target within which it should complete its work. Otherwise, we shall continue to refer Motions to Committees and we shall never have any conclusions.

In conclusion, rather than asking for probes of various Corporations, as we are doing now, piecemeal, I am suggesting to Leaders of Parties to consider at their meetings a general direction that every Committee should take every Board under its Ministry and examine the lacking and the failure of each Board. Within a space of month, each Committee should make recommendations for improvements in the administration of the Board concerned. I think this should have given the whole House and, indeed, every Member some specific assignments.

Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. (Applause)

Mr Speaker : Thank you very much, Mr Sadiku. That has been a wonderful address.

Local Government Elections

Mr M. Yusuf Ibn Muhammed (Moro) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I have an issue which has been burning in my heart. Now, I wish to direct the question to the Speaker and to my hon. learned colleagues.

The issue is on Local Government elections in this country. I happened to be a councillor during the election before the last one. When the Federal Government reformed the Local Government system in this country, it was seen that a general and uniform Local Government election—

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

Prince J. S. Sangha (Bori I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the Order is 26 (2). What the hon. Member is talking about now had been carried on the television and he had spoken about it in this House.

Mr Speaker : Well, he is saying that this matter on Local Government has been dealt with here.

Mr Yusuf Ibn Muhammed (Moro) : And therefore! (Laughter)

Condition of Roads in Lagos State

Mr L. A. Alli (Lagos South I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in contributing to the Motion for Adjournment, I like to draw the attention of this House to the condition of roads in Lagos State today. Not very

[MR ALLI]

long ago, the Federal Military Government distributed a sum of ₦19 million to each State to enable the State Governments rehabilitate the roads in each of these States. But unfortunately the grant which was to have been made available to Lagos State was withheld by the Federal Ministry of Works on the ground that rehabilitation projects would be carried out by them. I regret to observe that this maintenance and rehabilitation work was never effected.

As at today the Lagos State Government is obliged to carry out the rehabilitation of many of the Federal roads in Lagos so as to give relief to the travelling public. I sincerely think that this House would advise the President to instruct the Ministry of Works to release this sum of money to the Lagos State Government so that it can carry out the work far more efficiently than they are doing now at the moment.

Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo (Tangale-Waja South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I observe that the population of the House is getting smaller and smaller. May I now ask that the Question be put.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, the Question is that the House do adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

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

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.50 p.m.

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Thursday, 17th January, 1980
The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Request for the Creation of a New State

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I am sure you have all got today's Order Paper which is for Thursday 17th January, 1980. We have Notices of Motions and one Adjourned Motion. The first Motion is a request for the creation of a new State. The Motion making the request stands in the names of the hon. Member for Kankara (*Alhaji Magaji Kankara*), the hon. Member for Safana (*Alhaji Shehu Y. Runka*), the hon. Member for Musawa (*Alhaji Rilwanu Garba Musa*) and seventeen others.

The hon. Member for Malumfashi (*Alhaji Datti M. A. Malumfashi*), who is moving your Motion ?

Alhaji Lirwanu Garba Musa (Musawa) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this august Assembly, I stand to move this Motion for the creation of a new State from the present Kaduna State to be known as Katsina State. I move—

That in accordance with Section 8 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979, the representatives of the people of the former Katsina Province (Katsina and Daura Emirates) of Kaduna State of Nigeria pray the House of Representatives to receive the request for the creation of a new State from the present Kaduna State to be known as Katsina State comprising the following Local Government Areas :

1. Dura
2. Dutsinma
3. Katsina
4. Kankia
5. Mani
6. Malumfashi
7. Funtua

and accordingly request this House to expedite action on Section 8 (1) (b), (c) and (d) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1979.

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Thank you. Anybody seconding the Motion ?

Mr Inuwa Ali (Jos North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Thank you. Well, hon. Members, you know that Section 8 of the Constitution is highly technical and I am sure hon. Members have received their own copies of the request for the creation of Katsina State.

Several hon. Members : Yes.

Mr Speaker : I will suggest, without wasting any time, that we set up a Committee of this honourable House to go into the request and make a report before we resolve whether or not the request has been received by us. I do not think all of us can sit down here to go through the request and be able to say something. I think we shall set up a special Committee to handle this and any other subsequent request that may come in future. So, the Mover of the Motion should amend it to read that this be referred to a Special Committee of the House.

Mr S. U. Wanganga (Aba) : Point of explanation.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of explanation.

Mr Wanganga : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to explain that the procedure for the creation of a State is that once a request has been sent to this honourable House or the Senate, we note it and wait for other requests to come along. We cannot set up a Committee to consider one particular request. All the requests have to be dealt with at the same time. (*Interruptions*)

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Wanganga : Let me finish what I am saying I am entitled to free speech. Let me explain what I am trying to say.

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Aba (*Mr S. U. Wanganga*), no please. We have so many Lawyers here. What you are saying now is exactly what the Committee will say after they have looked into the matter. Our duty is not to note it. Our duty is to accept the request and when the request has been accepted by a Resolution, we inform the Executive that the request is lying down here in the honourable House and that we have accepted it. The Executive will go on to organise a referendum in the particular area and thereafter the rest of the procedure will follow. It will then come back to this honourable House for a detailed debate.

Alhaji Sidi H. Ali (Danbatta) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the question of Katsina State is something which all of us fully support ; there is no question about it. (*Applause*) But Mr Speaker, the present document is a false document because we have four hon. Members who are present in this honourable House. I am going to call them, Sir, and they are going to stand up, to deny that the signatures are their own. Therefore, this document—

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Danbatta, (*Alhaji Sidi H. Ali*) please hold on. Let us have a Motion for the setting up of a Committee from the Leader of the House.

An hon. Member : He is not here.

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) is here. (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order !

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I formally move that the first Motion on the Order Paper be referred to a special Committee.

Mr O. Akinboro (Oke-Ona/Owu/Gbagura) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

Motion referred to a special Committee.

Mr Speaker : You know, we shall require a formal Motion. A formal Motion would come up tomorrow for the setting up of this special Committee but meanwhile, the Party Leaders would meet in my office during break so that we could agree on the number of Members on the Committee and other things.

We shall go on to Motion No. 2. The Motion stands in the name of Mr I. D. Hassan.

The West African Examinations Council

Mr I. D. Hassan (Dase-Tafawa Balewa) : I rise to move the Motion standing in my name on the Order Paper—

That in view of the persistent public complaints about examination leakages, notwithstanding the implementation of the Sogbetun Tribunal (1977) on leakages embroiling the West African Examinations Council, and also in view of the increasing delay in releasing results, this House directs the Committee on Education to re-examine the issues involved with a view to providing permanent solution to this perennial problem.

I beg to move—

Mr Speaker : Yes, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

Alhaji H. Dikko (Maiha) : I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Yes, continue hon. Member for Dase-Tafawa Balewa (*Mr Hassan*).

Mr Hassan : Mr Speaker, Sir, I do not think that any Member here is ignorant of the embarrassment, hardship and inconveniences the West African Examinations Council has caused this nation, in conducting its affairs. The West African Examinations Council was established with good intentions and with good objectives, but unfortunately those to whom was entrusted the duty of gearing this Body to achieve its objectives have lost sight of the objectives.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

Dr E. Y. Atanu (Idah South) : Mr Speaker, this Motion is on Notice. Why is the hon. Member speaking on it now ? Should we not go by the Order of the Day and leave this Motion on Notice until it is scheduled to come up ?

Mr Speaker : No, it does not mean that the Notice of the Motion is now being given. He filed his Motion within time and it is in order. It is the business of the Business Committee to ensure that Members receive Notice of this Motion in advance. I think they are doing so now. The fact that it is called Notice of Motion does not mean that Notice of the Motion is now being given.

Yes go on hon. Member for Dase-Tafawa Balewa (*Mr Hassan*).

Mr Hassan : Thank you Mr Speaker. The officials of the West African Examinations Council lost sight of the objectives for which the Council was established to achieve. They allowed two specific serious evils to bedevil WAEC, one of that being examination leakages. As a result of persistent leakages, in 1977 the Federal Military Government appointed a Commission to look into the problems and the causes of the persistent leakages in WAEC and to make recommendations as to how the problem of leakages in WAEC could be solved once and for all. This Commission went into business and finally submitted its recommendations as to how the problem of leakages could be solved. The recommendation of the Commission was implemented but unfortunately that has not rid WAEC of its problem of leakages.

The second problem WAEC has is serious delay in releasing examination results which has caused serious embarrassment to many candidates. I know that each year students go to Schools of Basic Studies and many of them are turned back after three months when their results are not released by WAEC. This delay in releasing results has caused serious embarrassment to candidates who seek admissions into the universities. Some of the students who are denied admissions, normally, could have gained admissions into appropriate institutions of learning, if WAEC results had come out at the appropriate time. Sometimes these candidates have nowhere to go because of the lateness of the WAEC results. So, I am asking this honourable House to ask the Committee on Education to re-examine the issues involved with a view to providing permanent solution to the problems of this Body. Thank you Sir.

Mr D. A. Zubairu (Jama'a North) : I rise to support this Motion.

It is absolutely true that WAEC takes more than it can handle. You would realise that most of the examinations in this country, even the Civil Service examinations and all types of examinations that are supposed to be conducted by different Bodies, are being controlled and conducted by WAEC. When WAEC was first established, it was very effective. It was from 1967 that it started to deteriorate in the way it is conducting the examinations of this country.

Every year, we hear about leakages of all kinds of examinations ; and these have continued for quite some time. Apart from that, you would find out that the results of examinations taken in December, will not be released until June of the following year. As you know most of the universities in this country would want candidates who apply for university admissions to send in their results by March. Those people who are likely to get their GCE results from London or results from other examination Bodies are the people who are likely to be admitted into these universities. The candidates who took WAEC examinations would have a lot of difficulties. The same thing is applicable to those who take the RSA examinations and so many other examinations. So, I feel that this House should support this Motion and call for the review of the activities of WAEC as soon as possible. Thank you.

Mr J. U. Uyeh (Vandeikya East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not like to say that I would like to oppose the Motion, but I have few remarks to make on it. Now that Ministers have been appointed, and in keeping with what the Deputy Speaker enlightened us on with regard to the procedure in the United States, I think we should put a stop to the habit of bringing up unnecessary Motions that would waste the time of this honourable House. When Motions of this nature come up, they should be sent straight to the Committee that has been set up for them. The Motion should then come from that Committee to the Floor of this House. I think it is just a waste of the time of this honourable House for us to keep taking Resolutions which would not be implemented.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I beg to move that this type of Motion should not be brought to the Floor of the House again.

Mr Speaker : Yes, can we hear from the GNPP ?

Mr Idirisu N. Medugu (Madagali) : Mr Speaker Sir, the West African Examinations Council is responsible for the fall in standard of education in Nigeria. If you employ somebody with a Degree or a West African School Certificate, you will realise that he or she cannot do anything. This is due to the leakages in examinations, because even when a student knows nothing, he or she can still pass his examination. There are instances in this country when firms or Statutory Corporations recruited people with certificates but when the jobs are given to them, they cannot perform them satisfactorily. This is due to the irresponsibility of WAEC that often leaks examinations.

This Motion has come up at the appropriate time because we have said that 1980 is a year of action. It is a year of action for eradicating corruption in the West African Examinations Council. This House, therefore, should give this Motion the sympathy it deserves, and all the necessary facilities in the Committee so that appropriate scrutiny can be done. If some people are found guilty they should be tried in public. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr M. L. Na-Rogo (Karaye) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. It is unfortunate that in the morning, I approached the Clerk of this House for an Amendment to these Motions, and it is also unfortunate that on coming to the Chamber, I still found that we are going to deliberate on these issues. Nonetheless, I rise to contribute my quota with regard to this institution which is known as WAEC.

Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would not like to go into the mechanisms of WAEC or on how they conduct their affairs. It is well known to each and every individual Member of this House and other Nigerians that WAEC has already outlived its usefulness. If I am to be sincere to myself and to our junior brothers and sisters who are now in schools, Mr Speaker, I would like to make the following recommendations to the Committee on Education.

Henceforth WAEC should be dissolved and all its functions, duties and responsibilities delegated to the University of Ibadan, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria which should now start conducting all these examinations at Ordinary Level, Advanced Level and Degree Level. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not be doing anybody justice if I failed to condemn WAEC. Why should all powers for conducting examinations be concentrated in WAEC where all the social maladies exist? We cannot under-estimate or ignore the vices and other shortcomings of WAEC which have in the past led to examination leakages. This situation has somehow tended to create a feeling of cheating by certain sections of the country.

With this short contribution, Mr Speaker, I beg to sit down.

Mr Speaker : Yes, can we hear from UPN ?

Dr O. Ogunkoya (Ijebu Remo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion. The West African Examinations Council has outlived its usefulness and the earlier it is wound up the better. They have caused a lot of damages to the progress of so many Nigerian children. We must realise this fact. I cannot go on with all the details without comparing some instances in England and this country.

We have more or less tailored our educational system towards the English system. But, unfortunately, we are so unscrupulous in this approach and even worse than the English who taught us the system. I happened not to have done my West African School Certificate examination in this country. I did it overseas, and I can tell you very precisely that most of us who lived in England in those days and did the equivalent of West African School Certificate examination and passed, might have got a lot of problems doing it in this country. It is not because we know better or know less, but it is just because of the maladies which have been besetting the West African Examinations Council for a long time. It is still a peculiar problem in this country today that once you fail English Language in the School Certificate examination, you are more or less perished.

I have seen quite a number of students who are brilliant in physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics but who are not so good in English Literature or English Language and still they have made their mark in academic field. Why should we continue to tailor our education exactly to system where a few people will just have to decide which fate should belong to a particular child ?

As far as the question of leakages is concerned, it is unfortunate that the society has a lot of responsibility to carry. Some of the teachers are irresponsible. Some of the organisers of the examination are even more irresponsible. I was told that most of the question papers are being printed by the Security Printers. How come that some of these questions still leak? In order to win some girlfriends or boyfriends some school officials become tools for the leaking of examination questions. Why should that happen? Are we not in a dilemma that we

[DR OGUNKOYA]

cannot even manage the ordinary West African School Certificate Examination? Once more I should remind most Members of this House that a lot of students have done this examination for the past two years and up till now they have not received their certificates. Why is this happening? Is it so difficult to print certificates and give them to those who should have them? I think we have to look into this. I want us to tailor our system again into this question of division of responsibility. In England they have the London University GCE system, they also have the Cambridge system and the AEB. We can organise something of that kind.

My dear Colleague who has just spoken said it may be possible for Ibadan, Nsukka and Lagos or Ahmadu Bello to organise a system or a sort of AEB examination. It could be called Associated Examination Board. If anybody is not willing to do the West African Examinations Council's examination, he or she could jolly well do any of those university GCE examinations. When he passes it he is qualified to enter any university in this country. We are all at the threshold of progress in this country and the only way to make progress is through education. Our educational system must be so balanced as to help those who aspire to be better qualified and not to discourage those who wish to carry on in future.

With these few remarks I support this Motion and I whole-heartedly give my full weight to it that West African Examinations Council should be dissolved and replaced by a well organised body.

Thank you.

Mr Lam Adesina (Ibadan South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I would like to correct one impression created by one hon. Member that we should not discuss this Motion here. I think we want this country to continue several years after we might have left as this concerns the education of our children who have been born and those who are yet to be born. Even if we use the whole day discussing this problem of WAEC in this august House, it is not too much.

Mr Speaker, Sir, having been a school Principal for several years before I came to this House, I think I am in a position to X-ray some of the problems of the WAEC. The Motion has three salient points. Firstly, it talks about examination leakages, secondly, it talks about the delay in releasing results; and finally it seeks a permanent solution to these problems.

Well I will begin with number one. As regards the leakage of examinations, I can take your mind back and tell you that it is as old as the WAEC itself. I took the Senior Cambridge in 1959 and I think after Independence, the WAEC took over from the old Cambridge. Since then, if you examine the issue of WAEC as it is now, their examinations have been leaking. It only came to light in 1967 or so when everybody knew that the examination had been leaking. That is my first point.

What are the causes of these leakages? We want to examine them. Firstly, you have incompetent

officials working in the WAEC. They are incompetent in the sense that at times when they send packets of question papers to schools, for example, they mark English Language on a packet and when you open it on a day when you have English Language, you just find Bible Knowledge there. There and then the question leaks out. If the Principal, the Supervisor or the Teacher is an unscrupulous person, you will discover that the questions will circulate like that. So, this is what I mean by incompetence of WAEC officials.

Secondly, you have the issue of corruption which has eaten deep into the very fabric of this country. WAEC is made up of Nigerians, though it is an international body. Most of the Officials there are Nigerians and we know that corruption is the banes of our society. What is more, some of these Officials like money and they like to get it. Some parents like to bribe them to get out these questions. Again, there are some of them who have interest in making love to students and then they give out these questions, yet we say we do not know how these questions get out!

Thirdly, you also have to put the blame on the school teachers and some of the supervisors who just hawk these questions about. Concerning the causes of leakages, it is the lack of dedication on the part of the WAEC Officials. I say this because personally if you assign a duty to me I think I should be able to supervise that duty very well. But you find that they use the Civil Service red-tape attitude there. Perhaps the Registrar or the Deputy Registrar, once he has done his own part, he does not bother to supervise the rest at all.

Fourthly, the Officials in the WAEC lack any sense of nationalism because if you believe that this country is yours and you want to salvage the name of this country, I see no reason why question papers should be leaking every year. There had been a time when examination probes had been set up but in spite of that, WAEC still continues to behave like the French Royalist who has learnt nothing and has forgotten nothing. I think this is why we have to be very, very careful about WAEC in this country. It is spoiling the name of this country.

Fifthly, there is unusual importance attached to the possession of certificates in this country. I say this because if you employ somebody on the basis of his competence, you do not need to worry about paper qualifications. But I can bet that in the Ministries or in any Government Department or even in the private sector, unless they see your certificates they may never employ you. So, parents and students are aware that unless they can produce these papers, they cannot get any job and they now want by any means to get the certificates. These are the causes and let us go to the effect.

The effects which these causes have brought to this country today are firstly, it has impaired the validity and integrity of the examination itself. I will not deceive you, since the examinations have been leaking, I do not have so much confidence in the

[MR ADESINA]

certificates awarded by WAEC. This is because it is very possible to find a student with Grade I Distinction who does not merit a Grade Three Certificate.

Secondly, it has exposed us to ridicule to the outside world. They would say that these people say they are Nigerians and that they can manage their affairs, but they have not been able to manage it. Thirdly, it has shown to the outside world that we do not like just and honest things.

On the delay in releasing results, Mr Speaker, Sir, (I am sorry I am taking the time of this House), but because of my commentary on the public affairs of this country, I want to say that I have received four letters from different people. The first is on RSA; the second is on Grade Two Teachers' Examination. The next one is on GCE 'O' Level, and the last one is on GCE 'A' Level. They all said they took these examinations in 1977 and up till now they have not got their results. Where do we want these children to go? They are lamenting now. What is causing this delay? I think WAEC is chewing too much; it has too much on its hands. Happily, today Mr Speaker, Sir, it appeared on the back page of New Nigerian that as from 1982 WAEC would now run two examinations but 1982 is still far away. I have to suggest certain measures. Now, WAEC should not handle too much.

I think the WAEC should not be partial in the allocation of scripts to markers, because if you are friendly with WAEC Officials (I had been an examiner before in English Language and Yoruba) they will give you more than you can mark. The problem is that you may not get the time to mark them. This is because the more papers you mark, the more money you get! Again, you have also the irresponsible attitude of some Members who are markers. You discover that when they collect the papers, some of them go about drinking. There is a story of a gentleman (I do not know whether he is a gentleman) who locked up the scripts of children in the boot of his car and went to the bar to drink. But before he came back, the boot had been forced open by robbers. The scripts were carried away and WAEC released some results. Where did they get them?

There is NEPA too which is another useless body. They say any time the computers are processing the results NEPA would take light; so, that is a technical problem. Now the effect of these on the country is that is ruining the future of our children. If you delay result then a particular child cannot get to the university or to the polytechnic or to an institution of higher learning. Secondly, it is also giving our children unnecessary psychological attention because if a child took an examination, waited for the result and the result never came out, then he would not know his fate.

Now to the solution Mr Speaker. The WAEC is an international Body. It cuts across Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone; so whatever decision we take we have to bear that in mind. I once called on the Floor of this House for the scrapping of WAEC but ever since then I have re-adjusted my position.

We are not going to scrap WAEC now; we are going to give it less duties to perform. And what is more, let there be a Nigerian Examinations Board set up to administer different examinations in this country. Let there be a board to administer examinations on technical subjects; let there be a board to administer examinations on commercial subjects and let there be a board to administer examinations on other affairs. It is only by doing this that we are going to save the future of our children and we are going to salvage the name of this country which WAEC has almost ruined. Thank you, Mr Speaker. (Applause)

Mr Speaker: In the interest of Members who were not here yesterday, the Table is still open to receive donations for the benefits of the wife of our deceased Colleague. Anybody who has something to donate can still put it on the Table.

Mr E. U. U. Inyang (Ikono): Mr Speaker, Sir, the last Speaker has exhausted very important points I would have liked to make but—

Several hon. Members: Then sit down.

Mr Inyang: I still have one other point, Mr Speaker, that has not been covered. I find that in this country the human element which is at the bottom of our problem with WAEC has been playing a lot of havoc. I find that if people are punished or are afraid of a very severe punishment, they will restrain from taking some courses of action. Our children are affected and many of us know what this has meant year by year. I am asking the Committee on Education to which this has been referred to consider what aspect of punishment should be added so as to act as a deterrent so that those who are concerned in whatever body we are going to set up or re-organise may perform better.

I find that the moment a Nigerian knows that the punishment he is going to receive for doing a particular thing is very severe, he will think twice. I am talking about the deterrent aspect. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support the Motion on WAEC. I would have loved to move a Motion for the scrapping of WAEC because I know for certain that candidates who sat and passed the WAEC examinations in 1972 have not yet received their results. I had cause to write a petition to WAEC and I was asked to let the person swear to an Affidavit, attach a passport photograph, get the Principal or a Clergy-man or a Lecturer to sign an undertaking saying that the person took the examinations at such and such a centre and with such and such candidate's number. In fact I thought the Public Relations Officer who is my friend would have helped, but it was to no avail.

The problem here is that when we find an organisation to be inefficient, we remove the high echelon of the organisation and those who perpetuate the malpractices in such an organisation continue at the intermediate level. I think that is one of the problems of WAEC. It was not enough to remove

[DR. OREH]

Mr Vincent Ike from that organisation and to leave those who made sure that the question papers meant for examinations were in fact distributed to students before ever they sat for the examinations. I stay near a Secondary School and I was appalled during the last WASC examinations that the students had in fact the scripts and for six naira or two naira they gave you a copy so that the following day you could come and sit for the paper, having memorised the answer. The examination questions also leak because when teachers of science subjects like Biology are asked to collect specimens, they make sure that they tell their wards (I know of a Principal who gave WASC examination questions to his wife) or their candidates what specimens they are collecting for what questions. The result is that there is landslide leakage of examinations.

I know also that the WAEC is in fact now compounding the problem by issuing certain categories of certificates which are worthless. If you did not pass English, they would give you S.R. They say they give you G.C.E. but that G.C.E. is confusing. The Universities want five Ordinary Level passes if you are to be allowed to sit entrance examinations to the universities. Now they give you G.C.E. when in fact you have not made up to three credits. So one does not know what WAEC wants such certificates to be used for. The need for scrapping WAEC cannot be over-emphasised. I think it is high time those people working in WAEC were sent to look for jobs elsewhere because they have failed us.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I would wish to say that this country is large enough to conduct its own examinations without having to conduct examinations with Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia and other West African countries. It is unnecessary. I do not see the need for it. It is not that we need that joint International Venture in order to go and work in Ghana or Sierra Leone. I do not see why we should not have a body competent to organise examinations in this country. I know also that WAEC which conducts Teachers' Grade II examinations does not send the results in time. You will find that States' Papers come out three months before WAEC is able to send out the Federal Papers and yet WAEC is such a big organisation that I do not know why they are unable to conduct these examinations.

It is a pity really that we are proposing investigating and improving it instead of discussing the mechanism for scrapping it and finding a better organisation. Thank you Mr Speaker.

Alhaji M. G. Shamaki (Katagun) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I stand here to support the Motion. It is very shocking to see that we have got a Council which is supposed to stand and help the whole nation but unfortunately it is misusing its own opportunity. This Council has been working for long and has been established for years, but it is not contributing anything which will raise our standards.

Examination itself is not the only true way of testing one's knowledge. When a child is taken to school we do not start to think of the examination

itself but we shall have to think of educating the child first. When the child is receiving instructions, that moment, the teacher himself is testing the child. Then when finishing up, he will come and face some examinations in the class itself not from the West African Examinations Council. Many people have brought the idea of setting the examinations in the various Universities and this I think will remedy some of our problems. Because of the leakage itself, you can find a paper in the market or somewhere being sold. Instead of that child or the parent of the child who bought the paper helping the child, he is misleading the child to be selfish or to be unable to rely on himself. So, that would be the foundation of somebody's selfishness. The leakage itself is a cheating to some people who are ready to take the examinations. By this, I mean that some students are ready to take the examinations, but if it happens that there is a leakage, then, they will all be disqualified and that may even cause some of these students to lose admissions to the various Universities to further their education. On the other hand, if they are fortunate, they may be considered to go and attend one year's remedial class which is very unfortunate to some of our students in Nigeria.

The delay of the results itself is something which we have to consider. These examination papers are usually taken in July and it takes weeks and months or even a year before somebody could get his or her result. So, I think that if WAEC could be dissolved in the near future it would give us ample time to think of what we have to do in future. May be we have to decentralise the Council by having it in the various States.

So, with these few remarks, I beg to sit. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Mr Hassan Gambo (Mayo/Balwa) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting the Motion on the leakages and delays of the West African Examinations Council, I will say that this Council is already rotten. It has not been providing good services for our brothers and sisters, and as far as the nation is concerned, this Council has not been doing its duties in the appropriate way. Most of the students miss an opportunity to go to the Universities because of the delay by the Council. Now, if you look at it in one way or the other, the Council itself is not prepared to improve or to make any progress in discharging its duties.

The reasons are that the Council has many ways of twisting the examinations in that somebody who has not been enrolled for the examinations is allowed to take them and when the results are out, the name of the very person who passes is never mentioned. This delays the result which may take about one or two years to come out and if care is not taken, its delay will also bring backwardness to the development of education in the Federation.

I appeal in strong terms to the Committee on Education to see that this Council is completely scrapped now that another body will come in to represent that particular Council. With these few remarks, I beg to sit down.

Mr Speaker : Thank you.

The Chairman of the Committee on Education.

Dr E. C. Emekekwe (Onitsha South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House of Representatives, I stand to speak in support of this Motion.

WAEC has disgraced this country, WAEC has let Nigeria down and WAEC is an eyesore to this nation. It is a nuisance that I would not ask us to find ways of disposing of, but a nuisance that would find ways to change into something for the better for this country.

One of our Members spoke saying that he took his School Certificate Examinations in England and he wanted us to applaud him for that. As a matter of fact, I say that that is a shame that he should leave this country to go overseas just for the purpose of doing the School Certificate Examinations. I did my School Certificate Examinations in this country at the famous Dennis Memorial Grammar School in Onitsha whose tie I am wearing. I am proud that I did my School Certificate Examinations there. I can say that our standard at that time was as high if not higher than any other comparable institution overseas. It was the time when there was *Pax Britannica*.

Mr Rasheed A. Shitta-Bey (Lagos North-Central) : Point of order.

Mr Speaker : Make your point of order.

Mr Shitta-Bey : Section 26 (5) of the Standing Orders says :

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

Mr Speaker : Go on, the hon. Member for Onitsha South (*Dr Emekekwe*).

Dr Emekekwe : Mr Speaker, Sir, at the time when we did our School Certificate Examinations, there was *Pax Britannica* in this country. The so-called *Expo* was at that time unknown and it is because of this that I am going to say something which I would not mind if that makes me unpopular with any section of the community, but that is my conviction that since we have tried to reform WAEC and failed, we must think of bringing some external foreign examining bodies to take over the functions of WAEC for a short time. I say this because we have had precedents in this direction. This country had tried to run the Nigerian Railway Corporation and failed and it handed the Corporation over to the Indians. We all know that we failed.

Several hon. Members : Shame! Shame!

Dr Emekekwe : This country had tried to run the Nigerian Airways and it ran into difficulties and it called the Dutch Airline to take over. This country had tried in the Lagos State to run the transport. It ran into difficulties and it called in the Australians to come and help us. So, I am suggesting that for a change, we should bring over some external foreign examining bodies to take over for a while and see whether we can get this nuisance into better use.

I will also say that the fault is in us. We make laws and do not enforce them. We catch people who sell these examination papers and they are let off without any punishment. I was in WAEC office last Tuesday making some investigations about this and I put a direct question to the Officer I was interviewing whether to his knowledge anybody had ever been jailed in the WAEC establishment for offences connected with examination leakages. He told me that to his knowledge, nobody had ever been sent to jail. It is therefore our moral laxity, laissez-faire attitude, our callousness in this country that have put our children in jeopardy. It is a very bad thing to deprive a child a whole year in his life especially when a child has gone up for an examination and has done that examination successfully. After working hard ; and just for the mere fact that one or two students were caught in that vicinity with forged examination papers, the whole class would lose a year. I think this is what we must stop and I think that if we have to do anything we have to look at ourselves for the answers. I beg to support.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I have the pleasure to announce to the Members the presence in the Box of His Excellency the Governor of Bauchi State, Alhaji Tatari Ali. (*Applause*, His Excellency has come to pay this House a courtesy call and on behalf of the House I thank His Excellency very sincerely for his wonderful gesture.

Yes, Member for Enugu (*Dr Ufondu*).

Dr I. B. Ufondu (Enugu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, I want to state that I am in support of this Motion and in standing up, I must categorically oppose any idea of bringing in any foreign body to substitute WAEC. If we cannot develop, we can never hope to become a developed nation if we must always depend on outsiders. WAEC, as we know, is a regional body.

I strongly support regional co-operation within the African continent for purposes of development. We are already engaged in various regional co-operation efforts with our African brothers. I do not see anything wrong with that. However, we do know that the WAEC has a primary function of effectuating accountability and efficiency in the administration of educational services. This particular body has disappointed all the West African countries, not only Nigeria.

We do not only have leakages, we do not only have examination results missing, we do not only have WAEC withholding results but we also have gross corruption and abuse of power in that Examinations Council. I must state, and I know that my colleagues may want to speak for their Constituencies, that Anambra State has suffered tremendously in the hands of WAEC.

In Enugu, Mr Speaker, for many years, one would notice that the schools found their examination results withheld for months and when the results did appear, they came out in bits and pieces. I can give several examples but for lack of time I just want to state that

[DR UFONDU]

as a Member of this National Assembly, Mr Speaker, I want to see the WAEC scrapped and replaced with a National Examination Council that will be organised in co-operation with the Universities. I do believe that we have the expertise in this country, the greatest country in Africa that is highly respected all over the world for its academic excellence. Mr Speaker, Sir, the sooner we begin to deal with the issue of scrapping WAEC and actually implementing it without just dangling in the orbit of unnecessary oratory the better for this country.

With this contribution, Mr Speaker, I wish to sit down. Thank you.

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That in view of the persistent public complaints about examination leakages, notwithstanding the implementation of the Sogbetun Tribunal (1977) on leakages embroiling the West African Examinations Council, and also in view of the increasing delay in releasing results, this House directs the Committee on Education to re-examine the issues involved with a view to providing permanent solution to this perennial problem.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, the next one is adjourned Motion—Implementation of Sections 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution.

Implementation of Section 14 (3) and 157 (5) of the Constitution (Federal Character)

Adjourned Debate on Question,

17th December, 1979

Motion moved and Question again proposed :

That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implements without further delay the provisions of Section 14 subsection 3 and Section 157 subsection 5 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, so that all Federal Ministries, Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals, reflect the federal character as regards appointment and staff composition of Chairmen, Managing Directors, Board Members and Civil Servants and other employees within Grade Levels 07 to 17 including provision of guidelines for the composition of the junior staff in all these establishments, as well as the siting of these Ministries (or branches thereof), Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals.

Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) : I rise to move the Motion in my name and that of my Co-Mover Dr E. Y. Atanu—

That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implements without further delay the provisions of Section 14 subsection 3 and Section 157 subsection 5 of the Constitution of the Federal

Republic of Nigeria, so that all Federal Ministries, Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals, reflect the federal character as regards appointment and staff composition of Chairmen, Managing Directors, Board Members and Civil Servants and other employees within Grade Levels 07 to 17 including provision of guidelines for the composition of the junior staff in all these establishments, as well as the siting of these Ministries (or branches thereof), Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals.

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

Mr Ingo Mac-Eteli (Brass) : I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Bob-Manuel : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the purpose of this Motion is to ensure that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria takes note that we have nineteen States in the Federation now. Twenty years ago, the Federation was composed of three Regions. In 1964 we had four regions, when the Mid-West region was created from the old Western Region. In 1967, with all that happened, we had 12 States. In 1976 the country was sub divided again and we had nineteen States, and up to October 1979, there were still nineteen States in the Federation.

I would like to refresh the memory of hon. Members that in 1960-64 the Civil Service was controlled by people that we can call those who sought differences among themselves. In 1976 the Civil Service was being controlled by the same people.

Several hon. Members : Who are the people ? Name them.

Mr Bob-Manuel : The country has now been divided into more States. It was first of all three, and it was increased to four, and from four it was increased to twelve. From twelve it was increased to nineteen that we have now. But the policy-makers are still the same people.

Several hon. Members : Who are the policy-makers ? Tell us. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! Everybody will make his own contribution.

Mr Bob-Manuel : I would not like hon. Members to be sentimental over this matter. I am just telling you the story of what happened.

When we had four Regions in 1964 the people in control were the same and the same people were in control when we had twelve States in 1967. We praise those sections who were able to keep the Federation together during these trying days. We are also happy that they were able to keep the Federation together up till today when we are now nineteen States.

The Constitution came into effect from the 1st of October, 1979. Our Motion is only seeking the President to reflect the Federal character of Nigeria

[MR BOB-MANUEL]

in everything in future. We are 448 representatives in this honourable House ; so we need these 448 people to be represented as well in the bureaucracy. This is the import of our Motion. We are not saying that the people who are there now should be sent away from where they are and made scapegoats. What we are saying is that the Nation has now 449 Constituencies ; so the bureaucratic machinery of the Federal Government of Nigeria should reflect these Constituencies.

Several hon. Members : By quota system ?

Mr Bob-Manuel : I shall now digress a bit to tell you how the people who are not represented in the Federal Government feel in their homes.

An hon. Member : Tell us.

Mr Bob-Manuel : I will give you examples later. In the Civil Service, we all have been seeing the Office Directory of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Federal Government of Nigeria is not reflected in the book. We want the Federal character of Nigeria to be reflected in this book. I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Section 14 (3) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and I quote :

The Composition of the Government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies.

Anybody that is here and does not want the national unity of this country should forget about the Oath that he has taken and get out of this House. We must abide with the provisions of the Constitution and make sure that the peace and progress of this House are sought for. That is why we are all here. We should also take note that the Constitution says that there should be no predominance of persons from a few States or from a few ethnic or other Sectional groups in the Federal Government or its agencies.

If you look at the Official Directory of the Federal Government you will see what I am talking about. The Federal character of Nigeria should be reflected as from 1st of October, 1979. We do not want to rob Peter to pay Paul.

Several hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

Mr Bob-Manuel : From the 1st of October, 1979 all appointments under Section 135 (2) and (3) of the Constitution should reflect the Federal character of Nigeria, and I quote the Section :

Any appointment to the office of Minister of the Government of the Federation shall, if the nomination of any person to such office is confirmed by the Senate, be made by the President.

Any appointment under subsection (2) of this section by the President shall be in conformity with the provisions of section 14 (3) of this Constitution.

This has been reflected since the beginning of this regime on the 1st of October. What we are now asking from the President is to ensure that future appointments continue to reflect the Federal character of Nigeria. We are not asking the President to remove the people who are already there.

An hon. Member : Point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

Mr Effiong Ononokpono (Oron I) : Mr Speaker, my point of order is Order No. 28 (5). It says :

Members shall not make unseemly interruptions while any Member is speaking.

Mr Bob-Manuel did interrupt me when I was speaking. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : All right, please, hon. Members, do not interrupt when any Member is given the Floor.

Mr Bob-Manuel : Mr Speaker, as I have quoted earlier, Section 135 has been satisfied by our President who is the father of this Nation. He is a God-given man. We are still begging him to use his Godly and fatherly manner to appoint people into positions in such a way that the appointments would reflect the Federal character of this nation.

Section 157 says :

Power to appoint persons to hold or act in the offices to which this section applies and to remove persons so appointed from any such office shall vest in the President.

(2) *The offices to which this section applies are, namely—*

(a) *Secretary to the Government of the Federation ;*

(b) *Head of the Civil Service of the Federation ;*

(c) *Ambassador, High Commissioner or other Principal Representative of Nigeria abroad ;*

(d) *Permanent Secretary or other Chief Executive in any ministry or department of Government of the Federation howsoever designated ; and*

(e) *any office on the personal staff of the President.*

(3) *An appointment to the office of Head of the Civil Service of the Federation shall not be made except from among members of the Civil Service of the Federation or of a State.*

(4) *An appointment to the office of Ambassador, High Commissioner or other Principal Representative of Nigeria abroad shall not have effect unless the appointment is confirmed by the Senate.*

The most commanding aspect of Section 157 is subsection (5) therein. It says :

(5) *In exercising his powers of appointment under this section, the President shall have regard to the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity.*

[MR BOB-MANUEL]

However, we are still begging the President to, please, make appointments to these positions in such a way that would reflect the Federal character of Nigeria. I am referring to those positions which he has not yet made appointments into. We know that he has already appointed the Permanent Secretaries, but he is yet to appoint our Ambassadors, Chairmen of Corporations, Board Directors and so on. We want all these appointments to reflect the Federal character of the nation. (*Interruptions*) What I am saying is this—

Mr Speaker : Please, Mr Bob-Manuel, you are repeating yourself. You have repeated yourself several times and the repetition is getting tedious. You should not go over one point several times.

Mr Bob-Manuel : They disturb me a lot when I talk. However, I shall try to wind up now. I have almost exhausted the points I want to make

Now, I want to explain why this Motion should go through. We have the Report on the Third National Development Plan for 1979-80 with us. If you go through the Report, you will see that those States that were not represented on the bureaucracy are not taken care of in the Development Plan. What I am saying is that the Body that made up the Plan, the Plan Designers or Plan Motivators, did not reflect the Federal character of Nigeria. Therefore, those areas that were not represented on the bureaucracy are not developed. These are states like Imo, Anambra, Rivers, Cross River, Bauchi, Niger, Gongola and so on.

Mr Fola Omidiji (Egba Alake) : Point of order!

Mr Speaker : Yes, what is your point of order?

Mr Fola Omidiji : The Motion on the Floor is on reflection of federal character in respect of appointments, but the hon. Member on the Floor is now talking of Development Projects. This is irrelevant to the subject matter under discussion.

Mr Speaker : Yes, I agree that the point which Mr Bob-Manuel was raising is irrelevant to the Motion on the Floor of the House.

Mr Bob-Manuel : The reason for my raising the point on the National Development Plan is that many States were not represented on the bureaucracy. (*Interruptions*) If you go through this Report, you would see that there is no development in the areas that were not represented on the body that made the Planning.

In conclusion, I would say that I would leave further discussions to other Members of the House.

Dr Emmanuel Y. Atanu (Idah South) : Mr Speaker, first of all, I want to explain the motivation behind this Motion. I think it is important to put this Motion in its proper context. I have spoken briefly before on the Floor of this House on this Motion, and for the benefit of those who were not here then, I want to repeat myself. We are not here to challenge or chastise any persons or groups of persons in this country who have taken advantage of a prevailing situation in the country. But as young and aspiring Nigerians, we want to set in order what has bedevilled this nation for many years.

Our intention is to create a new Nigeria, and by so doing, we have to concentrate on those things that bring us together. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, I crave your protection, please.

Mr Speaker : Yes, go on.

Dr Atanu : Thank you, Mr Speaker, I think that this country cannot be one nation if we allow those things that divided us in the past to persist. I do believe that one of those things is the lack of psychological commitment to unity. I happened to be one of those who took part in the deliberations at the Constituent Assembly. Therefore, I am in a good position to say that those who inserted this clause in the Constitution had, at the back of their minds, the need to establish Nigeria on a sound footing.

You can read the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly. There was unanimous decision that we should find a good basis for running this country in the future. If we have produced statistics or data to support our contention, it is not because we want to cast aspersions on any group of people. It is a matter of fact that these things exist and if we are really true to ourselves we should examine them and find solutions together and try to find a way of getting out of the mess that has always prevented the unity of this country. So, please, I like to appeal to Members to read the documents presented to them with some commitment to this business of finding a solution to Nigeria's problems, not as a means of bringing to fore the idea that some people have been cheating. I do not think anybody has cheated. People have been smart enough to take advantage of a situation and I think that is just fair. (*Interruptions*)

Moreover, I like to say too that this nation should be thankful to those people who have carried out the business of running this country so far no matter what other benefits they have got out of it. However, what I think we should do in this House is to look at the areas where we think we can do something to bring about a better expression of our oneness and I want to propose three areas to be looked upon. One area is the area of the redistribution of wealth. Those budding socialists in this country would agree that there is a shrewd distribution of the wealth and resources of this country and that is not good for this nation.

Secondly, we have to create a system that guarantees equal opportunities for all people. I think we have all advocated that in our constituencies and that we would work towards this end. But, more importantly, we have not only to create equal opportunities, we have to guarantee that there will be equal access to the existing opportunities, equal access because—(*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker, the Constitution is replete with references to the provision of these three things. If you look at Chapter Two it is full of references to the guaranteeing of equal opportunities for education, for social amenities, for participation in the economy and it does empower this House, to do certain thing. In fact, if you look at Section 16—Economic Objectives, sub section 3 says :

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A body shall be set up by an Act of the National Assembly which shall have power—

(a) to review from time to time the ownership and control of business enterprises operating in Nigeria and make recommendations to the President on the same ; and

(b) to administer any law for the regulation of the ownership and control of such enterprises.

That is the crux of the matter. This spirit behind the Constitution is that those who make decisions on behalf of this country must reflect the composition of this country because it does not matter whether or not you are the General Manager of a big business concern, provided, however, that you can influence decisions in that area. The tendency or temptation is always to influence it, or at least, much of the time, to influence it, towards the particular section of this country which is best known to you. I do not think we have to deceive ourselves. This is the normal human tendency and we are saying, therefore, that if this country is represented fully and equally to the best of our ability, I think we can resist the temptation to do that, we can resist the temptation to place an industry in a location where it is not likely to be most suitable but because we come from there we attempt to locate it there without any opposition.

Mr Speaker : Wind up.

Dr Atanu : I will wind up but I want to say this, that there are various areas to consider. I do not think that Members have to be given the trouble to have these areas enumerated. The data we have produced will speak for themselves but I am more concerned with the area of the economy and the area of the services and the agencies of Government so that people who represent us, represent the Federal character of Nigeria. In the External Affairs matter that we have looked at, there are some data on it. We find, as I have said before, that the External Affairs is the area where we come in contact with the external world, where investment from outside world is channelled to Nigeria and I believe that we have to do something.

Mr Speaker : Yes, round up.

Dr Atanu : Mr Speaker, I thought I had an entitlement to thirty minutes.

Mr Speaker : Round up.

Dr Atanu : Okay, Mr Speaker, I think I will give other Members the chance to speak.

Mr Speaker : Thank you. Yes, Dr Sowho.

Dr J. E. Sowho (Ethiopia North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this Motion standing in the names of hon. T. O. Bob-Manuel and Dr Atanu, my two good friends, is a very important one. However, figures have been circulated which when screened, tend to give an impression that a certain section of this country has not behaved fairly well to the others in the sharing of these positions, that is Bendel. I would like to draw the attention of

Members to the circulated figures and to remind us all that this country started off from a point where we had four regions. These figures circulated here represent the figures for one region, and figures for States that have since been created from the other regions. If we add them together, we will see. I have made a simple addition and the figures are with you if you could do that. In the case of the tables for the External Affairs, Bendel as a region had 73 positions, the former Western Region 116 positions, the former Eastern Region 56 and the former Northern Region 72. So, you will see, in fact, that the former Western Region had more positions. And for the former Eastern Region we must remember there had been an intervening civil war. People made sacrifice to keep Nigeria one and Bendel made that sacrifice. (*Applause*)

Several hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

Dr Sowho : This country would not have remained what it is today if certain individuals—(*Interruptions*).

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Dr Sowho : This country would not have remained what it is today if certain individuals did not have the wisdom to make this necessary sacrifice. If we take the second figures we will find that Bendel, from the totals given, has 23 positions, the former Northern Region 40, the former Eastern Region 13 and the former Western Region 42.

Mr E. Basse Etienan (Oron II) : Point of order, Sir.

Several hon. Members : What Order ?

Mr Etienam : Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of order is that my hon. Colleague—

Several hon. Members : What Order ?

Mr Etienam : Order 26 (2). I will make my point of Order, please. Section 14 (3) of the Constitution which is mentioned specifically in this Motion makes reference to the Federal character of this country and is based on the 19 States structure and not on the Regions. So, I am submitting that my hon. Colleague should not draw us back to the days of the Regions which have nothing to do with us here. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Ethiopia North (*Dr J. E. Sowho*), you can go on.

Dr Sowho : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, we now have to examine the effects of the creation of more States in the former Regions of this country. Since these States were created, most of the new States needed staff and they recalled their members who were in the Federal Service to serve in the new States. So, their numbers can never remain the same. I have the figures.

I would like to emphasise, Mr Speaker, that while Bendel State made the sacrifice in holding this country together by providing the manpower, Bendel State was not allowed to have the benefit of having a larger share in the sharing of the Revenue of this country. So, you see, all we did was to hold

[DR SOWHO]

people together. Mr Speaker, Sir, from the figures circulated, while I subscribe entirely to the idea of a federal character, I would like to emphasise that even in Bendel State, the Delta area is not even represented there. However, these figures give us sufficient reasons to bring up a Motion which will soon come before this honourable House that there is indeed a case for the creation of more States in Bendel State so as to bring down these figures.

Mr S. U. Wanganga (Aba) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I am doing so with a great deal sense of responsibility and I am not interested in casting aspersions on any section of Nigeria. I am interested in our trying very hard to find a lasting solution to the problem of unity in Nigeria and the problem of contentment in Nigeria. I believe that live and let live is the best rule to ensure contentment and that is all we are trying to do. We are not trying to make people lose their jobs.

Mr Speaker, this Motion calls for a massive support from every section of this honourable House because I cannot imagine an hon. Member who would say that it is wrong to be fair or that it is wrong to ensure equity. It is only if the Motion is intended to punish any particular section, then they are entitled to oppose it but this Motion, as far as we understand it, is intended to ensure fairness. Hon. Members, this Motion seeks to enthrone fairness, equity and justice and we shall be shocked to know that there are people who, because probably, they are benefitted today, will oppose this but tomorrow it may be the turn of somebody else to benefit and he will hold what he has. This is not how we can run the country. We must run it in such a way that all of us participate actively and sincerely. We must share our liabilities, share our assets and share our opportunities and that is the only way.

I will draw your minds back to the cause of trouble in Nigeria. That trouble did not start with the civil war. It was a built-up and the civil war was the climax. That trouble was the attempt by one group or the other to grab what belongs to all Nigerians and that trouble ended up with a war. Nigeria went to war to lose her very valuable citizens. She lost hundreds of thousands of citizens in order to prove a point that Nigeria should stay one and that we should be fair to one another ; no victor no vanquished ; that was the conclusion. If Nigeria can take such a drastic step to ensure fairness and equity, then what we are trying to do is rather mild. All we are trying to do, in fact, is to ensure that there is a system of ensuring distribution of appointments, a system of ensuring membership of corporations and a system of ensuring the allocation of shares of companies owned by the Nigerian Government. I do not see an hon. Member who would say that this is not the fairest way to deal with a federation because Nigeria is a country of many nationalities. The colonialists in a derogatory way called it tribes, but it is, in fact, a country of many nationalities.

The idea of federalism means sharing, it means balancing of interests and balancing of interests cannot stop with purely being represented in the

House. If it did not matter, perhaps, one section could send all those to make laws for Nigeria but because it matters we took pains to share positions and opportunities for every section of Nigeria to be represented here. That means that federalism is being obeyed as far as legislature is concerned but it is not being obeyed as far as employment opportunities and the control of the national economy is concerned. To that extent, I believe personally that anybody seriously opposing the Motion, the main interest of this Motion, rather than the sentimental aspects of the accusation could be accused of anti-federalist activities and even anti-Nigerian activities. Because an attempt to monopolize what belongs to all of us must be resisted no matter who is making that attempt.

Mr Speaker, Sir, permit me to illustrate this evil in our national life with just one example. There are so many but I will not bore the honourable House with too many details. I am using the Nigeria Police Force as my example. The Nigerian Police Force is a federal institution and to ensure unity in Nigeria and protect us, we have to have belief in that Force, we have to have a sense of belonging in that Force. By we, I mean all sections of Nigeria. But look at the composition of the Nigeria Police Force. The Inspector-General of Police is one man and, therefore, he can come from any State but in this case he happens to come from Gongola State. That is not a serious issue. *(Applause)*

An hon. Member : Point of information.

Mr Speaker : There is nothing like a point of information.

Mr Wanganga : We have four Assistant Inspectors-General of Police. Now, out of these four, one comes from Benue State and the other three come from between Oyo and Lagos States.

Several hon. Members : Mention the States.

Mr Wanganga : All right, since you want the details I will give them to you. We have 24 Commissioners of Police in Nigeria.

Mr T. O. Badejo (Mushin Central 1) : Point of Order.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Mr Badejo : As regards the general rule of debates—

Mr Speaker : Read your order and let us hear.

Mr Badejo : *A Member must confine his observations to the subject under discussion and may not introduce matter irrelevant thereto.*

What I am trying to say—

Mr Speaker : No. You have finished. The hon. Member for Aba (*Mr S. U. Wanganga*) can go on, please.

Mr Wanganga : Mr Speaker, Sir, if I may continue after the interruption from my hon. Friend from Mushin Central I (*Mr T. O. Badejo*), we have 24 Commissioners of Police. Three of them are from Cross River State, six are from Bendel State, seven are from Oyo, Ondo and Lagos States and ten are from the Northern States.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr S. U. Wanganga : I am addressing the Speaker. Mr Speaker, Sir, I think the best thing would be to circulate the details because I would not like my time when debating to be taken up by interruptions. To that extent I would go on to make the other points I have.

One of the points I wish to make is that—

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Aba (*Mr Wanganga*). Please hold on. This debate is getting extremely rowdy and it is most unbecoming of very hon. Members. I think it would be in our interest to defer this Motion until a more convenient time so that Members would do more home-work.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Speaker : Please, sit down. Is it the wish of the Members that we should continue with the debate ?

Several hon. Members : Yes !

Mr Wanganga : The other point I wish to make is that a lot of well educated Nigerians have let us down because this problem of lack of National character in appointments is caused by highly educated Nigerians in positions of authority. They go abroad and they see how other people run their countries with fairness, equity and harmony. When they come back they change that and they then employ their relations. To that extent, I feel quite disappointed by what highly educated Nigerians in all the Corporations and Civil Service have done to this country.

I also have a word of, not warning, but a word of caution. The Military ruled this country and we thought that they should have done a lot to ensure National character but the problem got worse under the Military Regime than it was under the Civilian Regime. In fact, many of the soldiers became nepotism and bigots and they forgot all the rules of fairness. They just shifted people and commanded them with immediate effect to take up positions. I think the soldiers caused the problems that we are now trying to solve. There is a very important aspect of this debate. That important aspect is the economic implication of lack of Federal character in Nigeria. That economic implication is the imbalance in the Nigerian economy as at now. I would like to draw the attention of hon. Members to Section 16 (2c) of the Constitution. Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I read :

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

Now, what has happened with the Nigerian economy being controlled by a particular section that a lot of industries in Nigeria now, are monopolised by people who are so powerful that they can dictate the pace of progress for the rest of Nigeria. (*Interruptions*). I am not interested in mudslinging, I am talking facts and anybody who does not like facts may interrupt.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Prof. Opeyemi Ola (Ekiti West) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a point of order on Order No. 29 (1).

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

The issue, Mr Speaker, Sir, is the question of the Federal character of Civil Service positions in this country, not—

Several hon. Members : No !

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Aba (*Mr Wanganga*), please round up.

Mr Wanganga : Yes I am rounding up, with an illustration of what happens to a national economy when the means of production are monopolised in such a way that the economic interest dictates the foreign trade policy of that country. Now, as you well know most countries that are advanced today started by trading and the whole-sale margin in trading is the basis for building up capital for investments in industrialisation. This is the case throughout the whole world. It means that Nigeria, when we started, we had more or less a free trade policy. We were buying and our country-men were making high whole-sale profits, and as a result, they were able to accumulate and invest. What is happening now is because we have got some industries indigenised and we are trying to protect these industries, we have whole-sale ban on so many importations. As a result, other sections of Nigeria are not—

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Aba (*Mr Wanganga*), you are outside the Motion. You are speaking irrelevantly. Please round up.

Mr Wanganga : Finally, Mr Speaker, I want to propose that in order to ensure that the National character of Nigeria is reflected, not only in 1980 but permanently, a Bill should be brought to this House to establish a bureau for equal opportunity. This bureau should monitor all employments and positions throughout the whole Federation as a permanent institution. (*Interruptions*)

So, with this contribution, Mr Speaker, I beg to support the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Yes, can we hear from the GNPP ?

Mr Hamza M. Ngadiwa (Biu North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motion. The non-implementation of the Federal Character entrenched in our Constitution is the main cause why Nigerians do not know themselves.

[MR. NGADIWA]

You have a section of this country that has a supreme control of the main organs of our government and have come to neglect the interest of the other parts of the country. Mr Speaker, Sir, I can say without reservation and be noted for this, that left to those people who are in command of most of the organs of government in this country, transactions even in Cabinet meetings could have been conducted in their own language at the neglect of the other parts of the country. That is why we have imbalances in the economic structure of this country. That is why we have imbalances in the educational set up of this country. That is why somebody who is here in Lagos and who reports matters from other parts of this country will not be correct from his own perspective to say perhaps the Governor of Bauchi State is speaking in his own Capital, Sokoto! We do not know our country because the Federal Character which should have been reflected in our Constitution so that we know ourselves and our problems have been relegated to the background at the expense of National unity and National stability.

Members of this honourable House will agree with me that the council of federalism is an imperfect association. Nigeria's case is more imperfect in the fact that some of the factors of federalism like ethnicity are reflected in a kind of regional expression. You have the Hausas associated with a particular area, so are the Yorubas, so are the Ibos, so are the Tangellians, and so are the other people in this country. This has made the management of our Federalism to be so cumbersome. This has made the management of federalism of this country too so difficult. We are, therefore, faced with a real situation as regards the revelation contained in these documents. Real situations are no witch-hunting against any group in this country. We are, therefore, forced to face facts if the Federal Character of Nigeria should remain a reality. The question of national unity and stability should become meaningful to all the sons and daughters of this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe sincerely in compromise as the only solution to Nigeria's federalism. I believe, therefore, that no section of this country should have more than its fair share. I have already stated earlier that one of the factors of the Nigerian Federalism is regionally expressed. It is clear to identify who is taking undue advantage of federalism and who is being neglected in this country. I, therefore, sincerely appeal to this House to view this Motion passionately and to vote unanimously for the implementation of the Federal Character as entrenched in the Constitution. Thank you Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward) : Mr Speaker, Sir, a lot has been said on the Floor of this House in support of this Motion. I believe if in the whole of this calendar year this House does not pass a single Motion after passing this very one, I would have thought that the year had not been wasted. It is a great Motion. I believe it demands the greatest and maximum support of each and every individual nationalist in this House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, we have seen the glaring statistics presented to us this morning and I must say that what we saw here is a serious indictment and gross misunderstanding as manifested in practice of the concept of federalism by those who have been in power in this country since Independence in 1960. Mr Speaker, Sir, what has happened this morning has also exposed the sham of minority versus the majority because all along we have been hearing speeches by the minority that they have been neglected. But when it suits them or when they find themselves in an advantageous position, they prefer to keep quiet. For example, one of the self-styled minority States has more Ambassadors and more Permanent Secretaries than Kano State which is the largest State in the Federation. Mr Speaker Sir, you can see the sham and hypocrisy of belabouring the point of the majority versus the minority. The fact of the matter is one and simple.

Alhaji M. A. Amzart (Ikorodu) : Point of order.

Mr Speaker : Yes there is a point of order.

Alhaji Amzart : My point of order is Section 3 of the Nigerian Constitution. The Constitution does not recognise—

Mr Speaker : Read it.

Alhaji Amzart : *There shall be 19 States in Nigeria, that is to say, Anambra, Bauchi, Bendel, Benue, Borno, Cross River, Gongola, Imo, Kaduna, Kano, Kwara, Lagos, Niger, Ogun, Ondo, Oyo, Plateau, Rivers and Sokoto.*

There is nowhere in the Constitution where the question of majority or the word minority is used. Any State is recognised. *(Interruptions)*

Mr Speaker : Yes, go on Dr Muhammed.

Dr Muhammed : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to address this honourable House on the paramount importance of the concept of redistribution of wealth touched upon very ably by my distinguished Colleague, Mr Wanganga. There can be no egalitarian society; there can be no meaningful federalism if a group of individuals control more than their proportionate share of the national cake. There is no way one can justify the fact that one State among the 19 States has about ten to twelve Ambassadors and another State has one. In fact, the Rivers State has not got a single Ambassador. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like this House to seriously address itself to the danger of the existence of extremes of poverty and wealth and of the extremes of industries and of course lack of industrialisation in different parts of this country.

Several hon. Members : Fire! Fire!

Professor O. Ola (Ekiti West) : Point of order!

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

Professor Ola : Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I would like to raise this point of order again for the benefit of the House. Order 29 (1). This Order says the debate should be relevant to the Motion on the Floor of the House. We are discussing

[PROFESSOR OLA]

distribution of Federal offices and not the distribution of wealth in this country. We cannot be misled. I crave the indulgence of Mr Speaker for a ruling finally on this issue.

Dr Junaidu Muhammed : I can understand those who have vested interest in maintaining the *status quo* because it is to their advantage. They have taken refuge in the fact that the recruitment policy of the Federal Public Service Commission has been based on merit. This is far from the truth.

Mr Speaker, Sir, formerly all our Public Service Commissions in all States of the Federation were allowed to go on recruitment tour both within and outside Nigeria to recruit their own personnel. The Federal Public Service Commission relinquished that and took it upon itself to recruit staff for the States and for itself and distribute these men to all States of the country. When these people who are living in Lagos cannot see the glaring disparities in the proportions of the people representing States in the Federation in the Federal Service, how on earth can they recruit reasonably and reflect the Federal character in their recruitment policy? I do not think this can be possible. (*Applause*)

Several hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

Dr Muhammed : The *per capita* income of the average Nigerian from the year 1975-1980 has been ₦378 on average. But in other parts of Lagos and certain parts of the country it is over ₦1,000. You can see the amount of danger of this extreme polarisation between societies, because they do not expect a rich man to be happy with a poor man or a man from an under developed State to be happy with a man from a developed State. So, the fact of the matter is this, that the concept of Federalism must not be taken just like that. We must not talk of platitudes ; we must talk of realism.

Mr Speaker, Sir, so long as we continue to shy away from our responsibilities or so long as we continue to come to this House and say one topic is sensitive or sentimental, we shall never make any progress. This House, I believe, has the men of courage, it has the men of calibre and it has the power to go ahead and pass the Motion. Mr Speaker, I beg to move and I urge this House to give this Motion its tremendous support. I will oppose any move to take this Motion to any Committee because it is straightforward ; it does not need any Committee work.

Thank you.

Mr Speaker : Let us hear the hon. Member for Lagos North-Central (*Mr R. A. Shitta-Bey*).

Mr R. A. Shitta-Bey (Lagos North-Central) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to oppose this Motion.

Several hon. Members : Shame ! Shame !

Mr Shitta-Bey : It is significant to note that—

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) : This hon. Member is opposing the Constitution because it says Federal character.

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! The hon. Member for Lagos North-Central (*Mr R. A. Shitta-Bey*), the Leader of your Party, the hon. Member for Karimu Lamido (*Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen*) said you should not speak for them. (*Interruptions*) Please hon. Members take your seats.

Hon. Member for Karimu Lamido (*Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen*), are you withdrawing your injunction? (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order ! Let us hear the hon. Member for Karimu Lamido (*Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen*)

Mr B. M. Mabrama Jen (Karimu Lamido) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I will never withdraw my statement. What I have said is final ; I am not a coward. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! Gentlemen, please sit down. Please hear the Deputy Speaker (*Alhaji Idris Ibrahim*).

Alhaji Idris Ibrahim (Minna North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I believe Members have expressed their views on this Motion and tempers have risen. I quite understand that this Motion as it is in the Order Paper is a very important Motion to this House and there is nothing that is tribal or political in it. It is a Motion that touches on the Constitution of the Federation which we have all sworn to protect. It will therefore be most unfortunate if any Member should oppose this Motion because he will be opposing the Constitution he has sworn to protect.

Several hon. Members : Yes.

Alhaji Ibrahim : If I may refer you to the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, we all took the Oath saying that we will preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The President we are calling upon to implement Section 14 of the Constitution has sworn—that he will strive to preserve the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy contained in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. This is covered by Section 13 and Section 14 of the Constitution. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to definitely refer these Members to the provisions of the Constitution and to tell them that voting against this Motion will mean voting against the Constitution.

I beg to call on the Leader of the House to please move that the Question be put.

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

[ALHAJI KALTUNGO]

Resolved : That the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria implements without further delay the provisions of Section 14, subsection 3 and Section 157, subsection 5 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, so that all Federal Ministries, Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals, reflect the federal character as regards appointment and staff composition of Chairmen, Managing Directors, Board Members and Civil Servants and other employees within Grade Levels 07 to 17 including provision of guidelines of the composition of the junior staff in all these establishments, as well as the siting of these Ministries (or branches thereof), Agencies, Statutory Corporations and other Parastatals.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members please have your seats. The Leader of the House (Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo) should please go on with the Motion for Adjournment.

Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this House stands adjourned until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned accordingly at 12.42 p.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Friday, 18th January, 1980

The House met at 9.05 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Votes and Proceedings

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I have gone through the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday and they are correct.

An hon. Member says that he has a point of explanation to make.

Personal Explanation

Mr Adebowale Adeola (Ijero Ekiti) : My point of explanation is based on our proceedings in this honourable House. It is related to the posts and the offices of Mr Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the House, the five Political Party Leaders and their Whips.

During the week, we all observed that certain things happened. One of them is the proposed Committee on the Discipline of Members. The duty basically meant for the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Leaders of the five Political Parties of this honourable House and the Whips is, as it appears to me, to see that things run very smoothly in this House. They are to maintain discipline and in maintaining discipline, they would need our co-operation as hon. Members who are dedicated to the duties so that we can satisfy our electorate throughout the length and breadth of this country.

I regard the proposal to create another Committee for Discipline of Members in this House as very unnecessary. I also regard this as a sort of innuendo and as a sort of circum navigation.

Mr Speaker : I thought you were making an explanation.

Mr Adeola : Yes, I am still on the explanation, Sir.

Mr Speaker : But the debate has already been concluded.

Mr Adeola : I am not making a debate on that.

Mr Speaker : That is what you are doing. I thought you were trying to explain a point of procedure or something like that.

Mr Adeola : Yes, something happened here yesterday.

Mr Speaker : No ! No ! We are not going back to yesterday.

Mr Adeola : Mr Speaker, Sir, allow me to finish. This has something to do with discipline, Sir.

Mr M. A. Olukoya (Ijebu-Ode) : Point of Order.

Mr Speaker : Yes.

Mr Olukoya : My point of order is Order 16. Mr Speaker, Sir, it appears that some hon. Members are misusing the opportunity and the procedure under this particular Order. The Order which I cite, if I may with the permission of the Speaker read, says :

By the indulgence of the House and the leave of Mr Speaker, a Member may make a personal explanation although there be no question before the House ; but no controversial matter may be brought forward nor may debate arise upon the explanation—

Mr Speaker : Thank you very much. We have already called him to order. He will not continue. We are going on with the Order Paper for today.

Motion number one, hon. Members, is Psychiatric Hospitals standing in the name of the hon. Member for Kumbotso (*Mr Umaru Sadiq*). Go on with your Motion if you are Mr Umaru Sadiq. Mr Umaru Sadiq, if you are not prepared to go on with your Motion, it will lapse.

Mr Sule Lamido (Birnin Kudu) : Mr Speaker, Sir, he has not yet arrived.

Mr Speaker : Let us go to Motion number two.

Mr Lamido : Can I move it on his behalf ?

Mr Speaker : You cannot do that.

Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) : I have a point of order.

On the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 17th January, 1980, I had a point of information to make in view of the fact that some Members talked on the Creation of new States especially that of Katsina State. There were some Members who disagreed with the Motion, but the Votes and Proceedings stated that all the Members from the former Katsina and Daura States prayed the House to receive the request for the Creation of a new State to be known as the Katsina State. There were four Members who said that their signatures had been forged and consequently, they were threatening to take a court action.

Mr Speaker : Please, leave that one. Let us finish with today's Order Paper. You can go to the Clerk if you have anything to say.

Motion number two is on Natural Gas and it stands in the name of Chief G. B. Wodi.

Mr Lamido : I am trying to move the Motion on behalf of Mr Sadiq.

Mr Speaker : No ! No ! please. If Chief Wodi is not here we will go to Motion number three which is Creation of New States. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, I think that because of the rain many Members have not come. It rained very heavily this morning and I am sure that many hon. Members are still on their way. I would urge that this House be suspended for one hour so that the House will resume at 10.30 a.m.

The House is accordingly suspended till 10.30 a.m.

Sitting suspended : 9.15 a.m.

Sitting resumed : 10.30 a.m.

Letter from the Speaker of the Polish Parliament

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! Before we start there are one or two announcements. One is a letter from the Speaker of the Polish People's Republic Parliament.

Several hon. Members : We have not prayed.

Mr Speaker : We have already prayed.

The letter reads as follows—

*Speaker of the Sejm
of the Polish People's
Republic*

Warsaw, September 7, 1979.

Honourable Mr Chairman,

I take the liberty to convey to you the text of the "Message from the people of Poland to nations and parliaments of the world" adopted on September 1, 1979 at the patriotic rally of the people in Gdansk on the 40th Anniversary of the Outbreak of World War II.

I am convinced that both the people and the Parliament of your country will receive this Message as a manifestation of the feelings and will of a nation which has a special moral right and a particular obligation to speak in favour of the cause most vital for mankind : the cause of maintaining and strengthening world peace. At the same time I am allowing myself to convey the text of the speech delivered on this occasion by our nation's leader, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, Mr Edward Gierek.

Please accept, Honourable Mr Chairman, the expression of my highest consideration.

Stanislaw Gucwa

The text of the message is attached to the letter and I think on behalf of the House the Clerk will convey the appreciation of the House through the Polish Ambassador to the Polish Parliament. Also the message will be referred to the Foreign Affairs Committee for consideration and appropriate reply.

Behaviour of a GNPP Member

Another announcement hon. Members is on a very deplorable thing that happened yesterday during the Head of State's Reception. A Member, I think a GNPP Member (I have been trying to get his name), had behaved in a disorderly manner during the reception and particularly when the National Anthem was being sung. The behaviour was outrageous. I do not know how to describe it. It was outrageous to the extent that the Head of State, when he was going away remarked that if this man could not even respect that he was there, could he not even respect the National Anthem. Immediately afterwards, the security men surrounded him.

So, it is a case that completely eroded the dignity of this House and I am thinking that the Party Leaders should meet and this man be invited to explain his conduct. It is extremely outrageous to anybody who saw what happened. I think one or two people saw it.

Several hon. Members : We saw him.

Mr Speaker : It was outrageous. So, hon. Members that is that. I just want to make it by way of announcement so that Party Leaders will meet and this man will be invited. Please, will GNPP try and produce him to come and explain why he behaved in such a manner.

Yes, have you any explanation to make, Mr Ibrahim Ali?

Mr Ibrahim M. Ali (Maiduguri) : I think it is better you take up this on a personal basis because the Party has nothing to do with the behaviour of its Members especially in such a forum when the setting is not in the House.

Mr Speaker : I understand what you are saying. We are not saying that it is the fault of the Party. We are only saying that he belongs to that particular Party. So his own Party Leader should produce him before the Leaders of all Political Parties, and that will be on Monday at 1 o'clock.

The first Motion for the day stands in the name of Hon. Member for Kumbotso (*Mr Umaru Sadiq*).

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Psychiatric Hospitals

Mr Umaru Sadiq (Kumbotso) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name—

That in view of the deplorable condition of most Psychiatric Hospitals throughout the country, this Honourable House directs the Committee on Health to invite the Minister of Health to explain the causes or reasons for this deplorable condition and how improvement can be effected, and that the Minister examines the feasibility of building new psychiatric hospitals which shall be properly staffed with men and adequately equipped with drugs and materials ; that the Committee reports to the House its findings with a view to enacting remedial legislations to carry out these intentions.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Anybody to second the Motion ?

Mr Hussein A. Gajango (Malam Madori) : I rise to second the Motion.

Mr Sadiq : Mr Speaker, Sir, Hon. Members, we are all aware that everywhere in this country of ours, particularly in urban centres, one finds mad men and women roaming about the streets. I feel this is something which must be arrested. If it is a habit formed during the military era, I think we in the civilian government have a duty to do towards arresting this situation. As we can see, of all the States of the Federation, it is only in Kano, Ibadan and here in Lagos that one finds in hospital of this nature.

So, I feel there is need that such hospitals should be established in all the 19 States of the Federation and if not possible, at least in some States where patients from other States can easily go for treatment. Furthermore, I appeal to our businessmen and women to come to the aid of the Government towards this goal.

Mr Speaker, with these few points, I move this Motion and I hope everybody will support it wholeheartedly. Thank you.

Mr Mohammed Lawal Na-Rogo (Karaye) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise not only to support the Motion but to condemn the attitude of some Nigerians who contributed to madness in this country.

Mr Speaker, Sir, when these hospitals were built they were small in number, but there has been an era or an emergence of petty things such as illicit gin, Indian hemp, sleeping tablets and other dangerous drugs you can think of. They are the making of Nigerians. These people are not naturally mad, but some Nigerians made them to become mad. The capacity of our hospitals, especially the psychiatric hospitals, cannot cope with the number of mad people.

Furthermore, Mr Speaker, it is worth nothing that it is the people in the highest echelon of Nigerian society who smuggle all these dangerous drugs. They are the people who bring along Indian hemp into this country. On several occasions many Nigerians have been caught in one or another airport smuggling all sorts of dangerous drugs and Indian hemp.

So, the only solution and remedy, apart from building hospitals in all the 19 States of the Federation, is to curb the excesses of these businessmen who are the agents of multi-national Corporations. We know them ; we all know that all these things happen. But the previous Government did not have the initiative to curb the excesses of these people. If we are to be frank to ourselves, Mr Speaker, we should at least formulate a law or bring in a Bill to stop any Nigerian from bringing any drug that is likely to endanger the lives of innocent Nigerians or cause madness simply by taking these dangerous drugs. They cause congestion at the psychiatric hospitals. I think, such people need to be shot at the Bar Beach.

This Motion speaks for itself, and I believe that all Members of this honourable House will support this Motion wholeheartedly.

With this short comment, I beg to sit down.

Thank you.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I notice that there is an Amendment to this Motion.

Hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji Mustapha*) you should have signified that you intend to move your Amendment, or are you withdrawing it ?

Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North) : Mr Speaker, it is in the Order Paper.

My Amendment reads as follows :

Leave out from the word *of* to the end and insert as follows : the increase in psychiatric cases throughout the country resulting in the inability of the existing Psychiatric Hospitals to handle such cases due to lack of necessary infrastructure, namely accommodation, staff and drugs, this honourable House requests the President to come to the aid of all State Governments and University Teaching Hospitals in this area of health services, and make provision to this effect in the forthcoming 1980-81 Estimates.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

Alhaji Kaita (Kaita) : I beg to second.

Alhaji M. B. Mustapha : My reason for the present Amendment to this Motion is that, if one studies carefully the original Motion, one will find that the Mover of the Motion deserves to be congratulated by going deep into the Health Services and for discovering that this section of Health Services is suffering in isolation. It would appear that to mention the deplorable conditions is not enough. Rather, what we should do is to ask the Ministry of Health to rectify what makes the services or hospitals deplorable. You will see that Psychiatric cases increase daily—

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji Mustapha*) all that you should tell us is why you are proposing this Amendment. Leave the substance of the Motion ; we shall take that later.

Alhaji Mustapha : Thank you Mr Speaker. The Amendment is saying exactly what is required in terms of accommodation, staff, lack of drugs, that constitute the deplorable conditions in the existing hospitals. It is therefore better for this House to put this directly to the Ministry of Health so that they can rectify these shortcomings ; instead of summoning the Minister of Health to come and answer questions on what is not clearly spelt out.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, you have seen the proposed Amendment.

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move that the Question be now put in respect of the Amendment proposed by hon. Member for Bida North (*Alhaji Mustapha*).

Amendment put and negatived.

Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I feel the problems of mental cases and other groups and classes of destitutes are enormous. It is, in fact, a serious indictment to us as a country, and I must admit, it is a national disgrace.

In a country of approximately 80 million people, one cannot realistically talk of three Psychiatric Hospitals being adequate. In fact, I had had the pleasure or I would rather call it displeasure of working in one of the Psychiatric Hospitals, and that is the one in Kano. I would not even classify that shabby, ramshackle, moribund and absolutely badly maintained building as a hospital. I think it is nothing but a dungeon. It is a mental asylum where today, mental cases are chained and caned and, in fact more often than not, they never have the privilege of seeing a doctor.

The attitude, of people to the mentally handicapped in this country is the type some countries passed through in the 18th and 19th centuries and we still talk of the devils, the demons, and what have you. We still have not arrived at a stage whereby in this country we can accept mentally sick people just like any other category of sick people.

Mr Speaker, Sir, speaking as a neuro-psychiatrist, I think this Motion is a little bit technical, and I would urge this House to give the Health Committee a chance. First, to go into this matter exhaustively, and come out with the technical details, invite the Minister of Health, the Director of Health Services, and other sub-Directors in the Division, talk to some of the people and of course invite some of the distinguished Professors. I have in mind people like Professor Tolani Asuni, Professor Ayabinichi of the University of Benin, and Professor Anumuonye. These are people who can really advise us because they have carried out some of these investigations and have made the benefit of their experience available to the Government, but governmental bureaucracies being what they are, up till today we have not heard anything. So, instead of wasting our time and debating a highly technical issue I would rather move that we refer the matter to the Committee so that the Committee can get down to work.

I am glad that my colleague from Karaye (*Mr Na-Rogo*) touched on the problem of drug addiction. If you classify the number of mentally deranged people in this country, you will find that a large proportion of these people really took to drugs because of what we call in social psychiatry an escape phenomenon. These are people who would like to enjoy life and if they cannot, they would take a pep. They would either take it as vitamin in phyllotaxis or take some marijuana, and that is the end of this

problem. I think this aspect is absolutely important while doing something about taking care of people who are already mentally sick.

We should make it impossible for drug peddlers and other group of criminals in this society to import these categories of drugs. We should also make it impossible by imposing stiff penalties and fines like giving prison sentences without options of fines to anybody caught growing or peddling marijuana, bringing in phyllotaxis or the use of it in our vitamins. These are the main categories of drugs that have been misused in this country.

As I have said, Mr Speaker, hon. Members of the House, these are highly technical questions. Let us please leave the job to the Health Committee. They have about twelve doctors in the Committee. I believe that instead of wasting our time talking about technical terms which many people cannot comprehend here, let us please allow the Committee do its work.

I beg to support.

Mr Oluwole Oyatobo (Oyo South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I very much admire the speech of the last speaker (*Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed*). I am more or less in support except that I want to bring to the notice of this honourable House that the psychiatric case is just one of so many other medical cases.

As we are sitting down here in the Assembly, many of us are not really well. There are more insane people on the streets, than we have in the asylum. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker ; Please, hon. Member from Oyo South (*Mr Oluwole Oyatobo*), we will not accept that language. We are very healthy men here. Please, withdraw that statement.

Mr Oyatobo : With due apology to the House and to the Speaker, I withdraw that statement.

The point I was trying to make is that a case for the medical care of our nation is a very important one and we should not take it as a piecemeal type of discipline. Much as I support our referring this particular case to the Health Committee, I would like to add that other things should be examined critically. Things like preventive and social medicine, and also orthopaedic cases, are many other medical cases which should be examined critically. This should be done not only with emphasis on Lagos, Enugu or Kano, but as far as rural development is concerned.

I am suggesting that those who are on the committee on Health should take account of the development of all the States in the country, as far as health care is concerned, in a very comprehensive manner. By so doing, I am asking this honourable House not to waste further time but to throw this particular Motion to the Committee on Health in order to deal with it very comprehensively.

Only this week I read in the paper of a case where our Governor in Anambra State had to intervene before somebody was admitted into hospital in Enugu for orthopaedic treatment. This means that

[MR OYATOBA]

there is lack of facility for this treatment, otherwise this person could not have been prevented from having medical services in that hospital. This will support my own argument for a comprehensive review of medical care for our country as far as rural development is concerned. Thank you very much, Mr Speaker.

Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya (Ijebu Remo): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this important Motion.

I will support it with some reservations and with some important revelations. I am doing so because I strongly believe that the health-care delivery system of this country has actually gone to the dogs, and the earlier we tackle this problem the better. I am talking as a doctor who is very much interested in internal medicine of which neuro-psychiatric is part of its studies. I am also talking as a man who wrote the Federal Policy on Health for the UPN and asked sincerely for free medical services throughout this country.

The problem of neuro-psychiatric is a very nasty one and I will enumerate some of the causes of mental diseases in this country, some of the reasons why our hospitals are in such a deplorable situation, and also the recommendation which I personally think is fit to be applied to this problem.

My medical colleague, Dr Junaidu Muhammed, has suggested that this particular case be referred to the Health Committee. I beg to disagree with him. I disagree because we should really know what problem we are facing. You are all very intelligent and highly respectable citizens of this country. If we know the problems, we shall all join hands together to find solutions to them. In the whole Federation of Nigeria, there is the problem of drug inadequacy in our hospitals, our clinics and our health centres. This is well known to all of us. There is the problem of shortage of medical personnel. This too is very well known to all of us.

Dr Junaidu S. Muhammed (West Ward): Point of Order.

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

Dr Junaidu Muhammed: May I ask that my distinguished colleague in the medical profession (*Dr Obatayo Ogunkoya*) should stick to the issue before the House. We are not talking about inadequacy of drugs; we are talking about psychiatric hospitals. I do not think anybody can be a mental case by swallowing a few tablets only. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker: Well, doctors are now disagreeing. (*Interruptions*)

Dr Ogunkoya: I would tell you why I referred to the case of shortage of doctors. Nigeria has a population of, say, 80 million. Out of this, we have 5,000 doctors to serve the whole Federation. Out of these 5,000 doctors, 1,209 are foreigners and of the rest, nearly one-third of them are within 30 miles radius of Lagos. It is no fault of anybody; it is the fault of the set-up.

I would show you by statistics that we would continue to suffer from shortage of doctors for a long time unless the Federal Government takes the right step in the right direction by producing more doctors for this country.

Mr Speaker: Thank you.

Dr Ogunkoya: If we really want the mental hospitals to improve, the treatment must improve. In order that the treatment must improve, we must get some highly trained psychiatrists to man the hospital. We must also get highly trained nurses to man the hospital. In the whole Federation of Nigeria, there are only two psychiatric Nursing Training Schools. One of them is in Anambra State and the other one is the Aro Mental Hospital in Ogun State. This is the so-called Neuro-Psychiatric Hospital, Aro, which has now been taken over by the World Health Organisation due to the recommendations of Prof. Dr Lambo. These are the only two Psychiatric Training Hospitals in the Federation and we have only 34 students in these hospitals. Imagine what is going to happen to most people who might eventually become sick in the near future.

Psychiatric cases should not be blamed on anybody; it is the fault of the society. There are what we call pathological reasons for being sick. One can develop a disease like meningitis and be sick, and one's brain may get scattered. You can even develop the psychiatric illness yourself through alcoholism, that is, drinking too much alcohol, by taking Indian hemp, by taking heroin, LSD, et cetera. This can happen to anybody but if in future anybody is sick, how do you look after him when you have not provided enough doctors and nurses to look after people? We must train the manpower in order to man whatever hospitals we want to build in the future. We cannot just continue to build hospitals one after other without training the appropriate people to man them. There is a natural demand for building hospitals and for expanding hospitals but there must be a natural demand for giving the trained manpower to man these hospitals.

The question of deplorable government hospitals is not only a problem of psychiatric hospitals alone. It is the problem of most of our General Hospitals and even worse enough, the federally-owned Teaching Hospitals. For example, Idi-Araba Teaching Hospital is no more Idi-Araba Teaching Hospital: It is now *Idi-Abasha* Teaching Hospital because the hospital equipments are decayed. Idi-Araba Teaching Hospital is even worse than NEPA or P. & T. There must be a proper approach to these hospitals. The problems rest with the care of the hospitals and the training of the personnel. The earlier we face them the better.

I want to tell you that the problem of psychiatric hospitals—

Mr Speaker: Please round up. You will have another opportunity before the Committee on Health if this goes to it. So, please round up.

Dr Ogunkoya : I will round up by inviting the feeling of this House that there is no other way we can improve the hospitals unless the Government is prepared to pay its own share of the responsibilities I like to enumerate some—

Mr Speaker : No, please. It is time. You will do that before the Committee on Health.

Dr E. J. Sowho (Ethiopia North) : While I thank the Speaker for promising to allow all the doctors to speak, I feel this issue which is meant to serve the interest of the masses should not only be confined to doctors for consideration. The issue at stake is simple. Though my educated friend (*Dr Ogunkoya*) was trying to give us several reasons why we have these problems, I do not think that is what we are here to discuss. The Committee on Health matters will look into the details. The Motion simply states that we should look into the deplorable conditions of the Psychiatric Hospitals in this country. It is true that all other hospitals are also in the same bad shape.

Now, what do we do about this? The hon. Member for Westward (*Dr Junaidu Muhammed*) is right. We should refer it to the Committee on Health. It is technical but not only the doctors should be there. There are other aspects that we may not be fully aware of because the consumers of these services, that is, the general public would also have a good contribution to make. Certainly, we would not achieve much here, trying to educate the House on the causes of mental ill-health. They are not even interested in that. They just want better services. Let us refer the more technical side to the professionals and try to accept that this Motion be sent to the Committee on Health where proper justice will be done and which will make a proper, detailed, well-articulated study and bring it before the House.

Thank you.

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, having listened to my doctor friends who are not learned friends, I think it is time that we referred this Motion to the Committee on Health. I now move that the Question be put so that the matter can be referred to the Committee on Health.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved : That in view of the deplorable condition of most Psychiatric Hospitals throughout the country, this honourable House directs the Committee on Health to invite the Minister of Health to explain the causes or reasons for this deplorable condition and how improvement can be effected, and that the Minister examines the feasibility of building new Psychiatric Hospitals which shall be properly staffed with men and adequately equipped with drugs and materials; that the Committee reports to the House its findings with a view to enacting remedial legislations to carry out these intentions.

Natural Gas

Mr Speaker : This Motion stands in the name of Chief G. B. Wodi.

Chief Godwin B. Wodi (Port Harcourt II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I often perspire very profusely and I can see my hon. Colleagues here too, using their Order Papers in fanning themselves.

Mr Speaker : Please go to the Motion.

Chief G. B. Wodi : Well, the point I want to make, Mr Speaker, is that the situation of this room is not conducive for me to go ahead with this Motion. I would want to suspend it to a better day.

Mr Speaker : You are saying that this Motion should be suspended.

Chief G. B. Wodi : Yes, and I have chosen Wednesday—

Mr Speaker : No, please. You will leave it to the Business Committee. They will give you a new date because we do not know what they have in their Diary. The Business Committee will give you a convenient day because the day you may choose may not be convenient for them.

Motion deferred till a new date.

Committee on the Creation of New States

Mr Speaker : The Motion stands in the name of Mr Olusola Afolabi, the acting Leader of the House.

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to move the third Motion on the Order Paper standing in my name. The Motion reads thus :

That a Special Committee of the House to be known as Special Committee for the Creation of New States be set up, the composition of which shall be as follows :

Speaker—Chairman

5 Members of the NPN

3 Members of the UPN

2 Members of the NPP

1 Member of the PRP

1 Member of the GNPP

Hon. Members, we all agreed yesterday in principle that this Committee be set up. The purpose of this is to formally bring up this Motion.

I beg to move. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Lt-Col. P. C. Amadi (Owerri North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order.

Dr M. B. Ukpong (Abak) : My point of order is Rule 52 (1) With your permission I read :

There shall be a committee to be known as the Committee of Selection appointed at the commencement of every session to perform the functions allocated to it by these standing orders, and for such other matters as the House may from time to time refer to it.

[DR UKPONG]

Mr Speaker, Sir, at the commencement of this House a Committee of Selection was set up and this action was not taken by the Committee of Selection. We have been talking about abuse of office, usurpation of power, Federal character and we think that there are only few people privileged to be usurping power with absolute impunity. This is not an *Asoso Club*. What has been the principle should be accepted. It is a constitutional thing and I am very sure that this thing should be done by the Selection Committee.

In view of this usurpation of power and in view of the fact that these things have not been done by the Committee of Selection, I call upon this House to reject this recommendation. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker : Well, let us read the Order you have cited again.

There shall be a committee to be known as the Committee of Selection appointed at the commencement of every session to perform the functions allocated to it by these standing orders, and for such other matters as the House may from time to time refer to it.

Has the House referred anything to the Committee of Selection ?

Dr Ukpong : Yes.

Mr Speaker : What did you refer to it?

Dr Ukpong : This matter.

Mr Speaker : We did not refer this particular matter to the Committee of Selection.

Dr Ukpong : Mr Speaker, Sir, unless we want to be very consistent in inconsistency, when this matter was—

Mr Speaker : Please, Dr Ukpong, do not waste the time of the House.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Speaker : The duty of the Selection Committee is to select Members of the Standing Committee and they have done just that. It is the duty of this House to appoint Members of the Select Committee. This Committee is the Select Committee which is appointed to perform a specific function and we have just done that. The House is perfectly in Order. There is no argument on this matter.

Some hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Speaker : There is an explanation. This matter has been handled by Party Leaders.

Mr P. K. C. Atuwu (Sagbama) : Mr Speaker, Sir as a result of the explanation given by the Speaker that this is a Select Committee, we can take that, but the House is still concerned about the limit of the Members that have been put here. This is a very important Committee and we would want at least a representative from every State to be there. When we count this number it is only eleven with the Speaker as the Chairman. I think we should expand the membership of this Committee. We should expand it at least to twenty-five.

Mr Speaker : Mr Afolabi what do you say

Mr Olusola Afolabi : Mr Speaker, hon. Members I think the whole idea of this kind of committee is to have a body not too large and not too unwieldy to be able to look into this kind of matter, otherwise you will get into a situation in which the Committee will not be able to do anything. I would like hon. Members to remember that the Committee has no final say. Whatever it does could only be at best a recommendation. I would suggest, Mr Speaker in the alternative, that if there is need to increase the number here, the Speaker should co-opt representatives from—

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Afolabi : Mr Speaker could co-opt representatives from a place where the State is being created. As far as I am concerned I think a composition of thirteen with Mr Speaker as Chairman is just sufficient for this kind Select Committee. I beg that the number be left at thirteen.

Some hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Speaker : Let the Party Leaders speak (*Interruptions*) Order ! Order !

Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to suggest that in view—

Some hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Egbuwoku : Mr Speaker, Sir, on the Floor of this House, you voted for Chief Whips as Leaders of their various Parties—

Mr Speaker : Speak because I have recognised you to speak.

Mr Egbuwoku : So Mr Speaker, Sir, it is quite clear that both composition of the Committee and its structure have got some controversy. May I suggest, Mr Speaker, that this matter be sent back, in view of the comments, to the Leaders for further deliberation before they can bring it back to the House properly.

Thank you.

Alhaji S. Konduga (Konduga) : Mr Speaker, Sir, on this Motion about the creation of State which was moved yesterday, the Speaker had suggested that a meeting of the Party Leaders should be held in his office immediately after the House had adjourned for the day to discuss this issue. When we went to the Speaker's office to hold this meeting, he told us that the meeting was not going to take place and we went away. Surprisingly when we came this morning we found this Motion on the Order Paper for today. How we came about to find the formation of this number, twelve, or whatever was arrived at which the Acting Leader of the House presented, we do not know. We the Party Leaders were not aware of when this meeting was held and how they arrived at this point. As such, we have to hold a meeting either of the Select Committee or of the Party Leaders to agree on what formula we are going to use to appoint this Committee.

Thank you, Speaker.

Mr E. N. D. Uwandu (Mbaitoli) : I want to make an explanation and my explanation is based on Rule 52, the heading of which says *Special Committees*. There should be no other special committees to be appointed outside the provision of Rule 52 which says :

(1) *There shall be a committee to be known as the Committee of Selection appointed at the commencement of every session to perform the functions allocated to it by these standing orders, and for such other matters as the House may from time to time refer to it.*

So it is the House, and not the Party Leaders, that is referred to. Throughout the whole Sections on Special Committees, there is no where it is stated that this House has got the powers to form other Special Committees apart from the Standing Orders Committee, the House Committee, the Business Committee, the Public Relations Committee and other Committees.

Dr O. O. Oreh (Arochukwu) : Point of order on Order 60.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order. I am glad you have said that. I wanted to refer the speaker to Order 60. If you read Order 60, you will see that you have no *locus-standi*.

Mr Uwandu : The Select Committee shall be appointed—

An hon. Member : There is a point of order.

Mr Uwandu : I have not finished please.

Mr Speaker : Please there is a point of Order.

Dr Oreh : I want to refer the hon. Member for Mbaitoli (*Mr E. N. D. Uwandu*) to Order No. 60 and Mr Speaker, with your permission, I beg to read :

A select committee shall be appointed after notice given on motion made and question put, and shall consist of fifteen members, to be nominated by the Committee of Selection, which shall nominate one of the members to be chairman. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : You have made a very good point.

Mr Olusola Afolabi : Mr Speaker, Sir, in view of the controversy which has been generated over Motion No. 3, I hereby beg to suspend it.

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

Mr Afolabi : Mr Speaker, I hereby suspend the Motion.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, the Motion is suspended indefinitely.

Motion by leave suspended.

Mr Speaker : Now, we go to Motion No. 4. Do we do the same thing in respect of Motion No. 4 ?

Several hon. Members : Yes ?

Other hon. Members : No!

Composition of Members for Study Tour of the United States

Mr Afolabi : Mr Speaker, Sir, with your permission I intend to move the Motion standing in my name—

That a group of twelve Members do undertake a study tour of the United States of America, the composition of which shall be as follows :

Speaker—Leader of the delegation

5 Members of the NPN

3 Members of the UPN

2 Members of the NPP

1 Member of the PRP

1 Member of the GNPP.

This Motion should bring no controversy.

Several hon. Members : Why? Why?

Mr Afolabi : Please let me explain. We have a plan or there was an agreement that we should send 13 hon. Members to the United States as a study group. Based on the strength of the Parties in this Honourable House, it has been decided that the composition of that delegation should be as follows :

5 hon. Members of the National Party of Nigeria,

3 hon. Members of the Unity Party of Nigeria,

2 hon. Members of the Nigerian People's Party

1 hon. Member of the Peoples Redemption Party,

and 1 hon. Member of the Great Nigeria People's Party.

The Speaker will lead the delegation and I want to inform the honourable House that this is the beginning of such a study tour. It is the intention that all Members of this honourable House will have the opportunity to go on this tour. So, it does not mean that if an hon. Member does not go on this one, he will not go later. Therefore, I do not think that it is a matter which needs any controversy

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Are we going to withdraw this too.

Several hon. Members : Yes!

Some hon. Members : No!

Mr Speaker : Is there anybody seconding the Motion?

Several hon. Members : No! No!

Mr Bayo Akinbisehin (Ifesowopo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of explanation.

Mr Tom Egbuwoku (Isoko) : The explanation is this. I think when we discussed this issue at the Party Leaders' level, the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) was not at home. I think it must be made clear for the consumption of the public, the Press, and so on, that this is purely an invitation from the American Embassy and that we have only twelve chances given to us. So, these twelve chances

[MR EGBUWOKU]

are what we are sharing although at the Party Leaders' level, we have considered the possibility of we in this honourable Assembly also taking it up ourselves. The details are not yet worked out.

I thought it should be made clear so that there would be no question of doubt. It is twelve chances that they have made available to us and that is final.

Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker : Do we really want to debate this Motion?

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

Mr Speaker : Order! Order!

Mr Afolabi : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I formally move that the Question be now put.

Several hon. Members : No! No!

Some hon. Members : Yes! Yes! (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order! Order!

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That a group of twelve Members do, undertake a study tour of the United States of America, the composition of which shall be as follows :

Speaker—Leader of the delegation

5 Members of the NPN

3 Members of the UPN

2 Members of the NPP

1 Member of the PRP

1 Member of the GNPP

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) please move the Motion for Adjournment. (*Several hon. Members stood up to leave the Hall*)

Hon. Members, please sit down. There is one other item. The hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) please give me just one minute. I want to repeat the announcement I made in the morning. The Leader of the GNPP is here now.

The hon. Member for Konduga (*Alhaji Sanda Konduga*), we said before you came that—

Alhaji Sanda Konduga (Konduga) : I have heard about it.

Mr Speaker : Oh, you have heard about it. Please, the Party Leaders will meet in my office on Monday at 1 o'clock. The Clerk of the House of Representatives, if possible, will give you a letter for that Member so that he could come and explain his conduct.

Yes, the hon. Member for Oyo East (*Mr Olusola Afolabi*) please continue.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr Olusola Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I now move that the House be adjourned till ten o'clock on Monday morning.

Mr Speaker : Yes hon. Members, is there anybody seconding the Motion ?

Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) : I rise to second the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this House do adjourn till 10 o'clock on Monday morning.

The House adjourned accordingly at 11.33 a.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Monday, 21st January, 1980

The House met at 10.15 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Meetings

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, you can see that our Order Paper for today is very short. The reason is that we want the Committees to have enough time to start and do some work this morning. As a result, the meeting of the Committees has been amended as follows :

The Committee on Education will meet at 1 o'clock.

The Business Committee will meet at 1 o'clock.

The Standing Orders' Committee will meet at 1 o'clock.

Also the Party Leaders will meet in my office immediately after this sitting. We have two very important things to discuss.

Hon. Members the only Motion on the Order Paper is the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. That is the Motion standing in the name of Messrs M. O. Ugwu and Aka Ogbobe. If Mr Ugwu is not here, what about the co-Mover of the Motion, the hon. Member for Igbo-Etiti (*Mr Ogbobe*). He is not here too ?

Has anybody any explanation to make ? Yes, let us hear what the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*) has to say.

Personal Explanation

Mr D. Princewill (Degema I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I wish to remind this honourable House about two important issues. One of them is on Immigration. Shortly before we went on recess, I travelled to some European countries and on my way—(*Interruptions*) Before I left, Sir, I had a letter from the Clerk of the House introducing me as an hon. Member of this august House because my passport is so old that it carries Student on it. So everywhere I went I was treated with that respect and dignity. In fact, some Nigerians were surprised that I was not holding a diplomatic passport because I gave the letter to the Immigration Authority and I was immediately passed without any problem of visa or anything. But on coming back home—(*Interruptions*).

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members, the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*) is on a point of explanation.

Mr Princewill : On coming home, Sir, I was given a form to fill. It is called Immigration Form and on it you have to state the place where you slept while you were away and some other things. In fact, I had forgotten the number of my brother's house where I slept. So, I could not put the number of the house on the form. I was delayed for more than one hour. When I introduced myself as a Member of the National Assembly, the boy just treated me with outright banal neglect. If we should enter our country with difficulty I think it is very serious. What happens in other countries is that when one is travelling back home one does not have to fill any forms whatsoever. I would like the Immigration Authorities to note that in Nigeria, too, we do not keep records. The filling of that form is a waste of time, unnecessary and of no use whatsoever.

Please, I wish to express through this honourable House to the Immigration Authorities or to the Minister in-charge of the Immigration Department that any Nigerian coming home should not be subjected to filling forms of any nature.

The second point, Sir, is about something which I have read in the *New Nigerian* issue of today. It has been coming up in the papers but today I have taken time to go round myself and I have confirmed that the story is correct. This is about the display of the portrait of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, by the grace of God, Alhaji Shehu Shagari in public places in the UPN controlled States. (*Interruptions*) Mr Speaker, Sir, by the grace of God, Alhaji Shehu Shagari is the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the next four years. (*Applause*) He is the symbol of unity of Nigeria. He is the power.

In the words of Saint Paul to the Romans—Romans Chapter 13—(*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Princewill*) that is all right.

Mr Princewill : Mr Speaker, I would have liked to quote it because it is very vital.

Mr Speaker : That is a hangover from yesterday.

Mr Princewill : In the words of Saint Paul it is stated, *let every person be subject to the higher powers. Let every person subject himself to the higher powers because there is no power that is not made of God.*

Mr Speaker : That is all right.

Mr Princewill : Mr Speaker, the incumbent President has innermost powers and if he were—(*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : That is all right, Mr Princewill. Thank you.

Order ! Order ! Let the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Debo Akande*) speak but other contributions will come on Motion for Adjournment.

Omission of Parliamentary Privilege in the Constitution

Mr Debo Akande (Ibadan North) : We are not allowed to comment on the speech made by the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Dagogo Princewill*) until Motion for Adjournment but I would like to draw your attention to a very serious point, in my view, in the Constitution. Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to say that there is an omission in the Constitution which affects the debates and the continued stay of the Members during their Parliamentary tenure of office. I have found, on going through the Constitution, that the usual parliamentary privilege clause is missing, and we ought to be covered when we are doing anything in this Housing.

It is normal in all written Constitutions to find a clause giving cover as parliamentary privilege to all the Members for their debates and speeches during their tenure of office. This type of clause is also in all written Constitutions, and a similar clause will be found in Section 6, Subsection (1) of American Constitution. Unfortunately, there is no such clause in our present Constitution. I find that we are merely basing this privilege on our assumption as at now. Mr Speaker, Sir, I regard it as a very serious omission and I would like to draw your attention and the attention of hon. Members to this serious omission for our immediate consideration.

If I may, with your permission read the type of clause needed :

That the Members of the National Assembly or respective State Assemblies shall in all cases except treason and felony be privileged from arrest during their attendance at the Sessions of their respective Assemblies and in going to and returning from same, and for any speech or debate in their Assemblies they shall not be questioned in any other place.

You will see that apart from debates we shall carry on here during the tenure of our office in the House, we shall not be subject to any arbitrary arrest save in serious cases like felony and treason. So, Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the omission I like to draw the attention of the House to.

Mr Speaker : Thank you very much. As a matter of fact, I have taken this matter up with the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Mr Akande*) who happens also to be a very senior Member of the Bar. I have been able to refer him to Order 73 (1) which reads :

In cases of doubt the standing orders of this House shall be interpreted in the light of the relevant practice of the Commons House of Parliament of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

So, we also got this particular paragraph incorporated in the new Standing Orders that will soon come out for approval. The practice is that whenever our Standing Order is either vague or does not say anything about a particular subject, we shall always, according to this Standing Order, fall back on the practice and convention in British

House of Commons. So because of Mr Akande's insistence I thought that this matter should go to the Judicial Committee and all the Lawyers may be kind enough to attend and look into the matter particularly the legal aspect of it whether we can depend on the rules alone or do we require a substantive law in order to strengthen our position.

Mr T. O. Bob-Manuel (Degema II) : I want to help in this contribution. Under Section 267 of the Constitution we have RESTRICTIONS ON LEGAL PROCEEDINGS. In that restriction they only mentioned the President, the Vice-President, the Governor, and the Deputy Governor of the States but never talked about the Legislative Houses. Maybe when the Judicial Committee will be looking at this, they should amend it so that Section 267 could be enlarged to include Members of the National Assembly and all Legislative Houses in order to restrict us from legal proceedings during our sessions. Thank you.

Mr Speaker : We shall leave it to the Judicial Committee and incidentally it contains very experienced Lawyers like the hon. Member for Oshimili (*Mr M. A. Agbamuche*), the hon. Member for Ibadan North (*Adebo Akande*), the hon. Member for Njikoka South (*Mr E. O. Echetabu*), the hon. Member for Warri (*Chief Bon Omoruwua*) and the hon. Member for Ero South (*Mr Olu Olofinlade*). They will be able to make very good contributions.

We go back to the Order Paper of the day. The hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*), we have been waiting for you to move your Motion.

NOTICE OF MOTION

The Lagos-Ibadan Expressway

Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move—[That this Honourable House notes with regret, the deteriorating condition of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and calls on the Committee on Public Works to investigate the cause or causes of this deplorable situation just within a few months of the Expressway being opened for public use].

I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Is anybody seconding the Motion ?

Chief Okon Ikpeme (Akamkpa) : Mr Speaker Sir, I rise to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : Yes, hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*).

Mr M. O. Ugwu (Udi) : Mr Speaker, Sir, the construction Industry is one of the most important vehicles for the control of the economy of any country by its government. In this country this Industry ranks second to Petroleum in spending and probably has more impact on the people than Petroleum. This industry has been dominated in this country by two companies—The Dumez (Nigeria) Limited and Julius Berger (Nigeria) Limited. It is therefore proper that this august Assembly should duly inquire and look at the roads built by these companies with the tax-payers money. Of course it is important for us to see whether their activities are to the interest of this nation, and there is every reason to believe that that is not the case.

[MR UGWU]

It has been shown, however, that both Companies dominate the construction industry of this country. Most of them, though foreign, have been encouraging the bad government of this country. Both firms, Julius Berger and Dumez, came to this country to carry out projects financed by their governments.

In the case of Julius Berger, it received generous land allocation at Victoria Island and of course at Ijora and the Plots of land perhaps were worth several millions of naira.

Both firms performed their first contracts beautifully and their engineering designs were in fact excellent, but as they understand the language that the Nigerians speak, their performance in fact seems to have dropped and nobody seems to question the drop in the performance. Instead the work-load increases and this increase is to the detriment of this country.

I would like to say, Mr Speaker, that the contributions of those companies to their home Governments have increased within the past few years. I would like to add that Julius Berger rose from the position of real liquidation in Germany in 1964, and in 1978, it became the second largest construction industry in Germany. Dumez Engineering contributed to Dumez International sixteen per cent of its profits in 1978 and this money accrued from this country.

In 1978, each firm and its associations and principals in their home countries had two billion naira work order in this country and that was twenty per cent of the total Federal Government Expenditure in 1978. I shall illustrate how the standard of their work dropped and I shall mention these projects so as to convince the House that these firms have a case to answer.

Eko Bridge was the first project of Julius Berger and it was a beautiful job because in fact they did it with the specifications of the Federal Ministry of Works. The second one was the Eko Bridge Extension in Western Avenue. Of course this company has become so powerful that it designs and builds which means, that the Federal Ministry of Works has nothing to do with its design. The Company will design and sell the idea to the Federal Government and of course present their bill. It is just like going to a Restaurant to eat food that you don't know the price of. It is a menu without price list and when you have eaten, they will tell you that the bill is one million naira and that is what the tax-payers of this country are suffering from.

In fact, as an Engineer, I cannot see the reason for the Eko Bridge Extension because first of all the Company sand-filled the swamp and elevated it. There is no need for this elevation. If they constructed five lanes of road out of Lagos, the traffic could have been moving faster. But Julius Berger is a specialist in Bridge building and it is more expensive and of course this increases its profit.

Tin Can Island Port. This again is a very good project and a very good work but I am sure it could have been cheaper. This country paid two hundred and twenty million naira to build the Tin Can Island

Port and of course the conditions given were different from others. The fact is that they were paid generous mobilization fees and this Company was paid a pre-determined sum of money every month, just like somebody on a salary. The contract provision is that you are paid when the job reaches a certain stage but here this Company was just paid every month irrespective of what they had done. The same thing went on at Warri Port. This country paid ninety six million naira on Warri Port on the same condition that was obtainable at the Tin Can Island.

Mr Speaker : Hon Member, I thought you were talking about Lagos and Ibadan Expressway ?

Mr Ugwu : I am trying to develop the thesis. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Go on.

Mr Ugwu : The second work was the Lagos Inner Ring Road. Of course, this Company did not take into consideration that land in Lagos is very expensive. They put up inter-change within the City where the land is very expensive irrespective of the fact that people want it or not. I have not seen anywhere in the world even in Rio De Janiero where you have what I will call the inter-change built in the City. Of course the intermediate Fly-overs in Lagos are not very necessary because the traffic at the other end of Lagos is in fact very scanty. I am saying, therefore, that the amount of money invested on that bridge was unfair to the tax-payers and it was an idea sold to our Government by Julius Berger. It means, therefore, that the idea of Julius Berger is that the bridge or the fly-over they built leads to another bridge or another fly-over and that increases their profits.

I would like to say, of course, that the natural waterways and water-courses in Lagos cause a lot of flooding and it is because Julius Berger just fill the water with sand and do not care about the natural water-ways. All that it is interested in is to put up a bridge.

Mr P. O. Obaoye (Irepodun) : There is a point of Order.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Mr Obaoye : Order 29 (1).

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, please sit down. Let us hear his point of Order.

What is the point of Order ?

Mr Obaoye : Mr Speaker, hon. Ugwu has not confined himself to the contents of his Motion which is on Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. Order 29 (1) (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Yes, Mr Ugwu, continue.

Mr Ugwu : In reviewing the contract activities of Dumez, I do not think it is as disturbing as the first Company. In fact the Lebanese Managing Director was quoted as saying that he could get whatever he wanted in this country because he had got the Leaders and the officials of this country in his pocket. I know this is not true. I would like to say as well that certain roads were hurriedly negotiated by this Company in Bendel State and in the Rivers State. They are not terrible along Benin/Shagamu

[Mr. UGWU]

road, Warri/Benin Okene Highway and Port Harcourt/Warri Highway. The contract for Benin/Shagamu road was awarded for ninety million naira and by 1978 only 72 kilometres out of 300 kilometres was finished and the Contractors were demanding an increase of three hundred and twenty million naira. On failing to complete these Projects at cost, this contract nearly paralysed this country for there was no communication between the Western States or Eastern States and Northern States to Lagos. Then, after a certain review of the contract, the contract was increased by the Federal Military Government from ninety-six million naira to two hundred and twenty million naira.

Mr Speaker : Please, there is a point of Order.

Mr M. A. Agbamuche (Oshimili) : The Motion before the House reads thus—

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

Mr Agbamuche : My point of order is Order No. 26 (2).

The Motion reads thus :

That this Honourable House notes with regret, the deteriorating condition of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and calls on the Committee on Public Works to investigate the cause or causes of this deplorable situation just within a few months of the Expressway being opened for public use.

If I may go on Order No. 26 (2) reads :

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

Whether or not I share the view of the hon. Member that what he is saying is quite reasonable, it is outside the Motion before this House.

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! Hon. Member for Oshimili (*Mr Agbamuche*) I do agree with you. The rules of law are not the same as the rules of politics ! What he is saying is perfectly correct on point of procedure but this is politics. Go on, Mr Ugwu.

Mr Ugwu : Some other roads like Western Highway—Warri/Port Harcourt—were in fact abandoned and these roads would have been some of the most important roads in this country because they go through the oil producing areas. The oil producing areas are thinking that the Federal Government is neglecting them. It is because the contractors given the jobs have abandoned the jobs and are trying to do arms-twisting. The Ibadan Expressway was built by Dumez Engineering and Strabag Engineering and of course, Julius Berger.

As far as I know, a highway is made to last for 20 to 25 years. Then of course, Ibadan Expressway, ifa ndody has driven through there recently, is in fact a disgrace to engineering because it is not just the question of pouring coal-tar on the road. That is not the engineering part of it ; it is what is underneath the ground. It is the part that carries the stress of the road. If for example you have driven through Ibadan/Ife, the road is very old but it is solid. If you come to the new one that cost this country millions of naira, in fact it is so deplorable

that you cannot even see five to seven kilometres of straight road in Ibadan Expressway and that road has become a death trap to the users. I do not see any reason why this country should spend millions of naira to kill its citizens.

I therefore call on this Assembly to step in and intervene and save what I may call a kind of Mafiaism that is involved in the award of contracts in this country.

I beg to move. (*Applause*)

Mr Speaker : Yes, where is the co-Mover ?

Mr Aka Ogbobe (Igbo-Etiti) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, as a co-Mover of this Motion I stand up to support it.

The purpose of the Motion is not to witch-hunt any company, but it is asking the House to investigate the causes of the failure of a road which cost this country ₦177 million to build within the first few months of its use. As already mentioned by the first speaker, the contractors involved in this project are from the Lagos end Julius Berger, Ibadan end Strabag Germany, and in the middle Dumez (Nigeria) Limited.

In order to bring the matter to the attention of Members, I shall briefly explain the functions of the participants in the real project. There were three principal groups of people involved in the execution of the project—the client in this case was the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Consultants/Engineers and the Contractors. The client is first of all to indicate the type of road he wants to build and also he prepares requirements for the road. The Consultant/Engineer does the survey and the design of the road. It will be impossible within this short period to explain fully the work involved in surveying and designing. But I shall mention that the first thing a Consultant should do is to take a photograph of the route, determine alignment and discuss with the client and then go on with the detailed design. At the end of the design the following information is made available to the client. First of all, the contract drawings. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Mr Ogbobe : The contract drawings will indicate the length of the road, the route, culvert position and sizes, bridge position, then the width of the road. It should also show the details of the culvert, and design of the bridges and all items that are to be used in constructing the roads. There are also specifications prepared by the Consultant/Engineers. The specifications in the case of the quality of materials to be used, the type of materials and the control of the work. The third is the document. Document is the Bill of Quantities. The Bill of Quantities gives details of the materials involved in the construction. Every item used in the construction is indicated in the Bill of Quantities and the Engineer prices one of the Bills of Quantities as a confidential document to the client.

When a Contractor is tendering for a road he has no idea of what the cost is but the client has an idea. He is given an unpriced copy of the Bill of quantities. Then the Contractor which is the third participant goes on to build the road. What this House is asking

for is that the Committee on Works should investigate what has happened to this road. Why did the road disintegrate within the first few months of its use? It should find out whether the Consultant did a good job in their design. As really pointed out by the first speaker, when you are designing a road you should look forward to a twenty years' lease. What were the criteria for the road? Did he just assume that the road would carry ordinary cars and that there would be no trailers on it? By the way, the Consultants to this road were Scot Wilson, Kirk Patrick and Partners and they are British Consultants. They are all foreign contractors.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Mr David Adelu (Ibadan East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I want to refer to Order 29 (1). It seems to me that what the hon. Member is saying is not relevant to the debate on the Floor and it looks as if he is pleading for the fraudulent engineers that have debased the nation.

Mr Speaker : Yes, I do not agree with you. Thank you.

Mr Ogbobe : They have to investigate. Did the contractors abide by the design, procedure and specification? Did they use the correct material for the work? You will also find out who supervised the contract. Did they supervise it properly?

Mr Speaker, Sir, as already pointed out by the first speaker, we are not opposed to the use of foreign Consultants and foreign Contractors in this country. It is necessary that anybody invited to do some work in this country must abide by the accepted principle of doing a good job. It will be of interest to Members to know that there are five foreign contractors who dominate the construction industry in this country. They dictate the contract prices. They manipulate the contract prices to their advantage. They hold their meetings and decide who among them would do a particular job irrespective of what the Bills of Quantities say. In effect, even if they decided that this contract should go to Contractor A, they would still tell him to fix the sum to be so so amount because they know that the contract will fall to one of them. The Committee will be able to investigate who these contractors are.

Mr Speaker, as mentioned by the hon. Member for Udi (*Mr M. O. Ugwu*), the Benin—Shagamu Road is a case in point. There were some checks and balances that were introduced in the engineering design and execution. A Consultant is different from a Contractor because the Consultant does his work and the Contractor has to abide by the designs made by the Consultant. If you dare give a Contractor the job of designing and constructing, you are giving him a blank cheque because he can, for instance, make the pillar of a bridge 1,000 diameters instead of 2,000 diameters. These are the things that happen in this country. The Benin—Shagamu Road was given to Dumez to design and construct. It was a blank cheque. As was pointed out the original cost of the road was ₦96.2 million but it rose to ₦225.9 million in the first three months. These are the items that must be investigated by this House.

As I have said, we do not wish to witch-hunt. We cannot allow this type of situation to continue. It might well be that there may be a further opportunity to talk of other roads built by foreigners in this country. There are good Foreign Consultants and Contractors but there are very many bad ones who are dominating the construction industry. This House must do very well to stop that from going on. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker : Yes, Alhaji Abutu?

Alhaji A. D. O. Abutu (Ankpa South) : Mr Speaker, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity but I would like to speak during the Motion for Adjournment because I have quite a different topic altogether.

Mr Speaker : All right thank you. Let us hear from Engineer Alu.

Engineer Sam O. Alu (Afikpo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Nigerian Engineers and Contractors are very popular in this country. This Motion also tries to highlight that very important question. Is the expatriate contractor more efficient, more useful and less costly than the indigenous engineer and contractor? Now, this Motion also does not intend to victimise our foreign colleagues. But, I think what this Motion intends to do is to bring to the notice of Committee on Works what is going on in the contracting profession particularly the big ones like what my fellow engineers have already said.

My contribution is to ask this House to suspend the relevant order and add into this Motion some portions of the structures and road-ways that I feel are failing untimely in the light of the money invested by this country. I am sure in Italy and Germany where these companies come from, they cannot spend over a hundred million Naira on the bridge-work without guaranteeing it for twenty years, and also there must be proper research on the materials to be used.

If you look at the Eko Bridge which I am sure is not up to twenty years, you will find that the surface is already wearing off. You can see the naked structure or the steel part of it also wearing. I am sure it was not built properly. If the proper material was researched upon and used, it would not have worn out and would not be under repair at this time. Mr Speaker, I would, therefore, suggest to this House that the Committee on works should examine the cause on failure of some of these structures including the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway because a lot of money had been expended on them. When a bridge is being built across a Lagoon like the Eko Bridge, there is a lot of consideration in structural engineering. Material becomes of primary importance. The salt water that covers the whole of Lagos has a special effect on concrete work. You are not just going to order for any type of cement from Nkalagu to build a bridge across the Lagoon but you must order for a special quality cement, the best grade that can resist the corrosion of the salt water. So, some of these companies in order to make money do not give consideration to this very important fact.

[ENGINEER ALU]

So, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I would like to appeal to this House to suspend some relevant portion of our Standing Orders in order to include certain aspects of the structural work which should be examined by the Committee.

Thank you.

Mr Speaker : Yes, Mr I. Mac-Eteli.

Mr I. Mac-Eteli (Brass) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I think this Motion is quite straightforward. Though it is technical, it is straightforward in that we are to set up a Committee to look into the deterioration of the Ibadan-Lagos Expressway. When we came to this House in October there was cry about this road. Now the road has been repaired and it is bad again. That is the crux of the whole issue. We are now calling on this Committee to look into this matter and tell us why this is so.

Like the Engineers have described to us, we would like to know the details. Was there any feasibility survey? Were the correct materials used? Why is it bad at this time? Those are the issues. I do not think there is any need for us to debate much on it. I am, therefore, appealing to Mr Speaker and the hon. Members to commit this Motion to the appropriate Committee so that we can do something else. Thank you very much.

Mr G. N. Ozugha (Anambra South) : Mr Speaker, in supporting the Motion, I would like to point out that no Civil Engineer would quarrel with the geometrics of the Lagos-Ibadan Road. As far as I am concerned, the geometrics of that road comply with the Nigerian Highway Design Manual requirements. But, I am sure that what any Engineer would be disappointed about is the finish. The fact is that the road is suffering from what is called equipment distress due to poor finish.

I do not think this is the forum to go into engineering ramifications on this matter. So, I am still of the opinion that this particular matter should be referred to the Committee on Public Works to thrash out the relevant engineering details.

Mr Speaker, Sir, if you will allow Engineers to be talking on this very topic, we will turn this place into an Engineering School. So, Mr Speaker, in supporting this Motion, I would like it to be referred to the Committee on Public Works. Thank you very much.

Mr M. C. Okoye (Njikoka) : Mr Speaker Sir, in supporting this Motion I want to see if the Motion will include some other structures, to give the Committee the scope of working on some of the other structures as they deem necessary. Most of the rigid pavements which are designed should at least last for twenty-five years for a particular project but most of them are failing. The basis for adding some of the structures is to give the Committee wider scope of work. It is obvious to every person, irrespective of his profession, that the Expressway has failed. That is the point which the Committee is going to work upon. I am adding that other structures like the rigid pavements, the courses that have been erected everywhere in Lagos are really not necessary. There are places where flexible pavements should be constructed

but the Companies decided to construct rigid pavements which cost the country more. Flexible pavements are very easy to maintain.

Secondly, I should also like the Committee to include in the duties that they are going to carry out, that they should investigate why these Companies always have package-deals as hon. Member for Igbo-Ekiti (*Engineer Aka-Ogbobe*) has already specified. Package-deal contracts are never good contracts to be awarded more especially to foreign firms. Package-deals, to some of us, mean that the contractor becomes the designer, the one to carry out the job, and at the same time, the supervisor. This is what is called turn-key or all-in-all contract.

I would like the Committee to work and see why these projects cost more than the usual cost of the project when given to consultants and indigenous designers. Most of these jobs, when they are designed by foreign designers or foreign consultants *vis a vis* the indigenous designers and indigenous consultants, one would see that there is a disparity or gap in the price.

Finally, these contracts are given to those people who do not tender for them. They are just awarded the contract for their asking. One of the vital conditions why these foreign engineering firms are set up in the country is to help train Nigerians. But you will see that Nigerian Staff of these firms do not even get close to where the design and logistics are planned. I am craving the indulgence of the House to allow the Committee to get on this. Thank you.

Mr G. N. Uwechue (Aniocha) : Mr Speaker, Sir, distinguished hon. Members, I am not an Engineer, but I believe that those of us who are lawyers deal with clients who are engineers. I do not think that the fault is exclusively that of the contractors, or those who awarded the contracts of the Ibadan Expressway. I think the usage to which that road has been put has a good deal to do with it. Before the contract was awarded we had many roads in this country. Those of us who were going to Ibadan would either pass through Shagamu and straight to Ibadan or go through Ijebu-Ode to Ibadan, or through Abeokuta to Ibadan. Those of us who were going to the other States in the country like Bendel, Anambra, Imo, Rivers, Cross River, Benue, Plateau, and everywhere else pass through Lagos-Shagamu-Ijebu-Ode-Ore Road. Now, Ijebu-Ode-Ore Road has been closed. Everybody now has to do at least 60 kilometres extra to his journey. This is called circum-navigation because a man who is going to Ore has to go first to Ibadan, then to Ife, to Ondo, before he gets to Ore. I think that the Ibadan Expressway is carrying too much traffic.

Several hon. Members : No. !

Mr Uwechue : It is an Expressway, hon. Members. If a bridge is built and not used at all, that bridge may last for ever. If a road is designed and built well and not used it will also last for ever. But if a road is over-used, that road will not last.

(Interruptions)

Hon. Members, I am urging the Committee to look into the possibility of preparing the Shagamu-Ore Road so that people will not have to go through Ibadan to get to Bendel.

Several hon. Members : No ! No !

Mr Uwechue : There is no reason why they should not pay attention to the Shagamu—Ore road because this cuts my journey short by about 60 kilometre of what I have to do to get to my Constituency. Those who want to get to their Constituencies quickly and easily cannot get there now because Ibadan Expressway is being over-used. (Interruptions)

Hon. Members, I am sorry if I am getting emotional. The issue is a very serious one. It is because of the bad condition of these two roads that we all have to rush to the airport whenever we want to go back to our Constituencies. Those of us who are going to Bendel could easily have driven home if we had alternative routes. So, I am urging the Committee, while examining the issue of the Ibadan—Expressway to examine the possibility of doing a quick job on the Shagamu—Ore road as it was done in the damaged part of Ore—Benin road. Within two months Ore—Benin road was restored to a useable condition. If the Shagamu—Ore road is restored to a good condition, we can use that while the Ibadan—Expressway is being repaired.

Thank you Mr Speaker.

Dr Gordon Idang (Etinan II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to support this particular Motion, but in doing so I would like the Committee on Public Works which would examine this particular case to regard it as a case-study. The Committee should clearly investigate this particular problem in all its ramifications.

I am speaking with the interest of the tax-payers of this country in my own heart. I think there is really no need talking about the causes of the deplorable condition of the Lagos/Ibadan Express Road without really thinking in terms of the conditions and the terms under which the major contracts for the construction of roads and bridges in this country had been awarded. I would like that particular Committee to look into this particular area. I should also talk in terms of the relative cost. If we are really thinking in terms of the materials used in constructing the roads, I think it is proper that we should look into the cost aspect in order to know whether the money allocated to that particular project was efficiently used by the contractors. We should also look into the terms under which the contracts were awarded.

My hon. Friend that first moved this Motion took pains to do what I consider to be a very good homework. He has provided us with the background information on this particular Motion. I do not think that we should regard what he said as being irrelevant to the matter. We have not come here to waste our time looking into minor details of why a road should more or less become bad after a few months of its construction. There are many issues involved. We should look into who awarded the contract, under what terms, at what price, *et cetera*. Without investigating these points, we would not be able to know exactly why this road should become bad just a few months after its completion.

I would also like to add that I regard this issue as a case-study. I would wish that the findings of the Committee on Public Works, with regard to this particular road, should also be applied to all other construction works in this country. Once we know the terms and we can find the defects and loop-holes somewhere, somehow, we should be able to use this to determine the awards of contracts to other construction companies in this country.

I would also like this particular Committee to look into the very important issue of why we should continue to use these expatriate Companies. I think we should really know if it is still necessary to use these expatriate engineers after so many years of our Independence and after so much tax-payers' money has been used to train engineers in this country. I find that there are quite a number of engineers in this House. Do they come to this House because they do not have construction work to keep them busy outside ? Or, is it because the expatriate engineers have taken over what they should be going ? Or, is it in the best interest of the tax-payers of this country that our engineers should turn law-makers ? I think these are some of the basic issues we should look into. Why should we need expatriate construction engineers at this particular time ? Is it a fact that our own engineers are very efficient in theories rather than in practice ? Can they not deliver the goods ? These are all the points that must be investigated. We would then use our findings to determine whether we should continue to patronise foreign engineering construction companies, or we should give opportunity to indigenously construction companies.

With these few remarks, Mr Speaker, I would like to support the Motion.

Alhaji Sidi H. Ali (Dambatta) : Mr Speaker, Sir, in supporting this Motion, I would like to call the attention of the Committee on Public Works to the fact that there was an investigation similar in nature to the matter under discussion which was set up in 1974, and which led to the removal of the then Director of the Federal Ministry of Works for awarding a contract of nine million naira to Julius Berger without authority. The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Works at that time, Mr Williams, was suspended but unfortunately he was later appointed a Commissioner by the last Administration.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, if we are to go into this case, we have to ask first for that report on which the Director was dismissed. The Permanent Secretary who claimed that he was not aware that such a contract was given, and possibly the then Federal Commissioner for Works, Alhaji Femi Okunnu, should be invited to testify on this matter before the Committee on Public Works.

Mr Speaker, the question of Julius Berger is a very serious issue in this country. There are two Julius Bergers, one is Julius Berger (Nigeria) Limited while the other is called Julius Berger International. The latter, Julius Berger International, is almost a secret society. It received a contract of ₦500 million unannounced, and without informing anybody. Mr Speaker, I think this is a very serious issue in terms of our economy. It is something we should

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not throw away with a wave of the hand. Therefore, the Committee investigating this matter should invite some of us to come and testify with relevant documents in order to give the names of the people concerned. By so doing, the proper facts would be known.

What has taken place in respect of our bridges and roads, especially this Ibadan Expressway which cost us about ₦178 million, is very serious. I think if I am given three million naira I can build the same road! (*Interruptions*). This, I think, should not be allowed to be treated lightly because we owe this country the responsibility and the obligation to do everything possible to save the economy of the nation. We can never justify our election into this House if we go on ignoring certain issues just because we feel they are too hot to be touched.

Mr Speaker, Julius Berger has already built houses for some top people in Germany and other places. This is what I think the Committee should investigate. With these few remarks, I would like to sit down. Thank you.

Alhaji Muhammed Mustapha (Ringim Gado): Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion largely because this Ibadan Expressway has been described as the gate-way to the North, and at the end of this road at Ibadan, you will see it clearly marked—Ogbomosho to the North. Therefore, it stands to reason that we should describe it as a very important road.

I have particular interest that this road should be maintained, and that it should be of the highest standard as specified when the contract was first awarded to Julius Berger. I use this road very frequently. I agree with the Mover of this Motion that this road has fallen below the expectation of this country.

I support that the Committee should investigate both the engineering aspect which has been ably elucidated to this House by our engineering Colleagues, as well as the economics of it, that is to say, the cost of the contracts and the reasons for its rapid deterioration. This is a road which has been acclaimed as one of the best engineering designs by Julius Berger, Dumez, *et cetera*. We feel they should be thoroughly investigated in the light of what has been said in this House.

With this, Mr Speaker, I beg to support this Motion.

Mr Funsho Akinyosoye (Ondo): Mr Speaker, Sir, it is my considered opinion that there is merit in this Motion and I equally believe that it is the consensus of the opinion of this honourable House that the problem that arose after the completion of Ibadan-Lagos Expressway had given concern to a large body of the members of the public. However, I believe that this is such a sensitive issue which I think this honourable House has to handle with care.

After I listened to the facts elucidated by the Mover of this Motion, it is my view that certain aspect of the points he ought to make were missing and I wish to draw the attention of this honourable

House to these points. In the first place, I wish to state that to the best of my knowledge, the contracts for Ibadan-Lagos Expressway were awarded to three major international Companies, namely, Julius Berger, Dumez and Strabag. The Contracts were awarded to these three major companies in sets, and subject to the opinion of other experts in this House or outside this House, it is my view that Ibadan-Lagos Expressway has very beautiful design which in my humble opinion meets world standard.

However, after the execution of these contracts, the major problem arose at the last thirty-five kilometres from Ibadan towards Lagos because of bad surfacing. Yesterday, I travelled on this road and quite apart from this fact I do not think one can see any major complaint about this road. In conclusion of this first point, I believe that this honourable House has a duty, when we speak here, to lead the public aright and be very mindful about the reputation of other innocent companies that are involved in a particular job.

Mr Speaker, Sir, the next point I want to make is this. I do share to some extent the opinion of my learned Friend and Colleague in this honourable House (*Mr George Uwechue*) that when people sign a contract with a Government as contractors and they complete their job and obtain certificate of completion, it is not going to be an easy thing, no matter whatever investigation we conduct in this honourable House, to call on these contractors either to disgorge or refund some of the money Government has already paid to them. This is possible if we can come forward with conclusive evidence that there are certain retained fees which these contractors have not obtained that we can lay our hands on.

The third point I want to make Mr Speaker, Sir, is that in this country we are still faced with a very major problem. As I stated earlier that I travelled on this road yesterday. I did travel on this road very often, especially in pursuit of my professional duties before I came to this House. Mr Speaker, Sir, the Nigerian public in general, are still to blame for certain aspects of these finished contracts. Anyone who has travelled widely abroad would know the way the members of the public should use Express ways. When this road was completed the Federal Ministry of Works put out serious and strong warnings that properties should not be allowed to be developed along the sides of this road, but if anyone drives through this road now, he will see that various commercial factories and residences have been built there with the result that some of the access roads which are not supposed to be used by public transport are now being used and they are passing from one side of the road to the other. This is another aspect which I believe the Investigating Committee should go into with care and caution.

Mr Speaker, Sir, as I stated earlier, there is merit in this Motion and I support it. I believe that we should approach this issue with every sense of responsibility and conduct the investigation with a very neat mind and with clarity. Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to support the Motion.

Mr Gbadebo Adeyemi Adewumi (Oshogbo) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I am whole-heartedly in support of this Motion because it is a Motion that touches every home in Nigeria. But I want to quote and I want us to examine ourselves because when we are speaking in this House we are speaking for and on behalf of the whole nation. It was Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe who said about twenty years ago that : *Men are born critics and things would go on well with the world if criticisms are constructive. Destructive criticism, he said, deter progress and lead to chaos.* And Shakespeare also says : *The fault is not in us but in our stars that we are born underlings.*

Let us examine the curriculum vitae of Julius Berger for what it is. From what is known about Julius Berger, it has never performed any job successfully in Europe. That was the curriculum vitae of Julius Berger and this is a Company that Nigeria, having seen all this, still accepts and quotes as one of the major International Contractors (Bridge Builders). This is why I am saying that we should examine ourselves. Our Engineers would believe, and they do believe (why they are here is a different thing because they ought to be in the fields) that the duty of a Consultant (and in this respect, the Consultant I would say is the Ministry of Works) is to supervise and examine the materials being used as prescribed in the Bills of Quantities. We ought to search our minds. Is our Ministry of Works (by that I mean the people there) doing its jobs ?

Some hon. Members : No!

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Mr Aka Ogbobe (Igbo-Etiti) : The Consultants are not in the Ministry of Works. The Consultants are Scot Wilson, Kirk Patrick and Partners, not the Ministry of Works.

Mr G. A. Adewumi (Oshogbo South) : All right, thank you very much. In any case what we are talking about is the quality of the job. I shall quote, again, Nnamdi Azikiwe Street in Lagos. That street today is guaranteed for 20 years. Somebody was referring to the volume or quantity of vehicles plying over the Expressway. Well, what about Nnamdi Azikiwe Street here ? Millions of cars ply that street every day and yet it is good because of the guarantee of 20 years. Another road is the Marina. Marina has been there since I was born. It is because of the quality of the job. I do not want to convince anyone here that millions of cars do ply Marina everyday, yet Marina is still solid.

Mr Speaker, Sir, what is wrong is ourselves, our own patriotism, because of ten per cent—(Interruptions). Because of ten per cent we allow this country to be sold to foreigners. Please, it is our duty as legislators, in whatever venture we take to re-examine ourselves and apply a sort of patriotism to whatever we do. Whether the road is in Anambra State or Imo State, whether it is in Katsina or Borno States, whether it is in Oyo or Ondo States, it is my own road as a Nigerian. (Applause) Until you and I and the public realise the value of patriotism we shall get nowhere. It is not a question of witch-hunting. It is a question of bringing these firms, (we have it in our Constitution) to come and

face our engineers here and tell us what quality of materials they have used as contained in their Bills of Quantities that will make a road which is under 20 months become so wretched. I plied that road only yesterday and on every part of that road, no kilometre is without a fault. So I support this Motion and I support that these people should be brought both to this honourable House and the Senate and be asked questions.

Mr Speaker : Thank you.

Mr D. Niyi Adelu (Ibadan East) : Mr Speaker, I rise to support this Motion but I wish to bring to the notice of the House another aspect of the bad design of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway. The Designers and in fact the Nigerian Supervisors or those who gave out the job had definitely ensured that the free movement of Nigerians on both sides of the Expressway is hamstrung. On both sides of the Expressway from Lagos to Ibadan, most especially in Ibadan Municipality, there are no service roads and this is very important, Mr Speaker. The design actually showed that service roads should exist on both sides of the Expressway but as the job went on the Engineers refused to build the service roads.

In 1977 I led a delegation of Community Leaders to Strabag office in Ibadan and I was told point blank that the Federal Ministry of Works had finally refused to build service roads on both sides of the Expressway. This is a very serious matter, Mr Speaker.

The non-inclusion of the service roads on both sides of the Expressway has led to the death of thousands of Nigerian citizens living in Ibadan. For instance the usual roads have already been taken over by the Expressway and the movements of people have been curtailed. When people want to use any unauthorised roads to get on to the Expressway, the usual thing is death.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I hope the Committee that will eventually go into these details with examine the non-inclusion of the service roads. I would press very fervently for the eventual building of service roads on both sides of the Express Roads. Thank you.

Mr O. Ijaola (Lagos North-East) : Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Motion and also to agree that it be sent to a Committee, but I want to streamline some of the meandering speeches of Members hereto made.

The Mover of the Motion gave us a background of Julius Berger, but he refused to give us that of Strabag and that of Dumez. Apart from that, he gave us a lot of facts about Julius Berger but he failed to tell us what portion of the road was built by Julius Berger, what portion of it was by Strabag and what portion of it was by Dumez. Later we now found out, as some people were saying, that the Ibadan end of the road is bad ; some were saying the middle of the road is bad and some were saying the whole length of the road. So, Mr Speaker, I want us to give details of what we really expect from the Works Committee.

MR IJAOLA

If you would allow me, Sir, I would like to suggest that since we are now talking about the finishing of the contract, they should let us know this. During the Motion for Adjournment some time ago I had stressed on the Floor of this House to know who and who were the Engineers who signed the job completion certificate. I think that is very essential. What and what were the facts behind the signing of that certificate of completion? During the signing of the completion certificate was there anything in the coffers of Government like retention fee which is normal on all contracts and for what period is that retention fee claimable by the contractors? With these, we would be able to see whether the retention fee could still be used as a guarantee for the good job or it might not be paid until the work is efficiently done.

Another point is the one some of our Engineers have raised. Why foreign contractors? As much as I would agree with them, I would like to mention this here that the Lagos/Abeokuta Road was given to Nigerian Contractors and as far as I know, up till today, that road is not even half-way done.

If we as Nigerians want to talk seriously about giving jobs to Nigerians who are our fellow men, equally we must also talk of efficiency, not only to talk of giving jobs to Nigerians because foreigners come in to dupe us. (*Applause*) If we go again to give jobs to Nigerian contractors, I think it will be worse.

Another point I want to raise is that there are some—(*Interruptions*). Your protection, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order ! Order !

Mr Ijaola : Some names have been mentioned which I think is a question of prejudging the case. We do not want to say here that it was the former Commissioner for Works or the former Permanent Secretary or the former Director of Works who was responsible. Since we are still going to find out, the Committee has the right to call on anybody to come to testify as to what he knows about the contracts. But I think before that time, we should not prejudice the issue.

Apart from this, Mr Speaker, I would like us to see that the Committee calls on financial consultants. The man who is the co-Mover of the Motion did speak of Bills of Quantities and I think it is very pertinent because in the Bills of Quantities, materials and job values are given. If these have not been properly used, the financial consultants would definitely see what amounts were used *vis-a-vis* what ought not to have been used.

With these few comments, Mr Speaker, I support the Motion to be passed to the Committee on Works.

(*The hon. Member for Tangale-Waja South, (Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo) stood up*)

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Tangale-Waja South (*Alhaji Yunusa Kaltungo*), just one minute. He said there is a very important point.

Mr Aremu B. Yahaya : (Ilorin East) : I just want to ask whether we should consider co-opting engineers who are Members of this honourable House into that Committee.

Mr Speaker : No, leave it to the Committee. Yes, the Leader of the House.

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

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

Main Question, accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this honourable House notes with regret, the deteriorating condition of the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway and calls on the Committee on Public Works to investigate the cause or causes of this deplorable situation just within a few months of the Expressway being opened for public use.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I will seize this opportunity to announce again that Party Leaders and their Whips will meet in my office immediately after this sitting to discuss two very important matters. Yes, the Motion for Adjournment.

ADJOURNMENT

Alhaji Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move that this sitting stands adjourned till tomorrow morning at 10 O'clock.

Mr Dagogo Princewill (Degema I) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu*) to speak.

Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu (Ankpa South) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, first of all, I have to thank the Speaker and the entire Members of this honourable House for a job well done. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : The hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji Abubakar D. O. Abutu*) just a minute.

Please hon. Members, I have said before that it does not speak well of this honourable House for the Chamber to be empty whenever we start the Motion for Adjournment. I have said it several times, but hon. Members can go out on very pressing issues.

Missing Money

Alhaji Abutu : While I am thanking the hon. Members, I want to say something. Before we went on the first recess, if you remember, we passed two Motions here, one on the extension of currency deadline and the second one was asking the Police to let us know of their investigation on certain amounts that were missing. For your brilliant job, participation and the love you have for this country, you have read in the newspapers of the disclosure of millions and billions of Naira that have now gone somewhere.

Therefore, I would like to appeal to hon. Members that we have accountants, engineers and people of all types of professions and endeavours that can make Nigeria great in this honourable House. We all should go into investigations by helping the Interpol and the Nigerian Police to disclose more about our missing money through the Central Bank and the Commercial Banks. More than ₦100 billion has gone in the past five years into wrong hands. Therefore, it is a serious

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matter. We talk of qualitative education, we talk of free education, we talk of free medical education, we talk of all these things and all these cost money. (Interruptions)

Several hon. Members : Fire ! Fire !

Alhaji Abutu : We talk of agricultural green revolution. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Alhaji Abutu : Now, for these things, where do we get the money ? Our oil boom is being taken away by crooks and careerists. Therefore, it is a serious matter. I am calling on the Committee on Banking and Currency to speed up their job and invite more people to give evidence on this issue. You can invite anybody in this country, even our Speaker, if you know he can help you, or the President of the Senate! If there is anybody you know who can help you to get the disclosures, please invite him because our money has gone so much into wrong hands. Thank you very much.

Assembly of an Aeroplane

Mr Olaiya Fagbamigbe (Akure) : Mr Speaker, Sir, on Motion for Adjournment, I want to call the attention of the Members of this honourable House to the achievements of a fellow citizen by name Mallam Mustapha Mohammed of Maiduguri in Borno State. This Nigerian, a barber by profession, somebody who cuts and dresses hair, has assembled an aeroplane that has the potentialities of taking off. (Interruptions)

I can see that some hon. Members may like to speak in under-tone that the aeroplane has not been able to take off, but what I am inviting the attention of hon. Members to take note of is the effort which this citizen has put forward. (Applause). This effort is worthy of the notice and the commendation of this honourable House. I want you to bear in mind that the technological achievements which formed the prototype of all what we are enjoying today were the results of the efforts of mere illiterate men of genius. The Wright Brothers who invented the prototype of the modern aeroplane some seventy years' ago were mere illiterates. They had no college or university education and nobody ever heard that they attended any Aeronautical School and yet they gave us what we know today as aeroplanes, and we are all beneficiaries of the effort which they made.

I therefore, request that this honourable House should take note of the effort of this great citizen and the Federal Government should give him maximum encouragement. This encouragement should take the form of protection from dubious experts who exist only to discourage the good efforts which the country can benefit from. There are so many experts in this country who are out to frustrate the efforts of people with talents. They are arm-chair politicians who can only criticise what others do. One would have been happier if their criticisms were constructive ones, but they are only out to discourage. So, the Committee on Civil Aviation should invite this citizen and try to interrogate him, find out from him the extent of his knowledge.

There is a lot to gain from well-guided intuition. Many of the achievements of today came, from mere intuitions. So, the Federal Government should in addition to protecting citizen Mustapha Mohammed from experts, give him encouragement. Instead of saying that his aeroplane cannot fly, this citizen should be encouraged to tour some Civil Aviation installations in other parts of the world. He should be given facilities to study what is happening in some countries that have advanced in their aeroplane technology. He should be given time to travel and then come back to re-examine or re-appraise his achievements. I commend this citizen to the notice and attention of this honourable House. I suggest that the Committee on Civil Aviation should give him all the help and assistance that he deserves. Thank you very much.

Letter of Appreciation to the President

Mr K. R. Obioha (Ideato) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, last Thursday the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Alhaji Shehu Shagari invited us to a cocktail party. I think it is pertinent for the hon. Members of this House to use the office of the Speaker to convey our appreciation for the invitation and also to give thanks. We shall also use the opportunity to inform the President that we appreciated that gesture and request that such meetings, not necessarily on a cocktail basis, should be held in order to get more together. I noticed that on Thursday evening there was not much acrimony amongst us ; rather there was harmony and all that. I think in an atmosphere like that, the tension in this House may be reduced from time to time.

Erosion Problem in Eastern States

I would also use this Motion for Adjournment to pin-point a very minor item that is a little bit parochial because it concerns my local Government Area. It is the question of the erosion threat. It has actually become a disaster situation now in Ideato. Over 25,000 people have been displaced. The reason why I do not bring this in form of Motion is because I believe it is parochial. Since I can raise this point during this Motion for Adjournment, I wish that the people who are in-charge, who have given so much fund for fighting desert encroachment, could do something about the erosion problem in the Eastern provinces of Nigeria.

Mr Speaker, I thank you for this opportunity

The Plight of the People of the Abak Local Government Area

Mr A. Ukpanah (Ukanafun II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I want to use this opportunity of the Motion for Adjournment to bring to the notice of the Ministries of Works and Defence through the hon. Mr Speaker over the plight of some citizens of this country. The return to barracks of the Military men has caused a great hardship to certain communities where barracks have been built

[MR UKPANAH]

In Abak Local Government Area up to five villages covering nearly 700 hectares of land have been evacuated. These barracks have been completely built up within the last two years but no compensation has been paid to the inhabitants of these five villages. These people have got to find alternative accommodation for themselves, and worst still, this is the planting season in the Cross River State as it is in other parts of Nigeria. These people have not even had an alternative land, neither have they been paid any compensation in form of money. They have not been paid at all. Three weeks' ago, the General Officer Commanding the 3rd Infantry Division met the Governor of the Cross River State, Dr Isong in Calabar. The Governor also raised this issue but from reports reaching us, it does not even appear that the General Officer Commanding the 3rd Infantry Division under whose command these barracks have been built has known anything about the payment. He only asked the Governor to refer the matter to the Ministry of Defence.

I take this opportunity, Sir, to call on the Ministry of Defence to settle payments without any further delay. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Non-display of the President's Portrait

Mr A. Gapsuk (Shendam East) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to speak on this Motion for Adjournment. It is the issue which concerns the general security of this country that I would like to speak upon. It is situation that calls for the immediate attention of this honourable House and requires a substantive Motion.

This morning my hon. Colleague, the hon. Member for Degema I (*Mr Dagogo Princewill*) touched upon the issue of UPN controlled States refusing to display the Portrait of the President. It is also clear that very recently the Governor of Bendel State had the audacity to invite Chief Awolowo to go and address the State House of Assembly.

Mr Speaker : Hold on. There is a point of order.

Dr E. J. Sowho (Ethiopo North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I refer to Order 28 (2). The hon. Member for Ekiti West (*Prof. O. Ola*) is disturbing.

Mr Gapsuk : We should avoid any situation that will invite chaos and bad feeling in this country. I do not know in what capacity Chief Awolowo was invited to address the Bendel State House of Assembly. Consequently there was a walk-out by minority members. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Mr Gapsuk : I would also like to crave the indulgence of my UPN Colleagues to say that we are all together in the struggle for the stability of this country. It is therefore necessary that the caucus of your parliamentary council should discuss and make suggestions to your leaders.

I would like to point out that there is another very serious situation that is inviting chaos in Bornu State. The Governor of Bornu State who is Alhaji Goni has been complaining bitterly on the newspapers

and television about the sabotage of some people who lost election in the State where he won. I want to tell the UPN leaders that we too in the NPN are leaders of peace. (*Interruptions*).

It is clear from my investigation that a gentleman in Bornu is responsible for the confusion in Bornu State. Therefore we are going gradually into a situation whereby a person who is expected to keep peace will instigate others to disobey. I think this is very bad. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would very much want to but I do not want to disclose names because if the UPN will refuse to display the portrait of the President, they can as well sponsor one gentleman in Bornu State to sabotage the efforts of Governor Goni in the administration of Bornu. This is sad because we are all representing the Federation and must not take sides in any of these things. Please let us take note.

Investigation into the delay in Paying Government Contractors

Mr Inua Ali (Jos North) : I want to draw the attention of the House Committee on Works to which we assigned last week to investigate the delay of payment to some contractors not to restrict their investigation into the contracts awarded by the Ministry of Works alone. But they should extend their investigations into other Ministries because it is not only the Ministry of Works that awards contracts. There are Ministries like Defence, Communications, Education and so on that award contracts. All of these Ministries award very heavy contracts and there are a lot of dubious dealings within these Ministries which I want the Works Committee to continue to investigate. Therefore, Mr Speaker, Sir, I am appealing to the Works Committee to extend their investigation into these Ministries.

Senate/House relationship

Dr Junaidu Muhammed (West Ward) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to address the House on only two points. One point is the question of the relationship between this honourable House and the Senate in view of two episodes. The first episode had to do with the Motion passed on the Floor of this House extending the old Currency Notes period to a certain date which was later passed by the Senate, but had to be dropped by the Leader of the Senate. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would not have mentioned this very episode because we dealt with it at length if you can remember in your Chambers. I would not like to disclose details here but I am forced to refer to it in view of the utterances of the Leader of the Senate to a national newspaper last week. Again it has to do with a Motion passed on the Floor of this House which was not referred to the Senate but which the Leader of the Senate felt he could comment upon.

Now, I know that every citizen has the right to comment on a Motion passed in this House but when a Member of the other Chamber takes it upon himself to ridicule this House for passing a Motion which judging from the evidence before and after passing the Motion, was both correct,

I think it calls for grave concern. It needs to be clearly stated through the Leader of this House and the Speaker to the hon. Senators and indeed their Leader in the Senate, that these two Chambers have equal, I mean absolutely equal constitutional legislative powers. The Leader of the Senate is not the Leader of the House of Representatives and if the NTV insist on referring to this House as the Lower House, they should be told in clear terms that they are living in the hangover of the former Parliamentary System. We are not the Lower House.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I think it was most improper for the Leader of the Senate to go and have a chat with the Managing Director of the NNPC at the very time when a Motion on the NNPC was being discussed on the Floor of this House and after the Motion was passed to summon one newspaper and give an exclusive interview saying that in his own view an investigation into the affairs of the NNPC would be against the national interest. Of course, cleverly enough, Dr Saraki did not bother to define what he meant by national interest and whose national interest would be jeopardised.

Mr Speaker, Sir, you remember on that day I insisted on calling the attention of this House to the enormous intrigues which we were up against by saying that we were going to investigate the NNPC and I was proved right. Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to lay before you that it must be made clear to our distinguished Senator and their Leaders that this House will not tolerate interference from the Senate, this House will not tolerate the kind of the outbursts and high-handed way of dealing with issues which we have heard from the Leader of the Senate. The Leader of the House has spoken to him and I have also spoken to him but I do not think that is enough. I think it should be made absolutely clear (even if it should be in writing) in no uncertain terms that this House would not tolerate this kind of interference.

Non-display of the President's Portrait

The second topic I would like to raise has already been raised by two distinguished Members of this House. One was Mr Princewill and the other one, was Mr Gapsuk. It has to do with the display of the portrait of the President. It is unfortunate, Sir, that certain State Governments have decided to simply look the other way in matters of this nature. I do not belong to the Party of the President. In fact, I am in politics precisely to see that he does not become the President again and I fought to see that he did not become the President. But the fact of the matter is this, Mr Speaker, Sir, whether I like it or not, whether my Colleagues in the UPN controlled States like it or not, this man is the President today and we must give him his constitutional rights. (Applause) We are not talking of an individual ; we are talking of an institution and we are the pioneers in building this new Institution. I think it is an act of outrage for three or four States in this country to blatantly and flagrantly refuse to accord and to recognise what is obvious both constitutionally and otherwise. I think this is shameful and I think

this House should register with these States our utmost displeasure at this naked and irresponsible behaviour. Thank you. (Applause)

Equal Powers of the Houses

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, I would seize this opportunity to say that this House and the Senate form the National Assembly, that this House is equal to the Senate in all Constitutional aspects, and that in no way should Members of the Press or any media refer to this House as the Lower House and the other House as the Upper House. That terminology was only applicable in the Parliamentary System of Government. So this House has co-ordinate and equal powers legislatively speaking with the Senate and there will be no question of one House, in all respects, being superior to the other. (Applause)

African Cup of Nations Cup

Mr F. C. Adigwe (Awka) : Hon. Members, please, let us talk sports. Let us deviate slightly from controversial issues.

Brothers and Sisters, you will agree with me that this year, 1980, is a very big year for this country. In two months' time, Nigeria will be hosting the Cup of Nations Competitions, that is, Nigeria will be hosting a Football tournament for the whole of Africa. Up till this time it is ridiculous that such a tournament is not yet made known in this country. We only hear about this tournament in the newspapers without much interest.

Take for instance, there was a promotional programme to raise funds for this very tournament and up till this time no single individual or company or group of individuals have been able to donate towards this very sporting activity. Well I am not calling on Members to donate ; however in all civilised countries, it is the duty of the commercial institutions to help to promote sports especially when the country is hosting it. It is ridiculous that a company like the UAC cannot help the Ministry of Sports and Culture on this very issue. You have to realise that to be a big nation—

Mr Speaker : Round up.

Mr Adigwe : Mr Speaker, give me chance because this concerns the integrity of this country. (Interruptions) Please, I would like the Committee on Sports and Culture to get in touch with the Ministry of Sports, Youth and Culture to at least stimulate their interest. It is very important. Up-till this time not even the President has seen our Football Team, the Green Eagles. These chaps have been to Brazil but we do not even know of their activities and the extent to which they have practised. Indeed, in two months' time, we are expecting other African teams in Lagos and Ibadan. We do not know about this very event. I feel strongly that the President should do his utmost best to involve this nation and involve the generality of the people in this task.

[MR. ADIGWE]

I will once more remind this honourable House that this year is the year of Olympics in Moscow and up-till this time, we are not doing anything about this very issue. It is the duty of the Committee responsible to make sure that things are put right because we cannot say that we are the leaders of Africa while smaller nations with a population of about five to ten million would come here and beat us on our own soil. Yet we claim to be the leader of Africa. If we should be the leader of Africa, we should be in all respects. What makes Nigeria great today, you will agree with me, is purely oil which accounts for 90 per cent of our economy and 10 per cent—

Mr Speaker : It is time !

Yes, Alhaji Kaltungo put the question.

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

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

Main Question accordingly put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned accordingly at 12.25 p.m.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Tuesday, 22nd January, 1980

The house met at 10.10 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr Speaker in the Chair)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Votes and Proceedings

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members I have seen the Votes and Proceedings of yesterday which I have approved.

I understand that the air-conditioners are being serviced. That is why the doors are left open and as soon as they finish, we will have a comfortable stay.

Misconduct of an hon. Member

Hon. Members, we have dealt with the case of a Member who mis-conducted himself the day we had a party with the Head of State. That matter had been handled by the Party Leaders and the hon. Member in question was called in to explain his conduct. He sincerely apologised for what he believed was a conduct which he could not himself control. He sincerely apologised and assured us that there would never be a repeat performance. So, we have warned him very sternly that that type of conduct must not be repeated in future and that if by any means we receive a report of any mis-conduct on his part which is derogatory to the dignity of this House, that this House is definitely going to resolve and deal with him in a manner that is appropriate to that type of misbehaviour. I have also been mandated to meet the Head of State and apologise on the hon. Member's behalf. So, the matter has now been closed.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Admission of Students into Federal
Institutions

Mr Speaker : We have two Motions on the Order Paper for today. The first deals with the admission of students into the Federal Institutions. The Motion stands in the name of hon. Member for Bida North. (Alhaji M. B. Mustapha)

Yes, Alhaji Mustapha.

Alhaji M. B. Mustapha (Bida North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I move the Motion standing in my name—

That this Honourable House views with great concern, the failure of Federal Government's 'Students' Admission exercises into the various Federal Institutions (i) to reflect the 'Federal character';

(ii) to bridge the educational gap among the States and between the various ethnic groups;

(iii) generally to reflect the needs of the country, and therefore directs the House Standing Committee on Education to investigate and submit within 30 days the admissions policy suitable for promoting the unity and stability of this great nation.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker : Anybody to second the Motion? Yes, Mr Giadom.

Mr Kemte Giadom (Bori II) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to second the Motion.

Alhaji Mustapha : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, briefly before I continue, I would like to appeal to Members to have an open mind on this Motion. There is no motive behind this Motion. It is not against any individual or any tribe or a collection of our people. Its intention is in search of what can promote the unity and stability of this country. So, I would like all of you to give humanitarian consideration to this Motion.

Now, Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, educationally in terms of siting institutions throughout the Federation, I think no area in this Federation is at a disadvantage. The problem facing the nation is of a sort of discriminatory approach to admission of students throughout the Federation.

I would start with post-primary Colleges. In each State today, Mr Speaker, there is a Federal Government College either Girls' College or Boys' College, and the handling of admission of students to those Colleges by the Federal Ministry of Education is deplorable. Then in each State you stand the chance of having either one or two Schools of Basic Studies with the admission of students into these institutions similarly not in order. You have Advanced Teachers' Colleges geographically located throughout the Federation. If you study the manner in which the admission of students is being handled into all these institutions, you would not be satisfied.

The Federal Government Polytechnics are geographically located throughout the Federation, and still yet the admission of students there does not reflect the Federal character. The Universities are similarly geographically located and spread as far as possible and today the concern of this nation, that is, unity and stability, is being threatened by admission exercises.

Now, Mr Speaker, hon. Members, you would soon sympathise with the students concerned through no fault of theirs. When a student is seeking for admission he has to mobilise all resources within his reach to get admission into institutions. But the authorities concerned ought to know or to take into consideration the promotion of unity since these institutions are Federal-controlled. Mr Speaker, today there is a great imbalance in the admission of students into the Federal institutions. Institutions owned and controlled by the States appear more accommodating to students in various parts of the Federation.

[ALHAJI MUSTAPHA]

As I said, this matter is going before the Committee on Education which will give every Member an opportunity to contribute his quota towards establishing admission formula which will be acceptable throughout the Federation. The idea of no qualified candidates ought to be ruled out. If any area or town is given any institution today, (we are educationally advanced) it can provide the students to fill it. The Committee on Education should be able to summon University representatives, JAMB and all the Rectors or officials of higher institutions in search of suitable methods so as to solve the imbalance in the admission of our students. This is very serious, Mr Speaker, and I must warn that the stability, and unity of this country rest on education.

Educational imbalance generally is one of the serious obstacles to unity and stability. To this end, I would expect, and I hope that we shall team up and come up with ideas acceptable to all Nigerians. In other words, I would like to see the Committee come out, after a vigorous study of the matter, with the information that not less than fifty per cent of the students should come from the geographical catchment-area where the institution is located, and the remaining fifty per cent could be distributed among all the remaining States in the Federation. Mr Speaker, Sir, each area has got its own Federal Institution, and if this is done you will see that students will be equally admitted from all the States throughout the Federation.

Mr Speaker, Sir, another important thing is that the obstacles to educational imbalance in terms of admission is not something that we can just laugh at. It is so serious that the unity of this country rests on this admission exercise. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Alhaji Mustapha : Mr Speaker, Sir, this is not something to make noise about. Take for example, Mr Speaker, a School of Basic Studies was established in my own State, and attached to the University of Ife. The University cannot admit at least five per cent of the students passing out of the School of Basic Studies. Mr Speaker, Sir, while I believe that we should have additional Universities I do not believe that each State should have its own University. The problem is that we have no alternative, and we are pushed to the wall. If you are pushed to the wall, the only way open to you is to seek to establish a University of your own but this is going to have an adverse effect on the quality of education. The removal of admission exercise from JAMB, and giving each University power to admit its own students under the guidelines of the Federal Ministry of Education will be the most acceptable method of admission exercise.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I have gone round most higher institutions to collect useful information which I would present to the Committee purely in good faith. Mr Speaker, Sir, I also had a chat with some of the dominant students in some of the Institutions, and they agreed that their number is not justifiable. This is not their fault.

In order to allow other Members to contribute, I must warn that if there is no change in the admission exercise, I would do everything possible and I would go to the extent—

An hon. Member : To cause war ?

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member, you are going too far. You will not do everything possible, but everything lawful.

Alhaji Mustapha : I will do everything possible to see that the Motion is successful in the interest of peace, stability and progress.

Mr Speaker, Sir, I beg to move.

Mr Nuhu Poloma (Tangale-Waja North) : Mr Speaker, Sir, I rise to support this Motion.

In supporting the Motion, I will have to say here that the admission policy of Federal Government into higher institutions of learning in this country is a serious issue. A lot of controversies had taken place from one State to the other with respect to admission into various Higher Institutions of learning. Recently we had a very serious situation in Bauchi State. A Federal Government Polytechnic was established in Bauchi and last year there was an admission of about 500 students, out of which the ten Northern States had only 26 students.

Several hon. Members : Why ?

Mr Nuhu Poloma : Hon. Members, the situation was so serious that we decided not to keep quiet. We took the matter up very seriously going up and down, writing articles in the papers with students of various institutions of learning in Bauchi State carrying placards all over the street, and wanting to mob the Principal but we had to come to his rescue. Another admission exercise took place and the ten Northern States were able to get 100. But for the fighting of the common men and the students, we would never have got this.

Another serious situation is right now in Kaduna State. There is a Federal Advanced Teachers' College in Dutsema in Kaduna. Last year only two candidates were admitted from Kaduna State. Hon. Members, what happened was that the Principal of this College is a non-indigene of that area. What he succeeded in doing was to establish a College of his own and was using it as a conduit pipe to bring students into this Advanced Teachers' College. Right now this matter has gone before the State House of Assembly, and I am afraid that Principal might be removed.

Hon. Members, another case in mind is the serious situation in Keffi School for Basic Studies. We all know Keffi that it has been the best for education for many centuries now. Benue State established a School for Basic Studies and allied it to Nsukka University. What happened? For two years running now, not a single student from that school was admitted into Nsukka University. (*Interruptions*)

Hon. Members, I am now wondering how we are going to bridge the educational gap in this country. If we say we are going to have free education at all levels, what will happen? Are we going to close down the colleges in the UPN-controlled States at the expense of all the other States? If that is the case, then we have not yet got any solution. If we have 400 colleges in the Western States and 20 colleges in the Northern States, and we give all the students in these colleges free education, then we have not done anything. (*Interruptions*)

So, hon. Members, what we are saying here is that if a college is established in one of the Northern States, let us encourage the students of that area to gain admission into that college at a higher percentage. If the college is established in Ogun State, we should encourage the students of Ogun State to gain admission into that college at a higher capacity. It is then that we shall be getting somewhere. I do not believe in the idea of having a polytechnic in Ibadan and filling it with candidates from that area; then having the same college in Bauchi and filling it with candidates from Ibadan area; also having the same college in Bida and filling it with—
(Interruptions).

We have always said that all activities of the nation are to be done taking into consideration the federal character of Nigeria. Now, if the federal character of Nigeria means 90 per cent admission of Ibadan people into a polytechnic in Ibadan, and another polytechnic in Bauchi filled with 90 per cent admission of Ibadan people, and yet another polytechnic in Warri also filled with 90 per cent admission of people then, I can understand what federal character that is.

Hon. Members, with these few remarks I beg to really support this Motion and say that this Committee does a justifiable work.

Thank you very much.

Alhaji M. G. Shamaki (Katagun): Mr Speaker, Sir, this Motion has brought something which is of great importance to all the States in the Federation. In fact, my Colleague, hon. Nuhu Poloma, has touched on a little bit of what happened in Bauchi State during the 1979-80 admission exercise into the Federal Polytechnic there. In reality, I have got the facts and figures of what took place during that exercise.

In the *Nigerian Standard* newspaper of Tuesday, 6th November 1979, pages 12 and 13 therein were published the figures of the students who were admitted into the Polytechnic during that admission exercise. Candidates from the ten Northern States were given only 23 admissions; Anambra and Imo were given 114 admissions: (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Order! Order! There is a point of explanation.

Mr David Okwoche Agi (Oju): Mr Speaker, Sir, my point of explanation is to the effect that our UPN Members here should be reminded that this House does not belong to them alone. (Interruptions) I would like our UPN Colleagues on the other Side of the House to realise that in a Presidential System of Government, we do not have Opposition. Therefore, our UPN Members of this House should not be behaving as Members of Opposition in this House. Thank you, Sir.

Mr M. G. Shamaki: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, Cross River and Rivers States were given 58 places. Oyo, Ogun—

An hon. Member: Point of Order.

Mr Speaker: Yes, there is a point of Order

Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende): Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, my point of Order is based on Order 13, Rule 10, and if you permit me, Sir, I will read it.

Mr Speaker: Yes.

Mr O. K. Ogwe: A Member must make himself responsible for any facts stated in his question. It is out of Order to base a question on a newspaper report. (Applause)

Mr Speaker: Hon. Member for Katagun (Mr M. G. Shamaki) please go on.

Mr M. G. Shamaki: Mr Speaker, Sir, thank you very much indeed for protecting me. With reference to the hon. Member who has just spoken, if he wants to find more information, he may come directly and I can give him—

Several hon. Members: Go on.

Mr M. G. Shamaki: Thank you Mr Speaker and hon. Members, Oyo, Ogun, Lagos and Bendel States were given 107 places. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker: Order! Order! Please allow the hon. Member for Katagun (Mr M. G. Shamaki) to go on.

Mr M. G. Shamaki: Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members the actual number of students admitted during that exercise was 302 throughout the Federation and afterwards there was a complaint especially from the Bauchi State students' Union. After the complaint had been lodged all over, then there was a sort of compromise between the Ministry of Education and the Bauchi State Government and 100 students were admitted into a sort of introductory course.

Mr Speaker, Sir, this is the sort of thing which is happening throughout the Federation.

On the other hand, most of these Principals when they are just being appointed as Principals, go and admit only the students from their States in particular. If we are ready to share the national cake, if any Federal Institution is being built in any part of the country, let the indigene of that State be the Principal. It is not only the students that matter. Let us talk about the staff and the other people who are working in the institution. Only one night watchman was taken as a member of staff from all the ten Northern States. All the staff, including the driver were from somewhere else.

Mr Speaker, Sir, with these few comments I beg to support the Motion. Thank you very much.

Alhaji Abubakar Abutu (Ankpa South): Mr Speaker, hon. Members, before I comment on this important issue I want to make a passionate appeal through the Speaker to all hon. Members. At the Public Gallery students are looking at us. I said yesterday in this House—

An hon. Member: Point of Order.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of order against the hon. Member for Ankpa South. (*Alhaji A. Abutu*).

Prince A. U. Awa-Ekpo (Eket II) : Mr Speaker, my point of Order is 26 (2). I think the hon. Member is resorting to irrelevancy.

Mr Speaker : He has not even said anything.

Alhaji Abutu : Mr Speaker, thank you for protecting me.

Mr Speaker : Let us hear the appeal. If it is relevant to the Motion, then we will rule on it, provided you are speaking on the Motion.

Alhaji Abutu : Yes, I am speaking on the Motion. As I said yesterday we are dignified and respected Members. Since the history of politics in Nigeria this is the first time we have men of ability and respectability in this House. Therefore, let us keep to that respect.

Mr Speaker : Hon. Member for Ankpa South (*Alhaji A. Abutu*), you are out of Order.

Alhaji Abutu : I am talking on the Motion. I obtained your permission to make my appeal.

Mr Speaker : Please leave it until next time.

Mr Ogwe Kalu Ogwe (Bende) : Mr Speaker, thank you very much.

Hon. Members, this Motion is a very important one. It is important in the sense that the existence of the Federal Government Colleges and the admission system are totally in contravention of various Sections of the Constitution. In the first place the admission system whereby some students are allowed to enter the institution by having a minimum pass mark of 75 *per cent* and whereas others have a minimum of 50 *per cent*, is an anathema. In the second place, the admission does not make for unity and this conflicts with Section 14, Subsection 4, of the Constitution with respect to having a feeling of belonging. If you will allow me to read, if it is necessary—

Several hon. Members : No !

Mr Ogwe : Okay. Then I go to the staffing where I think the Federal character as enunciated by my friend and entrenched in the Constitution is quite relevant. If you have ever gone round the various Colleges you will find that most of the people who manage the affairs there are foreigners. Foreigners are not included in the Federal character of the country in appointment, and so on and so forth. You will see that they are each a breeder where Pakistanis, Indians and what have you, rest and feed at the expense of the masses there. (*Interruptions*)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Mr Ogwe : My other point, hon. Members as I said earlier, is that the existence of Federal Government Colleges itself is an anathema. If you go to Section 22 of the Constitution where patriotism is supposed to be mature, you will see that the admission system conflicts with this Section. If we are to bring up our children to love this country—(*Power failure*)

Mr Speaker : Hon. Members, please just one minute.

Alhaji Y. Kaltungo : Mr Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in view of this power failure I suggest that we suspend sitting till 3 o'clock this afternoon.

Sitting suspended : 10.53 a.m.

Sitting resumed : 3.15 p.m.

(The Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

Study Tour of the United States

The Deputy Speaker : Hon. Members, I would just like to make an announcement. This is in connection with the arrangements for the proposed Study Tour of the United States.

The Clerk of the National Assembly and the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Mr Olinmah, have been liaising with the officials of the American Embassy. According to the present programme, Members of the delegation are expected to leave Lagos for the United States on the 9th of February, 1980. The Staff of the American Embassy have handed over to the Clerk of the House of Representatives two forms which would be completed by all Members who would be travelling to the United States. One is the Biographic Data Form and the other is the Form for Visa.

To facilitate early completion of the arrangements for the trip, Party Leaders are requested to hand over to the Clerk of the House this afternoon or tomorrow morning the names of their Party Members who have been nominated to undertake the Study Tour. The nominated Members would then collect the necessary forms from the office of the Clerk for completion and return them to him. The Biographic Data Forms should be completed as a matter of priority as they are expected to be returned to the American Embassy not later than Friday this week. The co-operation of all concerned in this matter will be appreciated.

I believe the Party Leaders are still carrying out the exercise of the nomination of Members to undertake this trip. In actual fact, hon. Members should not think that there is plenty of time. There is not much time at all particularly considering that some of you may be applying for your basic travelling allowance if you want any additional money to take away, and this takes time. So, it is absolutely important that those travelling should have valid passports and not to start applying for them now.

Now, we were on the debates in the morning. I do not know what Members intend to do but it seems to me that if we start the debates now somebody is going to point us to Order because I know that people are fond of calling for quorum.

An hon. Member : Point of explanation.

National Assembly Debates (Representatives)

1215

[Adjournment]

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[Adjournment]

1216

The Deputy Speaker : What are you explaining? It is either we sit down in the heat and it is left to the Leader of the House—*(Prolonged Interruptions)* Anybody to act for the Leader of the House?

Mr Afolabi, are you making any point of explanation?

ADJOURNMENT

Mr O. Afolabi (Oyo East) : Mr Speaker, hon. Members, I think that it is very hot here and I am

moving that this House stands adjourned till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

Mr Yusuf A. Amoka (Okene) : I beg to second.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved : That this House do now adjourn till 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

The House adjourned accordingly at 3.21 p.m.

[MR SPEAKER]

to vote at the end of the debate and those in favour will always carry it. Please, let us give him the opportunity to develop his argument.

Professor Ola, you have about ten minutes more.

Prof. Ola : Hon. Ladies and Gentlemen, we have to solve the problem of what exactly we mean by Federal character. Does it mean hundred per cent allocation of seats and places in all the institutions or does it mean seventy-five per cent, fifty per cent, twenty-five per cent or ten per cent? This constitutional interpretation has to be quantified in practical terms before it can have any meaning. But I do know in my mind that Federal Character cannot mean hundred per cent all the way.

In places like India where we have Federal Character, it is always a mixture of merit and quota, in the sense that you properly give a certain percentage to merit and also a certain percentage to allocation and quota.

If I move on we will see that in order to solve this problem that is facing us either in the Civil Service or in education, the practical and constitutional meaning of Federal Character has to be solved in operational and practical terms. Otherwise, we will just be arguing circumlocutiously, we will just be arguing in a vacuum.

Secondly, Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to make another submission which I think will be very reasonable to Lawyers and Scientists and everybody who thinks reasonably. The hon. Mover of the Motion is making us to understand that there is imbalance and lack of Federal Character in admission in Federal Institutions. That is a theory, it is a hypothesis, it is a submission, but it needs—(Interruptions). Mr Speaker, Sir, we know that the Mover of this Motion is entitled to make that submission but it is not sufficient to make submission because anybody can make any submission. For any submission to be valid and acceptable, it has to be submitted and supported by facts and figures, and statistics. Mr Speaker, Sir, we have not been given—

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Mr Godwin Wodi (Port Harcourt II) : My point of order, Mr Speaker, is Order 26.

The hon. Member should realise that he is not lecturing his fellow Professors. He is talking to Members of this House. His language should therefore be reduced to the level of understanding of each and everyone of us here.

Professor Ola : Mr Speaker, Sir, I would say that we need a comprehensive body of data, a comprehensive body of facts and figures, to either support or diminish the argument. That is that.

As far as the problem is concerned, I will also mention one thing. We agree that there is educational imbalance in this country but what is the basic cause of this? Nobody has ever mentioned that the gap is created by the historic imbalance since the colonial days. This is a very important variable.

The fact is that since 1900 or since the last eighty years, there has been a gradual and historic and yawning gap between the various sections of this country and that very historic imbalance itself is a predetermination of another imbalance. If this is not taken into consideration we are merely arguing without any logical or scientific foundation and we are deceiving ourselves. That is the point. (Interruptions) I will move on to say—

Mr Speaker : Please round up.

Professor Ola : Before I wind up, I would like to say briefly what I know as an Educator, for the benefit of the House.

Mr Speaker : There is a point of Order.

Alhaji Muhammed Ali Kaita (Kaita) : My point of order is Order 26 (6) and it reads thus :

No Member shall impute improper motives to any other Members.

Several hon. Members : No !

Professor Ola : Mr Speaker, Sir, briefly I would like to give my own experience which is subject to verification. I know that in the Universities of Lagos, Ibadan and Ife which I have been associated with for the last fifteen years, there is no deliberate policy of discrimination in terms of admission. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Order ! Order !

Professor Ola : Mr Speaker, Sir, what I do know now from my twelve years in the University of Lagos is that very often, not sufficient candidates present themselves from the Northern States. This is a fact. (Interruptions)

Mr Speaker : Professor, please that last statement is provocative. Please say from a certain part of the country, and do not mention any specific area.

Professor Ola : I agree, Mr Speaker.

Alhaji A. Abutu (Ankpa South) : Point of Order.

Mr Speaker : What is your point of Order ?

Alhaji Abutu : My point of Order is 26 (1). The Professor is reading.

Several hon. Members : (Interruptions)

Professor Ola : I think, very briefly, in terms of Secondary Schools which are Federal Institutions, you can send a delegation to King's College, or to the Federal Schools of Arts and Science to find out about their policy and practice of admission. You will find that very often they have to shop around in order to get students from certain sections of the country.

Finally, Mr Speaker, to wind up, this much I would say—(Interruptions)

Dr Onwuka O. Oreh (Arochukwu) : Point of Order.

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