

Tuesday, 6th July, 1999

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[Votes and Proceedings]

[Announcements]

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA**

Tuesday, 6th July, 1999

The House met at 10.55 a.m.

PRAYERS

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I have examined and approved the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday, 1st July, 1999.

OATHS

OATHS OF ALLEGIANCE

AND

OATH OF MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members who have not taken their Oaths should please come forward to take same.

Thereupon, the following Member took and subscribed the Oaths required by law:

Hon. Ohepo Ada Ejiga

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Notice of Meetings

Meeting of Members from Bauchi State

All hon. Members from Bauchi State are asked to wait behind after the end of today's Session. (Signed: Hon. Dikko, M. S.)

**Meeting of hon. Members from
some Southern States**

Will all Members of the House from the following States please meet at the Committee Room immediately after the House Session? The States are: Ondo, Edo, Delta, Bayelsa, Rivers, Cross River, Akwa Ibom, Abia and Imo. (Signed: Hon. Temi Harriman)

Meeting of APP Members

There will be a meeting of all APP Members of the House of Representatives at Sheraton Hotel and Towers on 6th July, 1999, at 9.00 p.m. (Hon. Fidel Ayogu - APP Whip)

**Payment of Accommodation Allowance
to Hon. Members**

The Accommodation Allowance for hon. Members will be paid today. So, hon. Members can check their Bank Accounts today after the Session. The Clerk informed me just before I came into the Chambers.

Letter from the President

Hon. Members, a letter was received by this honourable House from the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on Thursday and it was read out to this honourable House. Yesterday, I rejected that letter on the basis that it did not put the matter in question properly before this honourable House. Today, I am in receipt of another letter from the President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and it reads as follows:

*Hon. Speaker,
House of Representatives,
Abuja.*

Appointment of Special Advisers

My attention has been drawn to an omission in my letter Ref. No. C-in-C/134 of 30th June, 1999 and I wish to assure the honourable House of Representatives of my high regard for the honourable House and its roles as an integral part of the National Assembly. In line with the provision of Section 151(2) of the 1999 Constitution, may I present a request for 12 Special Advisers to the honourable House of Representatives for your kind approval so that the Special Advisers can be sworn in at a later date. I also seek your approval for the remuneration and allowances of the Special Advisers to be the same as those attached to the Minister of State.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

*Signed: Olusegun Obasanjo,
President, Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria*

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ORDERS OF THE DAY

MOTION

**Appointment, Remuneration and Allowance of
Special Adviser**

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, there are two Motions on today's Order Paper for consideration. The first Motion is standing in the name of the House Leader, (Hon. Mohammed Waki) and he is invited to move his Motion.

Hon. Tony Anyanwu (Ahiazu/Ezinhite): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: What Order, please?

Hon. Anyanwu: I have a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. It is a Point of Privilege and it is based on the Constitution. With due respect, I would like to direct the House accordingly to Order 51(5), page 20 which says:

Reference shall not be made to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending, in such a way as might in the Speaker's opinion prejudice the interest of parties thereto.

That is one. Again, I would like to refer to paragraphs 16 and 17. With due respect, Mr. Speaker paragraph 16 says:

Any Member may rise at any time to speak upon a matter of privilege suddenly arising, and he shall be prepared to move, without notice, a Motion declaring that a contempt or breach of privilege has been committed, or referring the matter —

and then it goes on and on to paragraph 17. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will expatiate on the relevance of these Orders. But I will first of all like to direct your attention to Section 36(1) of the 1999 Constitution and I read, with due respect.

In the determination of his civil rights and obligations, including any question or determination by or against any government or authority, a person shall be entitled to a fair

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hearing within a reasonable time by a Court or other Tribunal established by law and constituted in such manner as to secure its independence and impartiality.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to expatiate on this Section. May I, therefore, direct your attention to Section 6(6) (b) of the 1999 Constitution.

Section 6, and Section 6(b). With due respect I will read:

(6) *The judicial powers vested in accordance with the foregoing provisions of this section —*

(b) *shall extend to all matters between persons, or between government or authority and to any person in Nigeria, and to all actions and proceedings relating thereto, for the determination of any question as to the civil rights and obligations of that person.*

And finally, Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I refer you again to Section 151 (2) of the Constitution. It reads:

(2) *The number of such Advisers and their remuneration and allowances shall be as prescribed by law or by resolution of the National Assembly.*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, on 1st July 1999, I did commence an action seeking declaratory reliefs against the President in relation to the unconstitutional manner in which he appointed his Presidential Advisers. I will like to mention, Mr. Speaker, that the co-defendants in the action are the President of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Clerk of the National Assembly and the Attorney-General of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I do recall today that the Clerk of the House of Representatives did indicate to me that you are in receipt of the Summons.

Under the circumstances, Mr. Speaker, Sir, and given the guidelines of the prior constitutional and other provisions of this order that I have hitherto referred to, may I humbly move that this House be restrained, at

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least, in the meantime until the resolution of my action as it is still pending before the Federal High Court.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Based on Section 151, Sub-Section (2) of the Constitution you have just referred to that:

The number of such Advisers and their remuneration and allowances shall be as prescribed by law or by resolution of the National Assembly.

I want to rule that that is why Mr. President has written this letter and is seeking for our approval. Your point of order is overruled.

Hon. House Leader should proceed, please.

Hon. Mohammed Wakil: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I rise to move the Motion standing in my name that:

Whereas the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as by a letter of 5th July, 1999, presented a request to this honourable House to approve the number of nominations and allowances of Special Advisers pursuant to Section 151 of the 1999 Constitution, be it now resolved:

(i) That approval is hereby given that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria do appoint twelve Special Advisers to assist him in the performance of his functions;

(ii) That the Remuneration and allowances of such Special Advisers be the same as that of the Minister of State.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I beg to move this Motion. Thank you.

Hon. Mohammed Umara Kumalia: (Maiduguri Metropolitan): Mr. Speaker, Sir, my hon. Colleagues, I stand here before you today to second the Motion moved by the Leader of the House.

Thank you.

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Mr. Speaker: I call on Wakil to expatiate on his Motion.

Hon. Wakil: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a letter has been sent to this honourable House by the President at our last sitting, and the honourable House is not happy about the contents of the letter because the President said that approval has been given by the Senate, and he wants the support of the House. While our Members here observed that we are not a *supporters' club*, rather we are one of the Chambers of the National Assembly, so we must be accorded that status as such. We must be given our place in the National Assembly. We must be given our respect as hon. Members of the National Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the reaction of hon. Members, the President went ahead to withdraw his first letter, and sent a fresh letter. In the letter, the President did emphasize that he is very sorry for the wordings and language used. He went ahead to say that he recognised the House of Representatives as part of the National Assembly. Either by omission or commission, or misdeeds by his Advisers, he apologized and asked the honourable House to forget and forgive and go ahead to approve his twelve Advisers. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are partners in progress. We are one of the arms of the government. When the Executive arm is ready to execute its duties, it is also our duty to encourage them to move ahead. The House frowns at the language and this has been substituted, and in view of that, Mr. Speaker, I urge the House and the Hon. Members to, please, consider this Motion and allow him to appoint his Advisers so that we can make progress. Our Members have shown their anger and it has been put on record and that is what we want. We must always fight to get our rights, and that we are given our due respect. He has done it and it has been corrected.

So, in view of that, my hon. Colleagues, I urge you to please let us make progress and approve his request.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Applause)

Hon. Mohammed Umara Kumalia: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, in supporting the argument marshalled by the House Leader, I would want to bring it to the attention of this honourable House, and in fact, I want to commend us on the reaction of hon. Members, when the contents of the letter was first read to us in this House. It was most gladdening to me because that is what I expect from this House. No matter from who, or from what authority, any sort of demeaning question that is

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coming. I think we should be able to stand up and tell them that we should be addressed properly and we should be given our due respect. Our Members have particularly made me proud by showing that they were not happy with the way we were asked to just support what the Senate has done.

The House of Representatives is part and parcel of the National Assembly, and whenever the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria makes reference to any Act being endorsed by the National Assembly, it should be clear to all authorities that the National Assembly is constituted of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and, therefore, request must be made for our own independent approval, at all times. Under no circumstances shall we allow ourselves to be taken for granted.

I must equally congratulate the President for his quick response to our unhappiness. The fact that the Senate has approved twelve Members does not mean we should go ahead and rubber-stamp the twelve; if we want we can give him only ten. And when we go to Joint Session, we are more in number, we can outvote them. *(Applause)*.

My hon. Colleagues, Mr. President has quickly responded to our dissatisfaction and has stated that he holds the House of Representatives with high regard and esteem. I, therefore, urge us as hon. Members, and as people interested in the progress and prosperity of this Nation and like it has been said over the past one month, that this House has been doing well; that this House is indeed the Upper House, and since we will not want to be a cog in the wheel of progress, I urge my Colleagues since the President has apologised, give him what he wants. This is because the point has been made.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

Hon. Gabriel T. Suswan (Logo/Katsina Ala/Ukum): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in supporting this Motion, I would like to refer this honourable House with regard to remuneration issue to Section 70 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria which says:

A Member of the Senate or of the House of Representatives shall receive such salary and other allowances as the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission may determine.

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I would want us to look at Section 84(1) of the same Constitution which says:

There shall be paid to the holders of the offices mentioned in this Section such remuneration, salaries and allowances as may be prescribed by the National Assembly, but not exceeding the amount as shall have been determined by the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission.

Mr. Speaker, hon. Members, while supporting the Motion in totality with regard to the approval of the numbers and the remuneration attached, the Constitution is very clear. What the Constitution says as to the salaries and remuneration of such Officers is:

shall be fixed by the Mobilisation Commission

That has been done. What I am saying is that the Constitution restricts our powers or even approve these salaries and wages as subject to powers given to the Fiscal Commission. So, it is not in our powers. The second Section of that paragraph confines our powers, subject to the Commission which is the Mobilisation Commission.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will urge this honourable House to approve both the numbers and the remunerations with regard to this section I quoted from the Constitution.

Thank you.

Hon. Abayomi Mayegun (Lagos Island I): Mr. Speaker, hon. Members, in view of the fact that Mr. President has realised and accorded us the respect that is due to this House, I urge my Colleagues to adopt the Motion and I would like to seize this opportunity to appeal to my learned friend and Colleague, Hon. Tony Anyanwu, to let us move forward in this country like in the spirit of progress and legislative activism, that we adopt this Motion and progress.

Thank you.

Hon. Ita S. J. Enang (Itu/Ibionoh/Ibom): Mr. Speaker Sir, in supporting this Motion, I would not want to say that Mr. President has accorded us due respect, I would say that Mr. President has accorded us the opportunity to

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perform our own aspect of the Constitutional duties. So, what we are doing here is not a favour to Mr. President, but exercising the functions vested in us under Section 151 of the Constitution, as an arm of the National Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we received the letter last time, Members made observations that it required us to concur to the approval of the Senate, but what we now have before us is a Motion by the Leader of this House asking us to approve the remunerations and allowances of the Special Advisers as part of our constitutional functions. I am rising to support this Motion and urge hon. Members to support this Motion in the exercise of our constitutional functions.

Thank you.

Hon. Barau Jibrin (Tarauni): Mr. Speaker, Sir, mine is to make a point in support of this Motion. We all know that in every human endeavour, one has to make mistakes and even have some oversights before he becomes perfect. Mr. President actually is a beginner. This is the beginning of a new beginning. We are just one month and few days in this new democracy, in both legislative, the executive and even the other arms of the government are bound to make mistakes. He has shown remorse. If he had Advisers from the beginning, they would have advised him against such a mistake. So, I support that he should be allowed to have the 12 Advisers he is looking for, if only they would advise him not to make such mistakes in the future.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: I will take arguments against the Motion.

Hon. Ibrahim Zailani (Toro): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must begin by saying that we accept the apologies of Mr. President for the error and we hope that this will be the first and the last, because it is a constitutional issue for which the President has an Attorney-General and a Legal adviser to advise him. We expect the President to digest the Constitution very well and know his Constitutional responsibilities and the National Assembly responsibilities. The issue we are talking now is the economy. Can our economy take 12 Advisers? Can our present economy absorb 12 Advisers? And if I may ask this honourable House, what are the remunerations of the President and Ministers of State? Nobody knows. So, if we are going to do it, we are going to give a blanket

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approval. I am urging this honourable House that much as we want to move forward, we should give it a trial. Firstly, I recommend that we endorse 10 Advisers. Secondly, this House should be furnished with detailed and adequate information of the remuneration of the Minister of State for endorsement.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Jerry Sonny Ugokwe (Idemili North/South): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I tried to speak on the argument for, but I discovered that Mr. Speaker did not give me the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker: I will take argument against.

Hon. Ugokwe: Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I go to my point, I would like to make an observation on the Votes and Proceedings of Thursday.

Mr. Speaker: Order, Hon. Ugokwe, we have passed that.

Hon. Ugokwe: Let me go straight to the point. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like you to call this House to Order 66, page 28 and in doing that, I would ask that, Mr. Speaker will exclude all strangers from this House so that he can lay to us on the Table what the remunerations are. In that regard, we will be able to discuss it in detail and know whether our economy can carry 12 Advisers and 49 Ministers before we give a blanket approval to what we do not know. (Applause)

Order 66.— *All strangers may be excluded from the House or any Committee thereof on a motion properly moved and adopted by the House or the Committee, as the case may be.*

I stand here to move, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that all strangers should be asked to leave this Chamber because we are going to discuss issues that border on remuneration, knowing that the Pressmen are around, and they may mis-represent the issue in tomorrow's Newspapers.

Mr. Speaker: I will take argument against, please.

Hon. Babatunde Olokun (Ikene/Remo North Sagamu): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, I would like to refer you back to Sections 70 and 84 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;

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it has been read earlier. What we are being asked to do is to affirm a Constitutional provision. I want to submit with respect that, we do not possess the powers to grant Mr. President what he is requesting for, because I have a copy of the harmonised salary structure, here with me. Mr. Speaker, Sir, if I may lay it on the Table, you will see that in Section 4, it provides the salary scales for Permanent Secretaries, Deputy Inspector General of Police, Auditor-General of the Federation, Clerk of the National Assembly, Special Advisers to the President which is at variance with the provisions of the salary structure for Ministers of States. With respect, if we do not amend Section 70 and section 84, we may not have any powers to ratify those salary structures. So, with respect I want to say that we are going out of our Constitutional powers to grant the request of Mr. President and if we do so, it is very fatal to the harmonized salary structure. So, with respect, I would rather want this honourable House maybe to amend the Constitution first or to adjourn and have a second look before we commit any blunder.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I humbly submit.

Hon. Ehiogie West-Idahosa (Ovia North East/Ovia South): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we happened to have seen the harmonized salary structure which my learned hon. Member from Abiazu/Ezinhite (Hon. Tony Anyanwu) has just referred to. That structure was prepared by the defunct Salaries and Wages Commission which has been overtaken by constitutional provisions.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the operative provisions on how remunerations for political officers are to be carried out and effected are now contained in the 1999 Constitution and to the best of our knowledge that has not been released. So, Sir, we cannot be dealing with a document that has become *functus officio* and no longer in operation by the force of the law.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to submit.

Mr. Speaker: I have a point of Information. I have to confirm the information that the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission will be actually inaugurated sometime this week to look at the details of the salaries and everything. I think the request by Mr. President to this honourable House is not the one Naira or two Naira issue. The request is that, whatever the Minister of State gets as his allowances or remuneration, so should it apply to that of his Special Advisers, and not

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one of two Naira. It is just on principle. I will take one more against the Motion.

Hon. Macebuh Chinonyerem (Ukwa East/Ukwa West): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in opposing this Motion, I want to call the attention of the honourable House to the fact that, since the Constitution allows us to intervene in this matter it means that the Constitution foresees the possibility of an abuse, because, one of our primary responsibilities in this House is to check abuses by the Executive arm of the Government. Therefore, I want hon. Members to advert their minds to the possibility of an abuse and where we see the possibility of such an abuse, we have a duty to Nigerians to oppose it.

I recall that if these Advisers are going to be equivalence of Ministers of State and the President has been granted almost forty-nine Ministers, if we add twelve of them that he is requesting for now, then we would have 61 Ministers. Remember also that previously the President had appointed an Adviser on Petroleum Resources, there is also an Adviser on Political Affairs and also an Adviser on Press Matters. I do not think that any of these Advisers would be in status, lower than a Minister. So, if we add these three to perhaps, one other, we would have 64 of them, at least.

The issue is not the issue of whether the economy can carry this load. I believe that there are enough resources to carry them. But the thing is, if we are going to spend our resources, are we going to spend them on issues upon which we can save? I suggest that if the President can do without a Petroleum Minister he should make do with just an Adviser on Energy. I wonder what he needs these Advisers for after he has gotten a Minister in almost every facet of our national endeavour. Are those Ministers not going to be advising? Is he not going to be conferring with them? Agreed that we may make an allowance of letting the job go round to the boys who helped in one way or the other during the elections, but we must put a limit to the extent to which we must allow people to be just brought in as mere reward when they are not needed in serving the nation in that capacity. The President can make rewards in other areas. And from what I see so far, I do not see any need for more Advisers for the President. (Applause)

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much.

I call on Hon. Mohammed Wakil to please round up and then I will put the question to vote.

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Hon. Mohammed Wakil: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am happy that so far, it appears to me that by the mood of the House that the motion is scaling through for the fact that the arguments against are not so strong with due respect to my hon. Colleagues that are against the Motion.

If I may quickly by way of a reply direct my hon. Colleagues there by citing Sections 70 and 84, with due respect to the hon. Member, I do not think there is any relevance by bringing in our remuneration by way of Section 70. With due respect to this honourable House, if I am permitted, I will read Section 70 and it says:

A member of the Senate or of the House of Representatives shall receive such salary and other allowances as the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission may determine.

I do not think there is any relevance in the facts we are discussing here on the Floor of this honourable House.

He also went ahead to cite Section 84 of the Constitution. Without taking the time of this honourable House, I am not going to read but rather browse through it. Section 84(4) mentioned the remuneration of the President and certain officers who the Revenue Mobilisation Allocation and Fiscal Commission is supposed to fix their pay. I do not see any relevance here. The question before this honourable House is very straightforward, that the President wants twelve Advisers and he wants their remuneration to be fixed. There was an argument where hon. Members are saying we should know the salary of Minister of State.

Hon. Members, I want the honourable House to realise that our duty here is to first of all approve the twelve Advisers and to also approve their remuneration to be as that of a Minister of State. The Constitution did not even give us the power to fix the salary. It is within the power of the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission to so do. Whether the salary is two or three naira, it is not within the power of this honourable House to review. After all, our salaries and their salary is being determined by the Revenue Mobilisation, Allocation and Fiscal Commission. In view of that, may I still urge this honourable House that we should please allow the country to move forward. This is a straightforward thing.

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The President has already apologised for his mistakes and he is now asking us to approve this motion. So, I urge this honourable House to please see if we can approve this motion so that we can move into action. Our names are still in the good books that the House is performing. So, let us carry on with this activity.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(Applause)

Mr. Speaker: I will now put the question.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: Whereas the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria has by a letter of 5th July, 1999, presented a request to this honourable House to approve the number, remuneration and allowances of Special Advisers pursuant to Section 151 of the 1999 Constitution, be it now resolved:

- (i) That approval is hereby given that the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria do appoint 12 Special Advisers to assist him in the performance of his functions;
- (ii) That the Remuneration and Allowances of such Special Advisers be the same as attached to Minister of State.

Mr. Speaker: We will go on to the next Motion.

Pension Rights for the Legislators

Mr. Speaker: I will call on Hon. Young-Harry Adokiye.

Hon. Young-Harry Adokiye (Aluku-Toru/Asari-Toru): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, I beg to move that:

In view of the fact that the three arms of Government, that is, the Legislature, Executive and the Judiciary are autonomous in their spheres of jurisdiction in all genuine democracies, and considering the fact that services in the Executive and the Judiciary are pensionable, this House do set in motion necessary machinery that will make the services of the

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Legislatures pensionable as is the case with the two other arms of Government.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, so be it moved.

Mr. Speaker: Do I hear a Seconder to the Motion?

Hon. Adeyemi Oluwole (Shomolu): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, I rise to second the Motion.

Hon. Young-Harry Adokiye: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this House, I want us to recall that the first thing in life, I think, is whatever asset you have gotten, you must try to protect it first and then go on to acquire more. The protection of the existing assets is far better than acquiring more assets. Some of us are up to sixty-five years, some of us are up to fifty years, some of us are up to forty years, and hereafter what would our lives be like?

This thing affects every part of us in this National Assembly that is, Senators and Members of the House of Representatives. We are talking about Anti-Corruption Bill. If we are sure that we will protect our lives after this honourable gathering by knowing that we are pensionable, we can rely on small stipends, then the Anti-Corruption Bill should not come in because there will be nothing like corruption. There will be no anticipation of you going into the labour market to look for what to do after you have been called a Member of the National Assembly.

On the other hand, on job protection you have the confidence to do anything you want to do which means you have to work harder if somebody promises or gives you the forum to take care of your life after the National Assembly which is the highest law-making body in any well organised democracy. Hon. Members, I am not speaking for myself alone, I am only trying to put things across to you that we have to carry our fates in our hands. Some of us might not come back after four years. Some of us might want to run after four years and if you are not coming back after four years, what is the guarantee that your life is fully protected? What is the guarantee that if you see a Member who is coming back after four years, the person will be ready to give you whatever thing you want to do?

Please, hon. Members, I want us to consider this Motion. Thank you.

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Hon. Austin Opara (Port Harcourt 11): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hon Members, I am supporting the Motion which is on the Floor of this House. We recall that some Members resigned to contest election as Hon. Members of this House and after four years, what happens?

Decree No. 32 of 1999 provides that former Heads of States should be paid N350,000.00 monthly. They are entitled to three vehicles replaceable every four years. They have free medical care within and outside the country. They have 30 days vacation outside the country. They have office accommodation at any location of their choice. They also have free telephone services.

Their Deputies are entitled to N250,000.00 monthly after their tenure and we recall that some of the Heads of State did not put in as much as four years that we are expected to put in. After months as former Heads of State, they are entitled to all these. We are not competing with the former Heads of State but we are of the view that Legislators' welfare hereafter, should be taken into consideration. So, we are thinking probably that the House Services Committee should be made to look at the welfare of Members. That is why the Motion is saying that this House do set in motion necessary machinery that will make the services of Legislators pensionable.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I will take arguments for the Motion, please.

Hon. Sule Yari Gandi (Wurno/Raba): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. members, I rise to speak in support of this Motion based on the firm belief that the present Legislature as we have it in this country is the first of its kind in terms of being the most respectable, vibrant and conscious Legislature we ever had to the yearnings of the common man. *(Applause)*

This is the first time in the history of this country that Legislators chose not to be parasites on the taxpayers money of this country. We rejected the initial accommodation that was to be provided by government because we considered that as too expensive. We do not want, as I had earlier said, to be parasites on our taxpayers' money. This is the first time you will see Legislators living their lives in the commonest way. When you come to Abuja you do not even take cognisance of the fact that there are Legislators living around. Most of us chose to live in ghettos among those that voted us to be here. Most of us have taken politics

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as a career and this is the perfect arena where we should professionalise politics. We have taken this as a career and we want to continue with it. We want to encourage people to come and join the trend of politics. How do we do it? We can only do this if we have an insured future; if we have something to retire to. This is the practice in other countries. If you go to Germany, after serving in the National Assembly for two consecutive terms, one is entitled to pension for life. This is what is also obtainable in France and other countries. We need to have a system that will ensure and guarantee democracy in Nigeria. How do we ensure and guarantee democracy in Nigeria? This is the only way we can ensure and guarantee democracy in Nigeria. We have to encourage people to love and appreciate the beauty of democracy. How is it done? We do it by making provision for all these kinds of facilities that will attract people to see and appreciate the beauty of democracy in all its ramifications.

The pension as proposed by the Movers of this Motion is a good omen, but perhaps, even some of our soldiers will now decide to resign their commissions and become professional politicians so that when they find themselves in this Parliament as lawmakers, maybe after distinguishing themselves during their tenure, they will retire them with a very good pension to live with their family.

In this regard, I would like to support this Motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Farouk Mohammed Lawan (Bagwai/Shanono): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, in so far as the Motion is seeking to be sent to the House Services Committee to consider, I think we should support it. I believe that there are quite a lot of grey areas one of which is the name and mark we have so far made as far as the people of this country are concerned. We have so far been seen as the only National Assembly that has spent the first one month without dwelling seriously on our welfare issues. Nigerians tend to see us as a House that is more concerned with those issues that affect the lives of the common man in this country. I believe we should maintain that stance and avoid discussing issues on the Floor of the House which will put us in a bad light.

Mr. Speaker: I said I will take arguments for, hon. Lawan.

Hon Lawan: Mr. Speaker, I am arguing for. What the

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Movers of the Motion are asking for is that we send the Motion to the House Services Committee to look at and I support that view. The House Services Committee can then quietly examine the *pros* and *cons* of this Motion and take a position later for us. I will not want us to go into the nitty-gritty of this Motion so that Nigerians will not see us as reneging on what we have so far been doing and discussing issues that simply affect our lives after four years. We have just spent five weeks in this House. I think we should avoid issues that will put us in the kind of light that we have seen happen to legislators in the past.

So, I support that we send the Motion to the House Services Committee to quietly look at it and then make a position later.

Thank you.

Hon. Adamu Abdu Panda (Albasu/Gaya/Ajingi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon Members, my point of information is that as much as I am in support of this Motion, I am looking at the constitutional provisions.

The 1999 Constitution at Section 84(5) provides as follows:

Any person who has held office as President or Vice-President shall be entitled to pension for life at a rate equivalent to the annual salary of the incumbent President or Vice-President.

With due respect, Mr. Speaker, this is the only place in the Constitution where the issue of public officers' pension was mentioned and inasmuch as we would like this issue to be approved or resolved, then it equally means that we have to amend the Constitution because this is what the Constitution provides for.

Thank you.

Hon. Sani Abubakar Aliyu (Babura/Garki): Point of Order!

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my point of order is in respect of Section 84(5) of the Constitution read out by my hon. Colleague for Albasu/Gaya/Ajingi Federal Constituency. (Hon Adamu Abdu Panda). I wish to cite Section 173 of the same Constitution which gives this honourable House the power to deliberate on the issue. With your permission, I will read that Section which says:

(1) *Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the right of a person in the public*

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service of the Federation to receive pension or gratuity shall be regulated by law.

Already there is this Pension Act which is Cap. 324, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria which had described those who are entitled to pension.

So, as for the Motion, it has been moved to let the House set a machinery going on how the pensions can be organised. So, this Constitution has given this House the power to make law in respect of the pension even if it means making amendments to anything. It is not only when the Constitution has to be amended but, maybe, the Act that has been subsisting in respect of pensions

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you for that point of information.

Hon. Joseph Babatunde Lakoju (Akoko East): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of the House, my contribution here is going to be quite brief.

The issue is how do we continue to guarantee that we could attract very qualitative minds into the National Assembly. One way, I think, is to ensure that the career, after we finish from here, is also conducive. We cannot bring qualitative people like we have here now and after four years they go back to the streets. I think, Hon. Speaker, and respected Members, it is important that we think of this and in supporting the Motion to ensure that Nigeria continue to attract very qualitative minds into the National Assembly so that the process of law making will be highly qualitative.

So, I support this Motion

Mr. Speaker: I will now take arguments against the Motion, Please.

Hon. Mercy Almona Isei (Ndokwa/Ukwuani): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in arguing against this Motion, I want to say that among us here we have some pensioners. In public service, after spending five years you are entitled to gratuity; after ten years you are entitled to pension. I wonder how after spending only four years you want to start asking for pension. (Applause) It is not justifiable. The only thing you may do is to, maybe, ask for a number of years but it is not possible for us to have people who will keep coming to the legislature for the number of, maybe, ten years or above.

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What we are saying is that, anybody who wants to ask for pension should be a legislator for, maybe, ten years and above, otherwise, we will have three quarters of Nigerian receiving pension for serving four years only.

Thank you. (Applause)

Hon. Danda Garba Budof (Bogoro/Dassi/Tafawa Balewa): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I stand to speak against the Motion. I think the Motion even though it looks so beautiful to us, did not come at the right time. We are the representatives of the people and we are aware of the sufferings of the people at home; what impression are we giving them if we are talking about our pension now? People are expecting us to start talking about their welfare; to start talking about programmes that will alleviate their sufferings and now when we are talking about ourselves, what signals are we sending to them?

So, Mr. Speaker, in order to minimise the pressure on our already distressed economy, we should have a re-think about this Motion. Already our economy is in shambles. If now we start talking about our pensions, and after us another 360 people will come and they may, perhaps, be getting the same pension and before you know it a lot of Nigerians will be getting pensions and that is going to lay undue pressure on our already distressed economy.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Dada Busari (Akoko North-East/North-West): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was going to speak in favour but I did not catch the Speaker's eye all the time.

Several Hon. Members: No! no!

Hon Dada Busari: Well, my being against may look somehow like being for. (Laughter)

Mr. Speaker: No, I said, I want arguments against the Motion

Hon. Dada Busari: Then I have an information which is that Motions are mere intentions. Whatever, we discuss here even if the question is put and we say *aye* or *no*, the operational words here are that *this House do set in motion necessary machinery that will make the services of legislators pensionable*. These are the operational words here and it is this area that we have to

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concentrate on. I want to say that this House do pass the Motion and send it to the appropriate Committee.

Hon Ja'afaru Damulak (Shendam/Mikang Quaan-Pan): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members right now, we still have the issue of minimum wage as crisis where most State Governments cannot pay. Now, we are introducing something that will be a further burden on the Nigerian State. I think, even if this Motion should be discussed, first and foremost, all of us here should sit together and see how we can make the machinery of State more productive before we talk of pension for ourselves. At this point in time, if we are talking of pension for ourselves and not of how the country is going to move forward, how the country will be a producing nation instead of a consumer nation, I think we are out of place.

Thank you.

Hon. Adamu Ahmed Samari (Ajaokuta): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Members I do not want to take much of this honourable House's time. If I may suggest to this honourable House, instead of asking for pension at this early stage, we should ask for more privileges to the Members and other benefits so that at the end of our tenure we should be able to live a comfortable life.

Thank you.

Hon. Mudashiru Husain (Oshodi-Isolo): Mr. Speaker, Sir, *(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker: Order, please! Hon. Members, one of our hon. Colleagues is speaking. Can we remain in silence, please?

Hon. Husain: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am disappointed with what we have done so far. Nigerian people need more assistance - how they are going to have three square meals a day. They have the problems of Electricity, Education and I see no reason why some people are agitating for their pension. So, I urge this honourable House to please do something about how we can alleviate the problems of our people. We should please keep this question of pension aside.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Young-Harry, do you have any reaction to any of the speeches made?

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Hon. Young-Harry Adokiye: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, I am up again, not to confuse you and not to convince you into doing what you do not want to do. However, I want you to remember that, if you must have read through this Motion, it is only setting something in motion and it could be on for one year, two years or three years and it could even be today. If I am right and you heard me properly, gentlemen and ladies of this House, it is our welfare. N13,500 to Civil Servants - *(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker: Order, please!

Hon. Adokiye: Mr. Speaker, Sir, whatever is the decision taken by this House today, I will abide by it.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

Question put and negatived.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, Order, please.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Strike by Petrol Tanker Drivers

Hon. Isah Saidu (Mokwa/Lavun/Edabi): I have point of Order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: What Order, please?

Hon. Saidu: The point of Order I am raising is Order 40 - *Matters of Urgent Public Importance*. As we are sitting here in this honourable House, Petrol Tanker Drivers across the nation are on strike with effect from today. I am sure that in the next few hours we may not have petrol in Filling Stations all over the country. I feel it is very important to bring this to the notice of the House so that the House can take urgent action to avert the situation. We all know about the problem of petroleum shortages in this country.

The strike is as a result of sealing off of the office of the Petrol Tanker Drivers in Kano about two weeks ago by the Security men on the orders of the Kano State Government. There was a problem between one Transporter named Sani Brothers and two Tanker Drivers and at the end of the day, the security men sealed off the Petrol Tanker Drivers' office in Kano. The Drivers issued ultimatum to the government about a week ago, that their office in Kano should be re-opened

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if the government failed to do that, by today, all the Petrol Tanker Drivers working day and night at the 22 Depots we have in this country, transporting petrol to all Filling Stations will embark on strike today.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, based on Order 40(2), is it the wish of this House that this matter be discussed?

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That the House do discuss the issue of Strike by Petrol Tanker Drivers, pursuant to order 40(2) of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker: You can proceed, please.

Hon. Saidu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and hon. Members. As a result of that office that has been sealed off over two weeks ago, the National Headquarters of the Petrol Tanker Drivers, NUPENG, issued to all their members at the 22 Depots we have in the country and they have embarked on strike today. I personally visited the Depot we have in Suleja, serving Abuja and environs, they have not brought even one Tanker of Petrol today to Abuja and all the States around Abuja. I will, therefore, want to call on hon. Members to take urgent action so that we will be able to avert this situation, either by way of setting up a Committee or asking the Committee on Petroleum to take up this issue with the appropriate Arm of the Government to look into it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *(Applause)*

Hon. Nwajiuba Chukwueke (Ehime Mbano/Ihiteuboma/Obowo): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, the matter that has just been raised is of a very urgent national importance and it behoves on this honourable House to, in the absence of *ad-hoc* measures, please, refer this matter immediately to the Petroleum Committee of this House. In doing that, I do not know what the constraints of the Hon. Speaker might be, but I would advise that this Committee be inaugurated immediately and this matter be given to it as a special assignment. Let them go into the matter as quickly as possible because apart from solving it on a day-to-day basis, there should be a provision within their working arrangement to find a lasting solution to the incessant industrial measures being carried out by a separate arm in the Petroleum industry. So, if this matter is referred to them, it should, I believe, begin a fundamental groundwork towards solving a bigger problem at the end

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of the day. So the sooner we can refer this to them and the sooner they can be inaugurated, the better for us all.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Any comments from this side?

Hon. Ekwe U. Igwebuike (Anari/Awagu/Oji River): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members I want to inform Mr. Speaker that the matter cannot be resolved by the Petroleum Committee. It is a Trade Union crisis, it should be referred to the Labour Committee.

Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you for your information. Hon. Abdullahi, please.

Hon. Abdullahi A. Gumel (Gumel/Maigatari Suletankwa/Gagarawa): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members, this matter of fuel crisis is very important and this is a matter which has been continuously recurring. Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Colleagues, I think we should be decisive in tackling this matter, but, first of all, we have to refer it to the Labour Committee in conjunction with the Petroleum Committee so that they can come out with a position for this House to discuss the issue once and for all. The problem we are facing, hon. Members is that a lot of people are making a lot of money on this fuel crisis.

These are people who are not ready to give up. They will fight to remain relevant so as to continue to be making money from the crisis. So, any time little fuel crisis that occurs, people will capitalise on it and thereby encourage the various Union to go on strike. I think after the various Committees might have given us their position paper we have to sit down to decide and take a firm resolution on this.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Zakarie A. Malherbe (Buruku): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Members of this honourable House, let me register first and foremost my appreciation that we are beginning to be very sensitive to issues that affect this great Nation, especially the ordinary man. I wish to doff my hat to you for this great virtue that one is beginning to see.

I am entirely in support of the fact that the time is ripe for us to try and tackle this problem once and for all. I

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bet it is going to be quite rough, but I do believe that this honourable House, through its Committees (that is the joint Committees on Labour and Petroleum) working hand in hand, may eventually be able to get over this problem. In doing so, may I urge the Members of that Committee to fish out every Decree and Act, to fish out whether it was Presidential directive that issued at one stage or the other in respect of this particular problem so that the problem will be better understood by this honourable House and we will not in future go chasing or trying to apply some fire brigade approach. The issue of petroleum product availability effective distribution which unfortunately have not been the case are of vital importance to the growth of this Nation.

I will, therefore, urge that the two Committees that are directly involved should go ahead with their duties in respect of this particular issue. They should inaugurate them today and they should be given this assignment. In addition, Sir, Mr. Speaker, I think it is proper that on any issue which touches on the sentiments of this nation, as soon as it is brought to the knowledge or notice of this House, the House should also draw the attention of the Press to it. In this particular instance, I am suggesting that we should not wait. Let this House decide that the Press should convey its concern to the general public as well as to those that are involved in this dispute, that this House urge them to please resume work whilst the proper attention will be given to the issue, with a view to resolving it once and for all.

I beg, therefore, to say to this honourable House that a very urgent step needs to be taken in order to avoid any further sufferings of the ordinary man on the street or in the remote places.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I will request the Mover of this Matter of Urgent Public Importance to prepare his Motion and submit it to the Chairman, Rules and Business Committee so that it can be on the Order Paper tomorrow so that we can take it up. Do you understand?

Thank you.

Publication in the *Punch Newspaper*

Hon. Aderemi Ajayi J. (Ekiti South II): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker!

Mr. Speaker: What point of Order, please?

Hon. Aderemi Ajayi J: I would want to refer you to Order 16. I want us to read it in conjunction with Order 18. I would want to draw the attention of the Whole House to the statement contained in the *Punch Newspaper* of Sunday, 4th July, 1999, page 34.

The statement was credited to the former politician in the last dispensation, Alhaji Wada Nas, accusing the National Assembly of corruption. If you permit me, Sir, I wish to read the affected portion: It reads:

So far, the actions of National Assembly Members to some extent, proved that they are corrupt and they have collected money as being alleged to elect their Officers and screened Ministers. I challenge all of them without one exception to swear by Koran or the Holy Bible as the case may be, that they did not collect money or other material indecent to elect officers of the Assembly and to clear Ministerial nominees.

At this period that Mr. President has sent to us Anti-Corruption Bill, this House should be seen
(Interruptions)

Hon. Ndaka Irabor (Ika North East/Ika South): Mr. Speaker Sir, I have a point of Order.

Mr. Speaker: What Point of Order?

Hon. Ndaka Irabor: The hon. Member cited Order numbers 16 and 18. If you read 18 closely, the complaint he is making does not infringe on the privileges. I do not know what point he is driving at. Is it this Order 18 or what is he even complaining about. This is a free country. People like Alhaji Wada Nas can say whatever they like about the House.

Several hon. Members: No! No!

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I believe that we are honourable Members. Hon. Ndaka Irabor, you have the Floor, please.

Hon. Ndaka Irabor: Mr. Speaker, may I read Order 18?

Hon. Fidelis Aguda (Ethiope): Mr. Speaker, I have a point of Order and that is Order 52, Rule 2, with your permission, I read:

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When the question of order has been stated, the member who raised it shall resume his seat, and no other Member who except with the leave of the Speaker or Chairman has decided the question, after which the Member who was addressing the House or Committee at the time the question was raised shall be entitled to proceed with his speech giving effect to the ruling from the Chair.

It is you, Mr. Speaker, that will interpret what they are raising on point of Order and not any other person. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. Aderemi Ajayi : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as I was saying, during this time when the Bill on Corruption has been sent to this honourable House, I think it is better for us to purge ourselves of accusation of corruption. This is because if the Bill is passed eventually, people will not regard the Bill as something very important if any accusation has been made against us and we fail to respond or to ask the person who made that statement to come and substantiate it.

To this extent, Mr. Speaker, I wish to refer us to Section 89, Section 1(c) of the Constitution, which has given this honourable House the authority to summon anybody in Nigeria. I am now moving that this matter be referred to the Ethics and Privilege Committee to invite both the Editor of that paper *the Punch* and Alhaji Wada Nas to come and substantiate the statement.

Thank you. (Applause)

Hon. Nduka Irabor: Mr. Speaker Sir, at this point, I think it is very expedient that I refer you to Order 18, again. The complaint and the request made by my hon. Colleague does not relate to what Order 18 speaks about. We cannot abuse the privilege that this House confers on us to summon or to call upon any Editor of Newspapers of Nigeria for that matter that says or accuses us of any matter. There is no privilege abused. So, on this ground, this matter should not be entertained. There is no privilege abused, the man has simply expressed an opinion.

Several hon. Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: Hon. Members, I want to put a question that this matter be referred to the Ethics and Privilege Committee to take action on it.

Question put and agreed to.

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Resolved: That the matter be referred to the Ethics and Privilege Committee to take action on the report in the *Punch Newspaper* of 4th July, 1999.

Mr. Speaker : Hon. Members, after this Session, you should please come back after 15 to 20 minutes so that we can inaugurate the other Standing Committees of this honourable House. This will be done in the Committee of the Whole House. In the meantime, I call on Hon. Agbeotu to move that this House do adjourn till tomorrow, at 10.00 a.m., please.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. E. E. Agbeotu (Burutu) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move that this House do stand adjourned till tomorrow at 10.00 a. m.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, inasmuch I move this Motion for Adjournment, permit me to speak on a Matter of Urgent Public Importance.

Last week Thursday, on the 1st of July, 1999, I was called by the people of my Constituency along with other hon. Members in the persons of:

1. Hon. Emmanuel A. Aguariavwodo representing Ughelli West/ Ughelli South/ Udu;
2. Hon. Clement Adie representing Sagbama/ Egberemor;
3. Hon. Michael T. Epengule representing Yenagoa/K/Opokuma; and
4. Hon. Chibudom Nwuche, the Deputy Speaker of this House.

At the meeting, we were told that irate youths drawn from Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Rivers, Bayelsa and Delta States had hijacked a Bristol Helicopter at Enwen in Rivers State to Okoloba in Delta State and two expatriates, the Pilot and the Engineer, were subsequently kidnapped.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, accordingly we notified the Speaker of the House and left for Okoloba in Delta State. As we got there, we went straight to Okoloba, a village in Bomadi Local Government Area of Delta State. As you know, we went through the rivers and got to the place in the night. Visibly, Sir, we saw all the youths drawn from these States I have just enumerated a while ago. We engaged them in a discussion. They told us that inasmuch as they believe that the neglect of the Niger Delta area by the Oil Companies and the Federal Government

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is still continuing, they have had cause to embark on whatever programme they have. They believe that a lot of them have been killed by the Federal Military might and in that manner, they decided to hijack the helicopter and the expatriates.

While this was going on, there were confirmed reports, even now that I am speaking, that the object and the people are still being held hostage.

In another instance, some youths from unidentified places went to Ughelli town in Delta State to kidnap two other expatriates and they have been taken to an unknown destination. While this is happening, other ones that were going to Bayelsa State at the place called Oloibiri to assess damages caused by oil spillages, in order that owners be compensated, were subsequently kidnapped. The boys are currently demanding for thirty million Naira.

Hon. Sani Abubakar Aliyu (Babura/ Garki): Point of Order, Mr. Speaker, It is Order 40 (3) which says: *Not more than one such motion may be taken at the same time.* This is a Matter of Urgent Public Importance. We had already taken one and that is that of Petrol Tankers Drivers' strike at this Sitting. Now, he is bringing another Matter of Urgent Public Importance and the Rule says :

Mr. Speaker : This is a Motion for Adjournment. The other one was a Matter of Public Importance. You may proceed, Hon Agbeotu.

Hon. Agbeotu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After getting that information from the youths, we proceeded to see Shell because the Bristol Helicopter hijacked and the two expatriates that were particularly kidnapped at Okoloba were working for Shell Petroleum Development Company (Nigeria) Limited. We engaged them in a discussion. They told us that their position stands; that they cannot pay a ransom neither can they discuss or negotiate a ransom.

We went into this matter starting from Thursday last week until yesterday. We went to the people about three times and discussed with Shell about three times, nothing came out of it. The bottom-line of what is happening, as we guess in our deliberation, is that the youths, not minding the amount they are calling, seem to have various other demands. We understand from our findings that they want all the expatriates in Oil Companies or whatever not to go to their own land to

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exploit any oil material. In that manner, all of us know that the oil industry has the whole economy of this nation and we cannot allow that to happen continuously.

I, therefore, move that this House, by your permission, should please speak on this and urge the Federal Government to subsequently go into the matter and address it as appropriately as possible.

Thank you, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: Could you second the Motion for Adjournment, please?

Hon. Emmanuel E. Aguariavwodo (Ughelli North/Ughelli South/Udu): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in seconding the Motion for Adjournment, I will like to inform this honourable House that what he said is a very serious situation. We have a situation where, at this particular point in time, about a hundred armed youths with sophisticated weapons are holding this Helicopter and the expatriates, one is an American and the other an Australian. The nationalities of the other ones we do not know and when we saw these expatriates yesterday, their health was seriously deteriorating. If these expatriates should die, this may snowball into something else. So, I would pray that this House should get involved, advise the Federal Government to go with us and let us determine whether we can settle this matter peacefully. We have heard the demands of the youths, but I am sure that, if we go back with good intentions and these issues they are talking about are addressed and action taken, the issues will be resolved.

So, I hereby second the Motion for Adjournment.
Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: There will be a meeting of hon. Members from Katsina State immediately after today's sitting. The venue is Committee Room 2.

Hon. Members will please reconvene here at 1.30 p.m. for the inauguration of the Committee.

Thank you very much.

Question put and agreed to.

Resolved: That this honourable House do stand adjourned till tomorrow, Wednesday, 7th July, 1999 at 10.00 a.m.

The House adjourned accordingly at 12. 50 p.m.