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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Wednesday, 1st April, 2009

The House met at 3.40p.m.

PRAYERS

(The Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

The Speaker: Honourable Members, I have examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Tuesday, 31st March, 2009.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Birthday of the Deputy Speaker

The Speaker: Hon. Members, today is the Birthday of the Deputy Speaker of the House of Representatives. Also, the Deputy Speaker and the Principal Officers of the House, after negotiation with the Banks, have agreed to write off all debts owed – It is *April fool*, please. So, do not go and ask your banks. It is *April fool*.

Wedding of Hon. Herman Hembe

The Speaker: Hon. Herman Hembe is inviting all hon. Members to his wedding ceremony in Makurdi, Benue State on the 3rd and 4th of April, 2009.

He looks forward to receiving you personally in Makurdi, Benue State. He prayed God to bless you all as you come.

Ad-Hoc Committee on Niger Delta Crisis to meet with the Speaker

The Speaker: This announcement is from Hon. Abdul Ningi. He is reminding all Members of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Niger Delta Crisis of their meeting with the Rt. Hon. Speaker immediately after sitting.

PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC PETITIONS

The Speaker: Any Member who has a petition to present to the House may please, rise to do so. *(No response)*

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Disappearance of Mr. Jude Onunze from the Police cell

Hon. Paul Okwudili Eze (Igbo-Etiti/Uzo-Uwani):
Point of Order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Please, proceed.

Hon. Paul Okwudili Eze: Mr. Speaker, my point of order is on Order 8, Rule 4 on page 26: *Matter of Urgent Public Importance*.

Mr. Speaker, I have a case of sudden and mysterious disappearance of my constituent, Mr. Jude Onunze from the custody of the Nigeria Police at Kuje Police Station, Abuja.

On the 1st of January, 2009, one Mr. John Ogbonna reported a case of criminal intimidation against Mr. Jude Onunze to the Police. The Police arrested Mr. Onunze on the 1st of January, 2009 and detained him between 1st of January to 4th January, 2009. Attempts to take him on bail by his elder sister Mr. Okwo and her Policed husband failed as the DPO insisted that the case was a case of threat to life and should be investigated thoroughly.

Surprisingly, on the 3rd of January, 2009 when Mr. Okwo took food to her younger brother in the Cell, the Police refused to call him out as was the case before. Rather, they took the food and ask the woman to go away. The woman protested and her protest attracted the attention of the DPO who intervened and told the woman and her husband to go and come back on Monday, 5th of January, 2009 when Mr. John Onunze should be granted bail.

On the 5th of January, 2009 they came back only to be told by the Police at Kuje -

The Speaker: Honourable, you have established your petition. You may please lay it.

Hon. Paul Okwudili Eze: It is not a petition. I am asking that the House should allow me for this matter to be taken in the next legislative day, as a Motion.

The Speaker: You can understand why I was beginning to assume that it is a petition. In any way, please conclude.

Hon. Paul Okwudili Eze: The conclusion is that when they returned on the 5th of January, 2009 the Police told them that Mr. Jude Onunze has been released the previous day, which was Sunday night. Up till today, nobody knows his whereabouts. Every effort

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made to get the Police to show us where Jude Onunze is, failed. Aku Welfare Association Federated, a socio-cultural organisation of the Community of Mr. Jude Onunze wrote to the Inspector General of Police to intervene. When nothing was done, they wrote another painful reminder to the Inspector General of Police. All these have not yielded any result.

As I am talking to you now, Jude is missing; he is a bread winner of five people with aged parent, his children are not going to school. So, I urge the House to allow me bring up this matter in the next legislative day.

The Speaker: Honourable, it is becoming obvious that this is a case that should come in the form of a petition and to be investigated. However, like I said, it is the Floor that would decide.

Hon. Members, he has brought up this issue as a Matter of Urgent Public Importance.

Question put and agreed to:

Resolved: that the House do consider the disappearance of Mr. Jude Onunze from Kuje Police Station, Abuja as a Matter of Urgent Public Importance on the next legislative day.

Harassment of Innocent Citizens in Borno State by Officers of the Nigerian Customs and Excise

Hon. Muhammed Ali Ndume (Chibok/Damboa/Gwoza): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: Please go ahead.

Hon. Muhammed Ali Ndume: Mr. Speaker, my order is on Order VIII, Rule 4: *Mater of Urgent Public Importance*.

I have been mandated by my honourable Colleagues from Borno State to present the current harassment of innocent citizens by men of the Customs Service in Borno State. As I am talking to you now, more than 100 registered private vehicles have been impounded on the road from innocent citizens on the claims by Customs that either they are under-valued or the Customs papers is not up to date or the car is not supposed to be on road because it is more than five years old as required by law.

In fact, an Elder Statesman called me on the way as I was coming from Bauchi on condolence and so many others laying their complaints as to what is currently going on now in Maiduguri.

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I, therefore, urge my Colleagues to suspend the relevant Sections of our Rule so that we can take this matter right now.

Thank you.

The Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, this is coming in two forms; the first is whether we should consider this matter as urgent enough.

Question put and agreed to:

Resolved: That the House do consider the Harassment of Innocent Citizens in Borno State as a Matter of urgent Public Importance.

The Speaker: Now that it is urgent, I now ask the House Minority Leader to move that this be considered today by moving for the relevant rules to be suspended.

Hon. Muhammed Ali Ndume: Mr. Speaker, I move that the relevant Sections of our Rules be suspended so that we can debate the Motion now.

I so move.

Hon. Nkiruka Onyejeocha (Isuikwuato/Umunneochi): Mr. Speaker, I second the Motion as moved by the House Minority Leader.

Hon. Mudashiru Kamil Akinlabi (Afijio/Atiba East/Oyo West): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: Which Order?

Hon. Mudashiru Kamil Akinlabi: Order 8, Rule 7(1).

The Speaker: You know that we are about moving a Motion for suspension of our Order.

Hon. Mudashiru Kamil Akinlabi: That is why it is important, Sir.

The Speaker: Please proceed.

Hon. Mudashiru Kamil Akinlabi: My Point of Order is on Order VIII, Rule 7, Subsection (1) Suspension of Rules and it says: "*No Rule shall be suspended except by a vote of 2/3 of the Members, voting at a quorum being present*".

The Speaker: Hon. Kamil, we have not even put the vote yet and you are already telling us that we have broken the rule.

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Would you please allow us to breach it?

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the matter be discussed immediately by suspending the relevant House Rules.

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume (Damboa/Gwoza/Chibok): Mr. Speaker, this Motion is very simple and straight forward.

The Motion is the harassment of the innocent citizens of Borno State in Maiduguri by the men of Custom Service in that area.

The House:

Notes the harassment of some innocent citizens by the Officers of the Nigerian Customs and Excise in Maiduguri and other cities in Borno State over accusation of non-genuineness of the Custom Papers and under-valuation of their vehicles;

Further notes that the Officers of the Command in Maiduguri and other cities in the State are demanding from innocent citizens, Custom Papers of vehicles that have been registered with the appropriate Agency of Government;

Worried that it would be difficult for the citizens to determine the validity of the Customs Papers and the actual value of the vehicles already in their possession in the State;

Disturbed that many people have been arrested and detained with about one hundred vehicles impounded in the State;

Resolves to:

Urge the Nigerian Customs and Excise to stop harassing innocent citizens in Maiduguri and other citizens across Nigeria.

I so move.

The Speaker: Is the Chairman or the Deputy Chairman of Committee on Customs here?

An Hon. Member: No.

Hon. Samuel Bamidele Aro (Yagba East/West/Mopamuro): Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my own support to the Motion as moved by Hon. Ndume.

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Question proposed.

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume: The Custom of Borno area command are in Maiduguri and other cities, stopping innocent citizens from driving their vehicle that are already registered and asking them to produce custom papers.

On producing most of those custom papers, innocent citizens will not know whether the custom papers are original, fake or under valued. Many of them have called this morning to say that over 100 vehicles have been impounded by men of the Nigeria Customs on the basis that either they were under-valued; outdated or that the Custom papers were not original, inside Maiduguri.

Already these vehicles are registered and a buyer cannot know whether the custom papers given to him by the dealer is original, under valued or outdated. All a citizen is concerned with is how to afford a vehicle.

My simple prayer is that the Committee on Customs should immediately liaise with the Comptroller-General of Customs so that those innocent citizens will not be punished unnecessarily. As I heard, they even embarked on arrest and detention of those innocent citizens simply because their custom papers were not what the customs want. So I urge my Colleagues to simply support this Motion so that Customs will stop harassing innocent citizens. After all, Maiduguri is over 100 kilometres away from the boarder.

I am not saying that the Customs should not go after contraband goods or anything that the law clearly states. I am not saying that the law that enables customs to do their duties should be short-circuited or short changed. All I am saying is that if an innocent citizen buys his car and he is driving it on the street, all the owner knows is the cost of the vehicle; he is not a dealer neither is he the one that paid the custom duties. He bought it from the dealer and registered it with the Internal Revenue Office. When they are driving to work or to their place of business, Customs men will stop them for a check. Usually they will look at the seatbelt to know the year of manufacture. If it was manufactured before 2004, but the customer happens to buy it in 2009, they would say that the car was not supposed to be in the country in the first place.

This kind of a thing is not fair on citizens and I urge my colleagues, to please support this simple Motion so that our people will not be harassed continuously.

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Hon. Samuel Bamidele Aro: I think it is necessary for this noble House to let the men of the Customs Service realise that there is a procedure that they should take when carrying out their functions. They should not transfer the result of their negligence to another party if they abandoned their functions.

The Customs are supposed to be at the entry point when these vehicles were coming into the country. If they abandoned the entry point and did not carry out their functions as at that point; if they failed to arrest people that do not have authentic documents, then they should not go on the streets to harass people.

Vehicles are automatically registered before you put them into use. They should liaise with the licensing officers, the Vehicle Inspection Officers or Road Safety Officers and confirm the authenticity of the documents being presented to them by the intending people who want to register their vehicles.

They abandoned all these and go to the streets to arrest people. It is necessary for us to stop them; let them go and do their job where they are supposed to do it. This is why I am giving my support to this Motion.

Hon. Ihiabe Samson Positive (Dekina/Bassa): Mr. Speaker, I rise to give my support totally to this Motion. It is timely and very important. We have seen an example where we should stand to capitally treat this matter and give it a final solution.

I recall some time in Kogi State, this issue came up and they were arresting our people on the roads, on vehicles that have been properly bought by individuals and group of persons and they were collecting their vehicles and even arresting them. Just like my Colleague has just said, they have a point where they should do such checks.

The custodians of those documents are the Customs. They are the ones who certify whether the custom duties paid were correct or not and they do the releases of those vehicles.

In the second instance, they do not have the right to do what it is now being said they are doing in Maiduguri or anywhere. There was a case of this kind in this country before when the whole of Nigerians had to rise against them. They were going from shop to shop to confiscate items that were already purchased in the super markets.

They also went to rice shops, to say that the rice was illegally smuggled into the country. Where were they when the items passed by? It is a very big matter of concern.

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In the third instance, they have registration offices. As a matter of fact, the moment items have been bought by individuals; all the papers are expected to have been correct. But invariably, the customs are just showing themselves to the public that they have not been doing their jobs.

I am of the opinion that the Motion raised is very important, it is timely, it is a Nigerian Motion and we should not allow our people to suffer any form of punishment, when they have not done anything.

Hon. Nkiruka Onyejeocha (Isuikwuato/Umunneochi): Mr. Speaker, this Motion is an important one because I was a victim. I bought a vehicle in Apapa Port and on my way to Abia State, some Customs Officers stopped me and said that the vehicle was smuggled. I told them that I did not understand what they were saying. They said they needed Release Copy from Customs. I then asked whether it was on the Express Road they would ask for Release Copy when they were supposed to check for that at the Ports before vehicles leave the Ports.

That brings me to the issue of people leaving their duty post and going to sleep. Sometimes some of them issue releases for these vehicles and those vehicles might not even pay up to what they were supposed to pay. They cut Duties and at the end of the day, because somebody has said they must meet their target they will go to the street to impound properties of innocent people.

Sometimes they will stop a vehicle to say that it was not cleared at Tincan Island Port or Apapa Wharf. My question is this, why should they stay on the express road to check the ones that are cleared from Apapa Wharf or Tincan Ports?

Customs Officers are at the border. What are they doing at the border that would warrant them to say that a vehicle that has entered Nigeria, registered in Nigeria with maybe Lagos or Abuja number was cleared in Cotonou?

I am saying that this has to stop. Customs Committee should look inward because the point is that no vehicle enters this country without the knowledge of Customs Officers. If it was smuggled in, it must be in collaboration with Customs Officers at the boarder. Vehicles cannot fly into the country because they do not have wings. Neither do vehicles turn to cats that could sneak away.

Customs Officers know how the vehicles enter into this country and they know who to hold responsible. They should stop harassing individuals.

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If they go to the car dealers, they can get information from them as to the cars that were cleared from Apapa Port or Tincan Port or the ones that were cleared from Cotonou.

Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila (Surulere 1): This is a very important Motion but let me from the on set say that we do not intend or want to compromise the

implementation of our laws and policies. It is only on that note that I will disagree with the mover of the Motion because I do not think it is relevant whether or not somebody who is driving a vehicle is aware that at the time of purchase, what year the car was made.

I believe that the policy and the law carry with them strict liabilities. To me it does not matter whether or not you know. Otherwise everybody will get away with it. It is your duty to know and check the date of the vehicle.

The issue here centres basically on the jurisdictional boundaries and the arresting powers of Customs. I believe this Motion should pass because it is unheard of in any advanced democracy that you will find certain agencies of coercion; Customs for instance on public roads arresting citizens.

It is important, as the other speakers have said, that we know where their boundaries are. Your duty posts are at the ports and at the boundaries and that is where you do your arrest; if at all.

What are those arresting powers? Are they allowed to arrest citizens? I am not sure that they are protected under any law. It is on those two bases that I will support this Motion as ably moved by Hon. Ndume.

The Speaker: Hon. Ndume, can you please repeat the prayers so that I can put the Question.

Hon. Ali Ndume: The prayer of this Motion is very simple,

That this House should mandate the Committee on Customs to liaise with the Comptroller-General of Customs so that innocent citizens would not be unnecessarily harassed in the whole country.

The Speaker: Hon. Ndume, but you have not asked Customs to stop whatever they are doing immediately.

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Hon. Ali Ndume: That is what I am saying. My prayer Sir is that the Nigerian Custom should immediately stop harassing innocent citizens on any of the Nigerian roads.

The Speaker: Right, that is the prayer.

Hon. Farouk Mohammed Lawan (Shanono/Bagwai): Mr. Speaker, the prayer from the Minority Leader pre-supposes that the Customs may not even discharge their responsibilities. This is because if you say any of the Nigerian roads; it means that where the Niger or Cameroon roads end is exactly where the Nigerian road begins which means that is the border.

So if you say they should not, it means they cannot do it even at the border post. So I would amend the prayer, instead of any of the Nigerian roads let it be in Maiduguri and other cities in Nigeria.

The Speaker: All right, that is not even an amendment that is part of the prayer. I will now put the question on the prayer. We will be moderating it that way. Is there any other moderation?

Hon. Austin Nwachukwu (Ehime Mbano/Ihite Uboma/Obowo): My amendment is that we ask the Committee on Custom to investigate and find out if the Nigerian Customs have the powers to go into the streets because we do not know the powers as contained in the Customs Acts; none of us here can say that.

We should find out whether they have rights to go beyond the streets, roads and borderlines to pick up vehicles.

Hon. Leonard Dilkon (Paskshin/Kanke/Kanam): Let us not forget that we need revenues in this country. If you say that Customs should stop and let us investigate not just in Borno but other places in the country, we may not know whether they are doing their job.

The Speaker: That was the same thing he said.

Hon. Henry S. Dickson (Ekeremor/Sagbama): Mr. Speaker, I rise to emphasize the issue raised by Hon. Austin Nwachukwu. Parliaments do not act in vain and I believe that if we have cause as a Parliament to authorize a resolution, it should proceed from the position of knowledge well founded in law.

Therefore, we should, at this point, express concern about what the honourable Minority Leader has brought to our notice and then mandate the Customs Committee to look at the issue, give it dispassionate and

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speedy hearing and then come back to us so that we do not have a situation where as a Parliament we would make a resolution that may not be well founded in law or which may not serve the national and public interest that we want to protect.

The Speaker: All right, in view of this we can put the question. We do not want a situation where we would have to come back for another amendment after another amendment.

Hon. Ndume, you have now heard contributions on how it should be. Tell us the prayer as advised, for the final time. The two points in which your Colleagues are trying to explain to us is the one that has to do with *cities all over Nigeria* and the second part has to do with *investigation by the Committee whilst we express concern over the activities of the Customs*.

Therefore, investigation activities which will allow us to know exactly the true position of the law as passed by this Parliament and as recognized by the Constitution are the two items that you need to accommodate before I put the question.

Hon. Ali Ndume Mohammed: Mr. Speaker, just before I raised this issue, I had cause to discuss with some of our learned friends. I sought their opinion from the legal standpoint regarding the Act. I did not actually look at it but they said the Act is very clear as to where their duties start and where it stops. A Member was saying that Customs is supposed to be confiscating contraband materials.

Perhaps, my Colleagues can help fashion out the Motion but my concern is what is happening in Maiduguri right now.

The Speaker: Therefore, read your prayers.

Hon. Ali Ndume Mohammed: The prayer of the Motion is that the House should direct the Committee on Customs to liaise with the Customs Service with a view to investigating and put immediate stop to the harassment of citizens in Maiduguri and other cities.

The Speaker: That is all right. Since you have advised him and he is giving this prayer, I am only going to allow for one amendment.

Hon. Bala Ibn Na'Allah (Zuru/Fakai/Sakaba/D/Wasagu): Mr. Speaker, it is not actually an amendment. I wanted to talk on point of law. I wish that I have had enough time to look at it but I do know within my limited memory that it is 20 miles

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within the border of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Therefore, anywhere within 20 miles -

The Speaker: Can we have a clear amendment on this so that we can put the question?

Hon. Ita Enang (Itu/Ibiono Ibom): Mr. Speaker, I move to amend as follows: *that the House Committee on Customs and Excise do investigate the issue and report to the House within one week.*

Amendment put and agreed to.

Main question as amended put and agreed to

The House:

Noted the harassment of some innocent citizens by the Officers of the Nigerian Customs and Excise in Maiduguri and other cities in Borno State over accusation of non-genuineness of the Custom Papers and under-valuation of their vehicles;

Further noted that the Officers of the Command in Maiduguri and other cities in the State are demanding from innocent citizens, Custom Papers of vehicles that have been registered with the appropriate Agency of Government;

Worried that it would be difficult for the citizens to determine the validity of the Customs Papers and the actual value of the vehicles already in their possession in the State;

Disturbed that many people have been arrested and detained with about one hundred vehicles impounded in the State;

Resolved to:

Mandate the Committee on Customs to investigate the matter and report back to the House within one week.

PRESENTATION OF REPORTS

Mid-Sessional Reports:

Committee on Marine Transport

The Speaker: The first Business of the Day is presentation of the Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Marine Transport standing in the name of Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi.

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Hon. Ugwuanyi is invited to present his report.

Hon. Ifeanyi Ugwuanyi (Igboeze North/Udenu): Mr. Speaker, I rise to move that this House do receive the Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Marine Transport.

Hon. Sani Abdullahi Dabai (Bakori/Danja): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

(Report Laid on the Table).

Committee on Commerce

The Speaker: The second Business of the Day is the presentation of Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Commerce standing in the name of Hon. Gilbert E. Nnaji.

Hon. Nnaji is invited to present his Report.

Hon. Gilbert E. Nnaji (Enugu East/Isi-Uzo): Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do receive the Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Commerce.

Hon. Aliyu Ahmed Pategi (Edu/Moro/Pategi): Mr. Speaker, I second the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

(Report Laid on the Table).

Committee on Steel

The Speaker: The fourth Business of the Day is presentation of the Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Steel standing in the name of Hon. Aminu Shagari.

Hon. Shagari is invited to present his Report.

Hon. Aminu Shehu Shagari (Yabo/Shagari): Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do receive the Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Steel.

Hon. Emmanuel Yisa O. Jev (Buruku): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

(Report Laid on the Table)

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Committee on Police Affairs

The Speaker: The next Mid-Sessional Report is that of the Committee on Police Affairs standing in the name of Hon. Abdul Ningi.

Hon. Ningi is invited to present his Report.

Hon. Abdul Ningi (Ningi): Mr. Speaker, I move that this honourable House do receive the Mid-Sessional Report of the Committee on Police Affairs.

Hon. Hussein Namadi Abdulkadir (Hadejia/Kafin Hausa): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

Question put and agreed to.

(Report Laid on the Table).

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION

Adoption of the Conference Committee Report of the 2009 Federal Capital Territory Statutory Appropriation Bill

The Speaker: The first Order of the Day is a Motion for the adoption of the Conference Committee Report of the 2009 Federal Capital Territory Statutory Appropriation Bill, standing in the name of Hon. Ali Atai Idoko.

Hon. Ali is invited to present the Report.

Hon. Ali A. Atai Usman (Ankpa/Omala/Olamaboro): Hon. Speaker, the FCT Appropriation Bill was passed by the House on Wednesday, 25th March, 2009 and transmitted to Senate for Conference. The Senate passed the same Bill with some differentials. The two Chambers met in Conference on Tuesday, 31st March, 2009 and adopted a harmonized version of the Bill.

A clean copy of the Conference Report is ready for presentation and adoption. In view of the importance of this Bill to the economic development of the Federal Capital Territory, it is hereby resolved that the Conference Report on the Appropriation Bill 2009 be received and adopted by this honourable House.

I so move.

Hon. Chukwuka W. Onyema (Ogbaru): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second that the Conference Report on

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the FCT Appropriation Bill 2009 be adopted as moved by my Chairman.

Question put and agreed to:

Resolved: That the House do receive and adopt the Conference Committee Report of the 2009 Federal Capital Territory Statutory Appropriation Bill.

Fire Disaster in Tarmuwa Local Government Area of Yobe State

The Speaker: The next Order of the Day is a Motion on a Fire Disaster in Tarmuwa Local Government Area of Yobe State, standing in the name of Hon. Khadija A. Bukar Ibrahim and ninety-two others.

Hon. Ibrahim is invited to move her Motion.

Hon. Khadija Burka A. Ibrahim (Damaturu/Gujba/Gulani/Tarmuwa): Mr. Speaker, the House

Notes that on the 27th March, 2009, there was a fire outbreak in Chirokusko and Mafa wards in Tarmuwa Local Government Area of Yobe State;

Concerned that the fire outbreak caused extensive damages, destroying several properties, food reserves, farmlands and crops worth millions of Naira;

Aware that the affected areas represent the food basket of Yobe State;

Worried that the displaced people are now stranded without shelter, source of livelihood and other basic necessities of life;

Resolves to:

Call on National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to urgently provide relief materials to the affected families and assist in rehabilitating them.

I so move.

Hon. Jerimon S. Manwe (Lau/K/Lamido/Ardo-Kola): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion as moved by Hon. Khadija Ibrahim.

The Speaker: Hon. Khadija Ibrahim, you have the Floor.

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Hon. Khadija Buka A. Ibrahim: Mr. Speaker, on Friday, 27th March, 2009 several calls were made to me by my Constituents in Chirokusko and Mafa wards of Tarmuwa Local Government Area, that an inferno started by a fire-wood stove and which was further aggravated by the wind of the Sahara, had raised 200 homes including local grain silos used as food reserves, grain reserves, known in Hausa as *Rumbuna* and several farms.

The situation has adversely affected not only the socio-economic lives and investment of my people, but also rendered this agrarian community homeless. One might ask what the Local Government and indeed, the State Emergency Relief Agencies are doing. But I can vouch for them in that I know for a fact that they had responded positively with some relief materials. Unfortunately, the extent of the disaster is catastrophic and overwhelming. The people are earnestly in dire need of more assistance through your intervention.

As representatives of the people at the grass-root, I think we should look upon this matter compassionately on humanitarian ground and earnestly intervene in their plight.

I so submit.

Hon. Friday Itulah (Esan North East/South East): Mr. Speaker, you are well aware of the saying *a good wine needs no push*. When you look at the number persons that supported this Motion, you will see the popularity that it enjoys. What had happened in Yobe State can happen to anybody that is within this Assembly; and fire for that matter is unpredictable.

Like the sponsor has said, we are aware that the State and the Local Government have already played their role. She is simply asking that the Relief Agency to supply relief materials to those affected by the fire disaster. These people are Nigerians. Chapter 2 of our Constitution states that the *Security and wellbeing of the citizens shall be the primary purpose of Government*. As a matter of fact, I expect that there will be nobody here that will not be in support of this Motion.

Hon. Uche Ekwunife (Anaocha/Njikoka/Dunukofia): Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple Motion and it has just one prayer. I am really very passionate and emotional when issues like this come up. This is because women and children are usually affected more than men. Men by nature should be able to shield women and children when there is crisis. We are talking about fire disaster. The Motion stated that the people were displaced, stranded without

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shelter, source of livelihood and other basic necessities of life. One could imagine the agony and trauma that the people that were affected are passing through now. We are here to protect our people, we are here to make sure that we come up with Motions and Bills that would positively affected the lives of Nigerians. They are looking unto us to come and rescue them.

This is a trying period for the people in that Constituency. As responsible Parliament we should be able to come up with something positive that would give them some kind of encouragement to know that they have people that they voted in.

I call on my Colleagues to please support this Motion.

Hon. Suleiman Abdulrahman Kawu (Sumaila/Takai): Mr. Speaker, this is a very straightforward Motion. We do not need to argue much on it because we have another Business of the Day.

So I urge my Colleagues to support the Motion and let the Question be put so that we can forge ahead.

Hon. Jerimon S. Manwe (Lau/K/Lamido/Ardo-Kola): Mr. Speaker, while speaking in support of the Motion, I do not think the House needs to stop at just asking NEMA to give relief materials. There is need for us to ask the State to intensify massive campaign on the dangers inherent in bush burning. That is very

necessary. In view of this, I will urge the Local Government to commence training of at least three permanent staff to enable them create awareness to the rural populace.

The Speaker: That is an amendment. Can you move the amendment?

Hon. Jerimon S. Manwe: I wish to amend the Motion to read:

That the House urges the State Government as a matter of urgency to implore the Local Government to form a Committee to embark on a campaign of awareness on the dangers inherent in bush burning.

Hon. Daniel Oritse G. Reyenieju (Warri North/South/West): I rise to second the amendment as moved by my hon. Colleague but with further amendment.

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The Speaker: Hold on and let us put the question on this amendment first.

Amendment put and negatived.

The Speaker: Hon. Daniel, what is your amendment, please?

Hon. Daniel Oritse G. Reyenieju: Mr. Speaker, I want to add:

That the House causes the House Committee on Interior to investigate the cause of the fire and when the result is out before it can be carried out in future.

Hon. Joyce Overah. (Okpe/Sapele/Uvwie): I rise to second the amendment as ably moved by Hon. Daniel Oritse Reyenieju.

Amendment put and negatived.

Hon. Albert Abiodun Adeogun (Ife Central/Ife East/Ife North/Ife South): Mr. Speaker, my amendment is:

To urge the Federal government to set up an inter-Ministerial Committee under the Ministry of Internal Affairs to investigate the causes and find solutions to persistent fire outbreaks in the country.

I so move.

Hon. Adewusi Babatunde (Egbado North/Imeko Afon): I rise to second the amendment as being moved by Hon. Adeogun.

Amendment put and negatived.

Main Motion put and agreed to.

The House:

Noted that on Friday, 27th March, 2009, there was a fire outbreak in Chirokuko and Mafa wards in Tarmuwa Local Government Area of Yobe State;

Concerned that the fire outbreak caused extensive damages, destroying several properties, food reserves farmlands and crops worth millions of Naira;

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Aware that the affected areas represent the food basket of Yobe State;

Worried that the displaced people are now stranded without shelter, source of livelihood and other basic necessities of life;

Resolved to:

Call on National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to urgently provide relief materials to the affected families and assist in rehabilitating them.

CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

National Archives Act, 1992 (Repeal) Bill/ National Archives and Records Administration (Establishment) Bill, 2008

A Bill for an Act to Repeal the National Archives Act, 1992 and to Establish the National Archives and Records Administration which shall be Entrusted with Permanent Custody, Care and Control of all Archives of the Federal Government and of such other Archives or Historical Records as may be required from time to time, pursuant to this Act, 2008 (HB. 145)

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, the next Order of the Day is commencement of debate on the General Principles of the National Archives Act, 1992 (Repeal) Bill/ National Archives and Records Administration (Establishment) Bill, 2008

This Bill was read for the First Time on Wednesday, 5th November, 2008. I now invite the Leader of the House, Hon. Tunde Akogun to move that the Bill be read the Second Time.

Hon. Tunde Akogun (Akoko-Edo): Hon. Speaker, I rise to move that a Bill for an Act to Repeal the National Archives Act, 1992 and to Establish the National Archives and Records Administration which shall be Entrusted with Permanent Custody, Care and Control of all Archives of the Federal Government and of such other Archives or Historical Records as may be required from time to time, pursuant to this Act, 2008 be read the Second Time.

I so move.

Hon. Baba Shehu Agaie (Agaie/Lapai): I rise to second the Motion as moved by my Leader that the Bill be read the Second Time.

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Question proposed.

The Speaker: House Leader, please lead the debate.

Hon. Tunde Akogun: The National Archives Act was established by the Federal Government called the National Archives of Nigeria. This Department is charged with permanent custody, care and control of all Archives of the Federal Government and other archives or historical records.

The National Archives Ordinance was first passed in 1957 as the first legislation on Archives. This Ordinance with all its colonial trappings and imperfections was repealed in 1992. The same year, the National Archives Act was promulgated.

Today, this Act forms the legislative framework for the administration and preservation of Archives and historical records of the country. Such records kept in the archives include but not limited to Judicial Records, Federal Government Gazettes, Proceedings and Laws passed by the National Assembly since the First Republic, Reports of various Administrative and Judicial Commission of Enquiries, Federal Executive Council Conclusions, Intelligent Reports highlighting history of Nigeria Communities, Publication of MDAs.

The Bill is therefore a response to the recommendation of the Ministerial Committee on the repositioning of the National Archives in line with the Federal Public Service Reforms and it specifically seeks to upgrade this existing Department in the Ministry of Information to the status of an Agency with corporate personality.

This recommendation may well be stated as akin to World Bank report that stressed the need to align national archives with the standard practice in other parts of the world, noting that archives are now major and vital public institutions of modern statehood. The upgrading of the corporate status of the department will enhance the funding of the Institution so as to facilitate its very important functions.

Since inception, the department has existed under eight different Ministries. These frequent movements have tended to undermine the significance and functions of Archival record keeping. Adequate funding will therefore help replace the department's inadequate and deplorable infrastructure.

Other specific amendments proposed include the establishment and composition of Governing Council in furtherance of its autonomy. Another one is the

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elevation of the Accounting Officer to the status of a Director General with borrowing powers and of course, with a direct budgetary funding. As a key institution that keeps the memory of the nation alive, honourable Colleagues are called upon to support the Second Reading of this Bill to enhance as it were, the service delivery.

I so move.

Hon. Abdul Ningi: (Ningi/Warji): Mr. Speaker, as a people, the most important and fundamental thing is our history. Our history tells us about our identity. Our history tells us about our past, where we are coming from, where we are and the possible road map of where we are going.

The National Archives as it is in Nigeria is the stock where the history of the various ethnic groups that come together to form Nigeria is housed. Going through what is in the National Archives will give us a historical background of our various ethnic groups, their norms and their ways of life, how they came to be what they are. Now, in repealing an Act of this nature, we need to be told so that we can understand the feelings of the present Act; what did they do, what are they doing, and what are they not doing.

The Leader of the House has sufficiently given us what this present Act has not been able to achieve over a long period. For almost 30 years, the Act has been dormant. But because we are in a dynamic world and we are moving forward, the Act must be made to match standards of the administrative set up. Additionally, looking at the Act on the records of the Administrator, one of the feelings of our history as a nation is lack of records. But now, this Act will hopefully achieve that particular lapse that has not been addressed over time, where records are kept for national interest and in the national interest. I am sure this particular Act if given the opportunity will be able to address some of the serious lapses that have engulfed the National Archives in the history of this country.

So, it is a good Bill and Members should support it.

The Speaker: I am going to put the question for the Bill to be read a Second Time.

Question put and agreed to:

Bill read a Second Reading and referred to the Joint Committee on Information and National Orientation as well as Justice.

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Tertiary Education Trust Fund (Establishment, etc) Bill, 2009

A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Education Tax Act Cap. E4 LFN 2004 and the Education Tax Fund (Amendment) Act, 2003 to Provide for Establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund to impose, manage and disburse Education Tax to Public Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria and Other Related Matters, 2009 (HB.194) –

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: The next Business of the Day is A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Education Tax Act Cap. E4 LFN 2004 and the Education Tax Fund (Amendment) Act, 2003.

The Bill was read the First Time on the 17th of March, 2009.

I now invite Hon. Tunde Akogun to move that the Bill be read a Second Time.

Hon. Tunde Akogun: Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill for an Act to Repeal Education Tax Act Cap.E4 LFN 2004 and the Education Tax Fund (Amendment) Act, 2003 to Provide for Establishment of the Tertiary Education Trust Fund to impose, manage and disburse Education Tax to Public Tertiary Education Institutions in Nigeria and Other Related Matters, 2009 be read a Second Time.

Hon. Rasaq B. Adewusi (Egbado North/Imeko Afon): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion as moved by the House Leader.

Question Proposed.

Hon. Tunde Akogun: Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks to refocus the Education Trust Fund. It will redirect its basic functions as an omnibus funding Agency for all levels of public education to intervene only in public tertiary education institutions.

The Educational Trust Fund (ETF) was established in 1993 to administer the two *per cent* tax imposed on declared profits of companies operating in the country. It was originally conceived as a Funding Agency exclusively for the rehabilitation, restoration and consolidation of tertiary education in the country. This came as a product of the planning between the Federal Government and Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASSU) in 1992.

When the law was eventually promulgated in

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1993, the ETF was required to fund all levels of public education in the country instead of just tertiary education alone as was originally conceived. Essentially, this has resulted in over stretching of the funding capacity of the ETF. With such omnibus general intervention, the ETF now lacks focus and thereby unable to achieve the desired impact as originally conceived.

Moreover, with the subsequent establishment of the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), agencies now exist with clear and specific objectives for the general administration of basic and secondary education. To remedy this duplication of roles, with its concomitant wastages of funds in a key sector like education that needs all the funds it could get, the amendment of Education Tax Fund had become imperative.

The Bill therefore proposes amendment by removing provisions in the Principal Act relating to non tertiary education. It makes new provisions necessary for the smooth running of the Fund. It also seeks to consolidate the earlier amendments to the Principal Act with a single compendium for ease of reference.

The advantages of the Bill include concentrating the ETF intervention to only tertiary institutions in the country, which would help achieve strategic and sustained impact; and this would translate to increase provision of physical infrastructure, instructional materials and of course, enhance staff training. It would also improve facilities and staff training which will reflect in better trained graduates prepared for the modern challenges of nation building.

It would also help to re-focus an intervention that will make for more effective monitoring of projects by the ETF. A number of beneficiary institutions of course, will be manageable since most of these institutions are located in Urban and sub-urban areas.

As the Bill ultimately seeks to restore to its former glory, the enviable standards of our tertiary institutions, I urge you to support this Bill for Second Reading

I so submit.

Hon. Farouk Mohammed Lawan (Bagwai/Shanono): Mr. Speaker, I would like to appeal to my Colleagues to support the House Leader by supporting this Bill to go through the Second Reading. The Bill as explained by the Leader seeks to reform the Education Trust Fund. Education Trust Fund like he said, was established in 1993 and it was as a result of negotiations between ASSU and the Government. So,

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the main consideration and objective of the setting up of the ETF in 1993 was to find a way to re-position and adequately fund and address our tertiary and University education in Nigeria.

ASSU was concerned that tertiary and university education was receiving very little funding. As a result, it embarked on a strike and it was as a result of the negotiations to call off the strike that led to the establishment of the Education Trust Fund. Unfortunately, the implementation for the disbursement only started in 1999; and from 1999 because there was no other intervention agencies for the educational sector, it was thought that the Fund should fund all tiers of education in Nigeria.

Experience in the last nine years has turned out to show that the impact that was expected for the ETF to bring about, in the educational sector in this country has failed to materialise. For instance, in 2008 each Nigerian University only received ₦1.7 million for staff training. Obviously ₦1.7million can not make any serious impact for any Nigerian University.

Again, the Fund was expected not only to fund 57 Federal Universities, but 49 Federal Polytechnics, 60 Colleges of Education, Secondary and Primary Schools in all the Local Governments in Nigeria.

In 2008 the only amount of money that could be released to each Local Government was ₦5 million and that amount was supposed to intervene in all the Primary Schools in each of the Local Government in Nigeria. At the end, the amount of money was thinly distributed that it failed to positively make impact on the standard and quality of education at any level.

Since 1999 two other intervention programs have come into being through the legislation of this Parliament. They are the existence of the Universal Basic Education that solely intervened for the funding needs of the basic education in Nigeria; and the existence of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). The MDG has also intervened, particularly in basic and secondary school education. This is why the idea is to re-focus the ETF so that it can concentrate its funding needs to the tertiary and university education in a manner that would alter and positively impact on the quality and standard of education in Nigeria.

One of the experiences is that because this amount of money is so thinly distributed, monitoring of the Fund has become almost impossible because when money is given to Secondary and Primary or tertiary schools, it becomes exceedingly difficult to monitor the full utilization of those resources; it is also very expensive to do that. As a result, ETF is making a case

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that these agencies should be re-focused to pay its attention to Tertiary and University education so that other agencies can concentrate their energies on Basic Education and Secondary School Education as a way of enhancing the quality and standard of education in Nigeria.

I therefore urge my Colleagues to support the passage of this Bill for Second Reading.

Hon. Tsegba Terngu (Tarka/Gboko): Mr. Speaker, when the Education Trust Fund was set up it was primarily to intervene in the education sector in Nigeria. That includes both Primary and Secondary Schools and Tertiary Institutions. We have not been told of any other specific intervention in this other sectors of education whether at the Primary or at the Secondary Schools level.

We are not unmindful of the fact that we would still look at the details of this Bill and that for us to get it right in the Educational Sector; we must have a very firm foundation for both our Primary and Secondary Schools in Nigeria.

I hasten to say that the ETF has done a very good intervention in form of infrastructure at both the Primary and Secondary School levels and this is the foundation we need to prepare students for Tertiary Institutions in this country. If we have been asked to amend this Act to provide only for Tertiary institutions without being told what other intervention that would be done in the other sectors, we still need to look at the details of the Bill. However, I still support the House Leader, to get the Bill through Second Reading so that we would look at the details.

When the Education Trust Fund was set up, we were told that it will intervene in all sectors of education. Some of the problems we have in the education sector today vary. While in other places it may be in tertiary institutions; others may be secondary or primary education. We have the UBE quite all right, but basically what they are doing today is to pay teachers and not to develop infrastructure at that level of education.

So I still think we should look at the details of this Bill. .

Hon. Halims Agoda (Ethiope East/Ethiope West): Mr. Speaker, I have seen the Bill before us; the Executive Bill presented by the Leader of this Distinguished Assembly. Secondly, the purpose of this Bill relates to an Institution set up by government with the basic idea that government alone may not be able to fund education. Therefore, this Institution is meant to

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collect funds from private sectors, particularly the oil industry in other to use this money to develop our educational sector right from the primary to the university level.

First, I disagree with the Bill as it is, if it is meant only for the tertiary institutions. If we are serious as a nation and if we are to attain the level of development as required in the educational sector, the basic foundation, the primary and indeed the secondary aspect of our educational life need to be properly funded and adequately taken care of so that the good products of the two systems will now form the tertiary level.

The idea as I said earlier is good but my worry about this fund is the management. When we came in 1999, one of the scandals of that time was the inability of this Institution to judiciously account for the ₦40 billion it collected from oil industries. It came to a point that the House then moved a Motion to conduct Public Investigation. Some of those oil companies came and tendered evidence of payment but between the Central Bank of Nigeria and the ETF office, nobody can explain how these moneys came about.

Now this act is painful as a nation and as a people, in spite of all good intentions and good laws that we have in place. The basic question is who will manage the Institution? Many Nigerians are good in their callings but many of us too have disappointed this country. At the end of the day, nothing was done as far as that ₦40 billion which was the great question of the day that time was concerned.

Again, I realised since my presence in this Assembly since 1999 that ETF has never one day through the President, presented whatever thing they have collected before Parliament for approval or for final allocation. I do not think it is the best thing to have. When they go out and collect these moneys the Parliament, at the end of the day, will not have an idea of how much they collected! Such monies need to go through the eagle eyes of the Parliament. I think the Committee responsible for it should also do something in that regard.

Another aspect of it is that the institution should be well focussed. When they want to implement, they should have a programme of action in place so that when they want to construct structures for primary schools, those structures should conform to standard. They should be structures that meet universal standard in any part of the world. Some of the structures I saw are not buildings that will actually house our children of this century. There is the need for them to be focussed and put a decent programme in place so that the amount

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of money they collected should compare to the services they render to Nigeria people. That is my contribution.

The Speaker: We have two more Bills to consider, should I put the question?

Several hon. Members: Yes!

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a Second Time and referred to Joint Committee on Education and Justice.

**Nigeria Expatriate Quota Administration
Agency (Establishment) Bill, 2009**

A Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigeria Expatriate Quota Administration Agency to Regulate and Control the Employment of Expatriates in Nigeria and Provide Training Opportunities to Nigerians who understudy the Expatriates and for Related matter, 2009.

Order for Second Reading.

The Speaker: The fourth Order of the Day is commencement of debate on the Nigeria Expatriate Quota Administration Agency Bill, 2009. The Bill was read for the First Time on Tuesday, 17th March, 2009.

I invite Hon. Warman to move that the Bill be now read the Second Time.

Hon. Warman W. Ogoriba (Yenagoa/K/Opokuma): Mr. Speaker, may I move that a Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigeria Expatriate Quota Administration Agency to Regulate and Control the Employment of Expatriates in Nigeria and Provide Training Opportunities to Nigerians who understudy the Expatriates and for Related matter, 2009 be read the Second Time.

Hon. Kayode Idowu (Odo-Otin/Ifelodun/Boripe): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second that the Bill be read the Second Time.

Question Proposed.

Hon. Warman Ogoriba: Mr. Speaker, putting it briefly, the Bill seeks to establish Expatriate Quota Agency for the sole purpose of issuing expatriate quota and business permit in Nigeria. The policy thrust of controlling expatriates inflow into any nation among other things is to safe guard the country, the nation and its citizens.

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You will agree with me that espionage activities are open areas of foreigners in any host nation. Nigeria has hosted expatriates for a very long time. If I may ask this rhetorical question, what is the level of transfer of technology in Nigeria? I will tell you that the answer is zero.

The current fees for issuing Expatriate Quota Positions are enormous. It creates job opportunities for those that have studied there because the Expatriate Quotas issued to them are for certain period of time. After the expiration of the Expatriate Quota, the expatriates should go back to their country. As we talk, no company or even Regulatory Agencies - the Ministry of Interior or the Immigration Services - monitors the issue of understudy. If I can go on to talk about the benefits of Expatriate Quota, we will not leave here today.

To re-emphasize the importance of these Expatriate Quota Position, on 30th September, 2003, this House mandated the then Committee on Interior headed by Hon. West Idahosa to investigate the abuse of Expatriate Quota Positions. The findings of that Committee are heartbreaking. Till today, the recommendations of that Committee have not been put in place. I will not leave until I relate what it intends to do if passed into law and some existing legal orders.

I will first take the issue of Nigerians Investment Promotion Commission. That Act was passed in 2004. As we talk today, while the Ministry of Interior under the Department of Citizenship and Business Permit issued Expatriate Quota, the NIPC also issued Expatriate Quota against the law and the Act that established the NIPC. If you go to NPIC today, you can get Expatriate Quota Position within twenty-four hours. Anything that does not fall within the confine of any law is illegal which means that the Expatriate Positions issued out by NIPC is illegal and it is conflicting with what the Department of Citizenship and Business Permit is doing.

Also I want to talk about the law in the Department of Citizenship and Business Permit which is also empowered by Section 51 of the 1963 Indigenous Act, though it is obsolete. That law empowers the Minister to regulate the issue of Expatriate Quota. That is why the Department of Citizenship and Business Permit has the sole authority to issue Expatriate Quota Position and Business Permit. It is only a two-office department in the Ministry of Interior.

What the Bill intends to do is simple. It is to set an Agency that is well structured and established. The

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benefits of this Agency would be so much that it will create job opportunities for our citizens instead of capital flight. It will also bring persistent repatriation of funds and those funds will remain with us.

There is no law that is conflicting with this Bill when passed into law not even the Immigration Act of 1963. If you look at Sections 8, 10, 34 and 51 of the Immigration Act of 1963; Section 8 deals with business in Nigeria. It does not talk of Expatriate Quota Position. Section 10 deals with Residence Permit and does not talk of Expatriate Quota Position. Also, Section 34 of the 1963 Act deals with opening business in Nigeria. Then Section 51 is the Section that gives power to the Minister to regulate under the Department of Citizenship and Business Permit.

My Colleagues and masters, I stand before you like a loyal servant to ask you to assist me to pass this Bill.

The Speaker: Let me put the question. Hon. Nwachukwu Austin, do you want to speak against the Bill?

Hon. Nwachukwu Austin (Ehime Mbano/Ihite Uboma/Obowo): Yes.

The Speaker: All right, please go ahead.

Hon. Austin Nwachukwu: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to sit in the House and let a goat born with a rope on its neck. I will not. The reason is just from the point I want to show to our Colleagues today.

I quite appreciate the good rendition of statement from my Colleague, Hon. Warman Ogoriba but I must tell this House that in 1986, when Anini was ravaging this country, upon his arrest he was tried in Benin by Justice Omo Agede as he then was. The brilliant defence put up by his lawyers could not save him. What the Judge said in his ruling was that there was no amount of advocacy that can withstand a legal fact. That was the ruling of Justice Omo Agede in Benin and Anini was sentenced and killed because news had it that the man was a robber. Even if you do not see him, it was said that the man could disappear. It became very clear to everybody so much that the then President of this country, General Ibrahim Babangida arrived at the Airport in Lagos and asked Etim Iyang who was then the IG of Police, *my friend, where is Anini?*

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor (Isoko north/Isoko South): Point of Order!

The Speaker: Hon. Leo Ogor, I believe he is about to make his point.

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Hon. Austin Nwachukwu: What I am trying to do is to lay my foundation. Section 9 of the Nigerian Immigration Act and if you allow me I will read. My dear Colleagues, please, let us be very patient so that we can hear ourselves.

The Speaker: He is protected, please.

Hon. Austin Nwachukwu: Section 9(d) of the Nigerian Immigration Act of 1963 says:

In the case of a person seeking entry into Nigeria for the purpose of taking up employment in Nigeria, refer the application to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

I will also read Section 8 which my Colleague also quoted and it says:

Entry for Business Purposes: No person other than the citizen of Nigeria shall accept employment in Nigeria not being employed with the Federal Government or State Government without the consent of the Minister of Internal Affairs.

This position is quite clear. What my Colleague is seeking is an Agency to do the same job that the Interior Ministry is doing at the moment. We can not sit down here and make laws everyday that are not going to be enforceable. The Act is quite clear.

I want to urge my Colleagues that if he wants to bring an Amendment to the Act, let him come by an Amendment. This House will look at it and if it is justified then we put it into the law and not to create a lopsided Act by way of Bills.

There is a department in the Ministry of Interior known as Citizenship and Business Department. This is a department that handles Expatriate paper issuance. It also issues what we call Naturalisation Certificate to deserving foreigners who want to be Nigerian citizens. These are their functions.

I want to let this House know today that our current Secretary to the Government of the Federation (SGF) was the head of that Citizenship and Business Department in Interior some years ago before he became a Permanent Secretary. Today, he rose to be the SGF of this country. The department is still in operation and in force in the country. That is one aspect.

The second one is that the Minister issues the Quota. Let me make it very clear to all of us. He gives

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the Quota through that department called Citizenship and Business while the Comptroller-General of Immigration enforces the Quota by asking the companies to bring application for them to have Residence Permit, that is now called CEFA.

I want to also say that the issue of 24 hours Quota is never done in this country. This is because if you want to get Expatriate Quota, you must go to the Afribank specifically and pay twenty-five thousand Naira, which is called processing fee. And until you bring the slip to this department, they will never touch your application.

I wonder then what my Colleague was saying. This is a serious allegation. We are all Nigerians and lawmakers. Let us not say something that will cause stir in the Ministries.

Secondly, he referred to Section 51 of the Act which is very clear. It reads: *Regulations*:

The Minister may make all such regulations as in his opinion are necessary or expedient for giving full effect in the provisions of this Act and for the true administration thereof.

This means that the Minister can make regulations to suit his way of running the Ministry and he had done so by creating the Department of Citizenship and Business for the issuance of quota. Once you have the quota you will go to Immigration. They are of different offices. Immigration is under the Ministry of Interior. I want us to bear that in mind so that we do not create unnecessary Bills that will not be enforceable.

Hon. Agoro Lanre Adeniran (Irepo/Orelope/Olorunsogo): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the intellectual in-depth of the Bill presented by Hon. Warman. However, before Hon. Austin Nwachukwu stood up, I had already made my consultation with the Chairman, Rules and Business on this matter. About this time yesterday, we stood an amendment Bill down on this particular matter. I want to crave the indulgence of Members to go to the Votes and Proceeding of yesterday, page 963, where we said:

A Bill for an Act to Amend the Immigration Act Cap 11, LFN 2004 to Provide for Better Control of Expatriate Quota Issues in the Petroleum Industry for the Purpose of Advancing Nigerian Content Development and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2009.

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The relevant Sections of the 1963 Immigration Act referred to by Hon. Warman Ogoriba were actually considered yesterday.

Based on that, we referred to Section 34 which became contentious on giving the powers to seek for expatriate quota from the Interior Ministry by the Minister of Petroleum Resources in Nigeria and at that point, we got stocked. The House in its wisdom decided to refer the Amendment Bill to the Committee on Interior. What this means is that what Hon. Warman Ogoriba seeks to do with his Bill now was considered yesterday and the House was unable to make any headway.

What I would suggest is that, instead of considering it as a pure Bill, we should consolidate the two. In the light of this, I do not want to just go on wasting the time of the House. I, therefore move formally that the consolidation of the two Bills will bring forth whether to create an agency out of Ministry of Interior or to give a separate department as it were.

Hon. Abdul Ningi (Ningi/Warji): Mr. Speaker, I have heard the two speakers who spoke against the principles of this Bill. A Bill does not start and end at the Second Reading. In fact, it is just a process.

Looking at the Bill critically, the question that should occupy Members' minds is whether the expatriates in Nigeria or the influx of expatriates to Nigeria is an issue? It was an issue in the 80s in Kenya, Uganda, Gambia and other places. Just as Immigration is an issue in the United State, equally, Immigration is an issue in Europe.

What we need to ask ourselves is this: Hon. Warman is disturbed by the influx of expatriates within the Nigerian economic system. Does that infringe on the upward movement of Nigerians to be able to achieve what they need to achieve economically?

The question that we must address is this: when Hon. Barrister Austin Nwachukwu quoted the Immigration Act -

The Speaker: Is Hon. Austin a Lawyer?

Hon. Austin Nwachukwu: Mr. Speaker, I have LLB in Law.

The Speaker: I know. Hon. Austin, did you go to any Law School?

Hon. Austin Nwachukwu: No, Mr. Speaker.

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The Speaker: Hon. Ningi, please proceed.

Hon. Abdul Ningi: The question is: should the issue of expatriate quota in Nigeria be squarely rested on the Ministry of Interior alone? If we think that the issue is big enough to require an agency, then we must address Hon. Warman's question and fears. But if we think that the issue of expatriate quota is of less importance within the body polity of this country, then this Bill has no place.

To my mind, this Bill is important in order for us to reappraise this issue of expatriate quota; how they come in, why they come in, what they do when they come in, vis-à-vis the capacity of Nigerians to be able to do what these expatriates do.

For now, all we are operating are Military Decrees that pertain to this expatriate quota, but because we are developing and moving forward, it calls to question the mentality and the reasoning behind putting the expatriate quota on the table of the Minister.

I am sure that the House will be able to address this particular concern.

The Speaker: Two Members have spoken against and one has spoken for the Bill. Does any member want to speak for?

Hon. Samson Osagie (Orhionmwon/Uhunmwode): Mr. Speaker, I want to start on the note that Bills are sponsored by Members in appreciation of an existing disturbing phenomenon which needs to be corrected. As such, we must constantly appreciate Members' efforts in any direction.

I also appreciate the fact that some of our Colleagues have brought to the fore some existing legislations and of course, practices along the issues of expatriate quota. But I dare say this afternoon that the Bill being sponsored by Hon. Warman Ogoriba and a few others is quite apt in an effort for us to re-appraise the existing regime of expatriate quota in Nigeria.

I do not see any much difference between what have been canvassed against the passage of this Bill at this stage and what have been proposed for it.

In the final analysis, I would like to say that all these arguments must be put into the process of breaking and making an expatriate quota regime that would be workable, practicable and for the national interest of this country.

The question I want to ask is, what is the regime like today? Is it working for the utmost benefit of the

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Nigerian economy? Is the Nigerian economy deriving optimum benefits from the way and manner external investors carry on business in this country?

We are not unaware that there are expatriates in this country that have indulged in various acts of illegality in the course of carrying on businesses. They have also had the opportunity of circumventing rules; such a regime must be checked.

Of course, Hon. Warman Ogoriba and others may have thought that an agency of government, properly put in place and focused on this particular item can do the magic. If it is not going to be as a result of an agency, his effort can also lead to a situation where the performance of this function by the present Ministry of Interior can be enhanced and strengthened by a legislation or an amalgam of legislations that are put before this House so that we can have a better regime for expatriate quota administration.

I want to advise that this Bill will need to go through the Second Reading so that if it gets to either Third Reading the necessary surgical and clinical examination will be done for us to have a clear Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time and referred to the House Committee on Interior.

Federal Inland Revenue Service (Establishment) Act, No. 13 2007 (Amendment) Bill, 2009

A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Inland Revenue Service (Establishment) Act No. 13 2007 to Empower the Accountant-General of the Federation to enforce Remittance of Revenue to the Federation Account, and also provide for penalties and for matters connected therewith, 2009 –

Order for Second Reading

The Speaker: The next Order of the Day is the commencement of debate on the general principles of a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Inland Revenue Service (Establishment) Act No. 13, 2007.

The Bill was read for the first time on Tuesday, 11th November, 2008. Hon. Leo Ogor will now move for the Bill be read the Second Time.

Hon. Leonard Okuweh Ogor (Isoko North/South): Mr. Speaker, may I move that a Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Inland Revenue Service (Establishment) Act No. 13 2007 to Empower the Accountant-General of the Federation to enforce

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Remittance of Revenue to the Consolidated Account of the Federation Account, and provide for penalties and for matters connected therewith be read a Second Time.

Hon. Kolawole Ismaila
(Boluwaduro/Ifedayo/Ila): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the Motion.

Question proposed.

Hon. Ogor Leonard Okuweh: Mr. Speaker, let me first of all state very clearly that the essence of Bills as clearly stated is to address problems that had become reoccurring decimals in our system.

We all know clearly that this Bill seeks only two or three specific issues: Addressing the issues of non-remittance into the Consolidated Accounts of the Federation and also the Federation Account if the need arises.

We are all aware that recently the papers have been publishing that as far as up ₦3.3 trillion being the revenue that was supposed to go into the Consolidated Revenue Account of the Federation was expended without the appropriate authorities giving the necessary approval. We all know that Section 80, Subsections 3 and 4 of the Nigerian Constitution states clear that:

No funds shall be withdrawn from the Consolidated Account of the Federation or any public fund except in the manner prescribed by the National Assembly.

What this Bill seeks is to make sure that the Accountant-General of the Federation, is mandatorily empowered to make sure that revenue collected by Ministries, Corporations, Agencies and Government owned Companies, are all paid into the Consolidated Account of the Federation.

It therefore means that the Office of the Accountant-General of the Federation will identify and compile lists of all revenue generating Ministries, Corporations, Agencies and Government owned Companies and enforce remittance of such revenue to the Consolidated Account of the Federation.

This Bill also seeks a monthly statute Report through the Ministry of Finance to the National Assembly.

The essence of this Bill is to make sure that funds that are supposed to go into the Consolidated Accounts of the Federation are not appropriated by those that lack the authority to appropriate.

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I believe that if this Bill is passed into law, it will check the excesses of some of these Ministries, Parastatals, and Government generating revenue Agencies that spends funds without proper authorisation.

I therefore want to appeal that Members should take a clinical analysis of this Bill; look at its import and the importance of making sure that Parliament at every given time must be prepared to perform their functions of appropriation.

As I listened to Hon. Halims Agoda make his submission in respect of the last Bill, he did say that about ₦40 billion were spent without National Assembly even knowing about it. This is really a clear violation of Section 80(3) and (4) that I had already quoted.

My appeal therefore is for us to be able to support such provisions so that in future we can leave a wonderful legacy whereby transparency and proper accountability will be the order of the day.

Hon. Mohamed Ali Ndume
(Damboa/Gwoza/Chibok): Mr. Speaker, I personally do not like supporting Bills or Motions coming from Hon. Leonard Ogor, but when he comes up with something that is very germane, I have no option but to stand up to support him.

I am not actually surprised by him coming up with this brilliant Bill. Mr. Speaker, you have been saying that so much amount of revenue have not been remitted to the Consolidated Account because the various Agencies were taking advantage of some Constitutional silence and this Bill will now reinforce Section 80, Subsection 4 of our Constitution and make it clearly mandatory for those Agencies that abuse the process to remit these huge sums of revenue into the Consolidated Revenue Account.

This Bill is coming at the right time when we have a very serious drop in the revenue generated from our single source and that is Oil. We have to look inward for the internally generated revenue. Therefore I feel that this is one of the responsible things that this Assembly will do in order to move this country forward.

I urge our Colleagues to strongly support this Bill which is very important for our national development and growth.

Hon. Abike Dabiri Erewa (Ikorodu): Mr. Speaker, this Bill is long over due. I recall that in the

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course of our workings in this House, there was a time we had to summon some Agencies for not remitting funds to the Federal Government and we came up with huge sums of money.

One of the problems that we are facing in our country today is wastages and of course, corruption. I believe that this Bill put together by my hon. Colleague, will go a long way in tackling this fundamental problems that is facing our nation.

Hon. Joseph Jaiyeola Ajatta (Oshodi-Isolo II): Mr. Speaker, I am supporting this Bill because of what you have been seeing around when we were going for our oversight functions.

There is a lot of money going round that are not coming into the Federation Account because of the Law that establishes the Agencies. They did that specifically to protect themselves. They usually say that they need the money very quickly and therefore it was necessary for them to have this clause.

Any business set up, whether government agencies or private, should be able to do their budget and know what they are going to spend during the year. If they have their budget for anything, there is no reason why they should not release the funds for them. Look at a situation where somebody is getting about hundred percent and only sending about two percent to the Federation Account and keeping 98 percent of what he got, and there is no way for the National Assembly to know that this kind of thing is going on,

The reason this is necessary is that we have to build up our own economy knowing fully well that oil is not coming as it used to. If we just close our eyes to all these irregularities, where are we going to get the money to pay for our budget which is going to be over drawn?

Hon. Halims Agoda (Ethiope East/West): Let me add to this very brilliant action and idea put together by Rt. Hon. Okuwah Ogor. At the end of the day when this Bill is passed by this Parliament and indeed by the Distinguished Senate, and assented to by Mr. President, we will have a new direction in terms of revenue generation and enforcement of collection. This Bill has provided an opportunity for this country to enhance collection of revenue. Two provisions in this Bill copiously talked about collection of revenue and payment into the Consolidation or Federation Account of our country.

Section 80 of the Constitution is very copious about that. Indeed, Section 162 of the Constitution is very clear and obvious of how money should be paid

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into the Federation Account. But the Constitution having provided this, did not go a step further to provide sanction. In spite of this copious constitutional provision, we have passed some laws in this Parliament that allow some government agencies either to use 2% or 5% of whatever they collected internally among themselves, and such laws are inconsistent with the 1999 Constitution.

So, the Bill before us as exemplified by Hon. Leo Ogor is to provide sanction that when in the event, as an agency or ministry or a collective institution of government revenue, fails to put this money in the required account, refunding processes and sanctions would happen. This will enable our courts, the adjudicating aspect of our government; to then know what to do when an agency flouts the provisions of the Constitution of Nigeria.

I am happy and Hon. Leo Ogor should be praised and encouraged that what he has done will enhance our revenue generating power.

Hon. Godfrey Ali Gaiya (Jaba/Zangon Kataf): Mr. Speaker, I also wish to commend the Sponsor of this Bill for the wonderful presentation just like other speakers before me did. If there is any reason that I need to support this Bill, it is for the fact that this Bill will help us in fighting illegality that we have almost allowed to become a way of life in this country.

The Excess Crude Account which we maintain has become an account that is not subjected to any accountability. If this Bill comes to be, it will then make it mandatory that every kobo collected, whether it is from the Excess Crude or anywhere, should pass through the Consolidated Revenue Account so that proper accountability and sharing would be done. This is because the way it is, we will wake up one day and hear that money is being shared from Excess Crude Account and such monies are not budgeted for anything. At the end of the day, it becomes a drain pipe for people to just enrich their pockets without bearing the interest of the ordinary Nigerians at heart.

The Speaker: I am sure I am not wrong to say that at least Excess Crude Account is being remitted. He is talking about those monies collected that are not even remitted. You are now talking about appropriation of remitted funds, but the hon. Member is talking about monies collected that are not even remitted into the Federation Account.

Hon. Sokonte Davies (Degema/Bonny): I also join my colleagues to commend our Colleague, Hon. Leo Ogor, for this thoughtful amendment he sought.

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It is unfortunate that we will continue to experience all these leakages in our economy. We are now in an era that we do not know what will become of our major income earner - the oil, whereas our internally generated revenue which should form a substantive part of our national income is not being accounted for.

A lot of those monies form some kind of slush funds which Chief Executives and operators of the system use anyhow because as rightly observed, the Constitution has given that lacuna of not being stringent on what to do with such acts. Therefore, this Bill seeks to check that.

I think that it is only important and proper for us to support this Bill to pass through the Second Reading so as to stop these bad practices in this country.

Hon. Ogbuefi Ozomgbachi (Ezeagu/Udi): Mr. Speaker, let me use this opportunity to thank Hon. Leo Ogor. Hon. Ogor has been consistent in this advocacy for this type of law to be passed by this House. Today, we stand on threshold of history because we know that even during the Military rule until the advent of democracy, there has been a lot of loopholes and leakages in the revenue collection machinery of this country.

There was a time when Ministers of government were more dependent on the agencies under them for the operational needs of their ministries. It may interest this House to know that there are some agencies of government under certain Ministries that collect more money than the annual budgetary appropriation by the National Assembly.

Let us take PHCN for instance. When we did the power probe, we found out that consistently the internally generated revenue base of PHCN has grown to between ₦63 billion to about ₦80 billion. Whereas, if you consider the annual budgetary allocation for the power sector during that very period, it was on average of ₦85 billion. So, you find out that some of those agencies have more money than what the Parliament allocates to the entire ministry. I believe that what we are doing now is something that will enable us to be in charge of accurate appropriation of national revenue.

You will also find out that it was because of those leakages by some of the agencies that informed the decision by this National Assembly to ensure that under the Fiscal Responsibility Act about 32 agencies had their budget as part of the National Budget. Even since the passage of the Fiscal Responsibility Act, none of these agencies has appeared because they know what they are hiding. We made sure that their respective

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budgets were attached to form part of the National Budget. I believe that what we have not been able to get through the Fiscal Responsibility Act should be captured in the entire national revenue, under the purview of this Bill that has been sponsored by Hon. Leo Ogor.

To that extent, I support this Bill and I call on our Colleagues to support it too.

Hon. Chinyere Emmanuel Igwe (Port Harcourt II): Mr. Speaker, this Bill could not have come at a better time other than now. This is because of the world economic situation coupled with Nigeria economic backdrop. You will agree with me that our major source of revenue which is the oil is no longer bringing in revenue as much as expected. As a result, it becomes necessary to close the bottlenecks and the leakages in our internally generated revenue.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that during the first tenure when you were a Member of the House over sighting Committees, you would have observed and seen the way and manner Agencies and Departments of Government misuse government revenue. They would collect revenues but will not remit them to the Consolidated Revenue Fund. What would they tell you? They would say it was the problem of *our Act*.

The Act establishing the Agencies provides for that; that they can spend. I am sure that by the time we amend the Federal Inland Revenue Act, we would be able to block those leakages. With the global economic melt down, we would get more revenue and execute projects that would benefit our people back home.

Hon. Jerimon S. Manwe (Lau/K/Lamido/Ardo-Kola): Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my friend once again for his efforts in coming up with this noble Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Inland Revenue Act. Before the advent of the Committee on Finance Investigative Hearing, I know of Agencies, to be specific, Immigration Services, that was rendering just little above one billion Naira as revenue into the Federation Account. But when the Investigative Hearing was carried out, the revenue they collected or remitted was over ₦12 billion. It means that the House is doing a good job and this Bill would strengthen the work of the House. Therefore, I once more commend his effort and urge my Colleagues to support the passage of this Bill for Second Reading.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the Second Time and referred to the Committees on Finance and Justice

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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS

Report of the Committee on Finance on Revenue Generation

The Speaker: Hon. Colleagues, please listen to this information. I tried as much as possible not to intervene during the last debate on the Bill by Hon. Leo Ogor. I think this is just a prelude to the main debate on the Report of the Committee on Finance on revenue generation from all generating Agencies. I want you to have a look at that Report properly.

Hon. Ita Enang (Itu/Ibiono Ibom): Mr. Speaker, in fact, it was because of this Bill that that Report was also scheduled for today.

The Speaker: But they do not have copies of the Report.

Hon. Ita Enang: We have circulated it and we still have extra copies.

Several Hon. Members: No.

The Speaker: I think you should just have a second look at that in order to make sure that all Members have the Report of the Finance Committee's investigation into revenue generation.

Hon. Ita Enang: We would circulate more, Sir.

The Speaker: I do not want to talk too much about the Report until we come to the recommendations. But it is important that the line we should be taking is for legislation just like Hon. Leo Ogor is already taking a step forward for legislation to make sure that these issues do not happen. My experience as a Deputy Chairman of Finance Committee was that at every given opportunity when we tell those Agencies to bring the Act so that we can see the portion of their enabling Act that empowers them to spend their revenue, they never came up with the Act.

If the figures that the Finance Report is saying are correct, it means that contribution of non-oil to Federation Account would not be 5 per cent as we have seen it today. It could be in the region of as much as 40 per cent. It is very critical that we take our time to study that Report and come up with a legislation that would vindicate our position.

Report of the Committee on Pension on Chartered Pension Institute of Nigeria (Establishment) Bill, 2008

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The Speaker: The sixth Order of the Day is the resumption of the Consideration of the Report of the Committee on Pensions on a Bill for an Act to Establish the Chartered Pension Institute of Nigeria Bill, 2008.

On Wednesday, 4th of March, 2008, the House in the Committee of the Whole considered Clauses 1 to 16. I invite the Leader of the House to move that the consideration of the Report do resume.

Some Hon. Members: The Chairman is not here.

(Report with the leave of the House stood down)

Report on National Honours Act, Cap. N43 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 (Amendment) Bill, 2009

The Speaker: The seventh Order of the Day is the consideration of the Report on a Bill for an Act to Amend the National Honours Act, Cap. N43 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Provide that the Award of National Honours shall be subject to the confirmation of the National Assembly. This Bill was referred to the Committee of the Whole on Thursday, the 12th of March, 2009.

Several Hon. Members: We do not have the Report.

The Speaker: All right, I shall stand it down. The only Report we can take would be that of Pension.

An Hon. Member: The sponsor is not here.

(Report with the leave of the House stood down)

Report of the Joint Committees on Women Affairs and Human Rights

The Speaker: I understand the sponsors of Reports numbers 9 and 10 are here. Is the Chairman, Committee on Women Affairs and Human Rights here?

Hon. Beni Lar (Langtang North/Langtang South): I am here, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: The consideration of Report of the Joint Committee on Women Affairs and Human Rights on a Bill for an Act to Establish a Trust Fund for the Physically Challenged in Nigeria and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2008; and a Bill for an Act to Ensure full Integration of Nigerians with Disability into the Society and to Establish a National Commission for Persons with Disability and Vest it with the Responsibilities for their Education, Health Care and Protection of their Social, Economic, Civil and Political

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Rights and for Other Matters Connected Therewith, 2008.

This Report was laid on Wednesday, 25th March, 2009.

I invite Hon. Beni Lar, to move for the consideration of the Report.

Hon. Beni Lar (Langtang North/South): Mr. Speaker, I must crave your indulgence because the Committee Clerk is yet to distribute the Bill.

The Speaker: Hon. Chairman, Women Affairs, let us hear from you?

Hon. Binta Masi Garba (Madagali/Michika): I am sorry; I think the Report was supposed to be distributed by the Committee on Rules and Business.

The Speaker: Chairman, Committee on Rules and Business, may we hear from you?

Hon. Ita Enang: Yes, we have the Report but we are just thinking that given the number, we would be - *(Interruptions)*

The Speaker: Do you have it for distribution now, yes or no?

Hon. Ita Enang: Yes, we have it, Sir.

The Speaker: Can it be distributed?

Hon. Ita Enang: Yes, Sir.

Several hon. Members: No, the Reports are not here.

Hon. Ita Enang: Mr. Speaker, the Reports are here.

The Speaker: I think we should stand down that Report?

Several hon. Members: Yes!

Hon. Ita Enang: That is all right, Sir.

(Report with the leave of the House stood down)

The Speaker: Do you have any other report for us to consider?

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Several hon. Members: We have the Report on Water Resources to consider.

The Speaker: That is true. We have Report on Water Resources to consider.

Hon. Ita Enang: We have two very serious Reports on Water Resources to consider.

**Report of the Committee on Water Resources
on the Gurara Water Management
Authority Bill, 2009**

The Speaker: The next Order of the Day is consideration of Report on the Gurara Water Management Authority Bill, 2009. This Report was laid on Thursday, 26th March, 2009.

I now invite Hon. Terngu Tsegba to move for the consideration of the Report.

Hon. Terngu Tsegba (Gboko/Tarka): Thank you very much Sir. *(Interruptions)*

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume (Damboa/Gwoza/Chibok): Mr. Speaker, Point of Order!

The Speaker: Which Point of Order, the Minority Leader?

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume: Mr. Speaker, it is Order VIII, Rule 5.

The Speaker: You may please read?

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume: It reads:

By the indulgence of the House and the leave of the 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. The terms of the proposed statement shall be submitted in extensor to the Speaker when his leave to make it is sought.

The Speaker: Hon. Minority Leader, Personal Explanations are usually made at the beginning of a Session.

Hon. Mohammed Ali Ndume: No, Sir, but this is coming now Sir. This Report on Water Resources has

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just been circulated to us. Let us be honest to ourselves.

The Speaker: Chairman, Rules and Business, did you just circulate this Report now?

Hon. Ita Enang: Mr. Speaker, that is not correct. We circulated this Report in advance. What we usually do is that the day it is to be considered, we produce extra copies.

Several hon. Members: No! No!!

The Speaker: It is becoming painfully obvious that you may wish to have this House adjourned till tomorrow morning because all sorts of excuses are just cropping up here and there.

We need to do justice to this Report but the Chairman of the Committee on Pension is not here.

Hon. Members please study this Report so that it can be considered tomorrow.

Is that alright?

Several hon. Members: Yes!

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The Speaker: Hon. Chairman, Committee on Women Affairs; may we hear from you?

Hon. Binta Masi Garba: Mr. Speaker, since the Report of the Joint Committee on Women Affairs is here before us, I think it will be pertinent for it to be distributed.

The Speaker: It should be distributed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Tunde Akogun (Akoko-Edo): Hon. Speaker, I move that the House do adjourn till tomorrow Thursday, 2nd April, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

Hon. Shehu Baba Agaie (Agaie/Lapai): I rise to second the Motion as moved by the House Leader.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do stand adjourned till tomorrow, Thursday, 2nd April, 2009 at 10.00 a.m.

The House adjourned accordingly at 5.12 p.m.