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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

DEWAN RA'AYAT
(HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES)

OFFICIAL REPORT

SECOND SESSION OF THE SECOND PARLIAMENT

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Bill to amend the Merchant Shipping Ordinance, 1952, in order to give legal effect to an international convention for the safety of life at sea, signed in London on 17th June, 1964, and to international regulations for preventing collisions at sea, 1960, and to enable Malaysian vessels exclusively employed in the fishing industry to be exempted from the provisions of Part III of the Ordinance; presented by the Minister of Transport; read the first time; to be read a second time at a subsequent meeting of the House.

THE SUPPLY (1966) BILL

Committee

Order read for resumed consideration in Committee of Supply (Fourth Allotted Day).

House immediately resolved itself into Committee of Supply.

(Mr Deputy Speaker *in the Chair*)

SCHEDULE

Head S. 14—

Resumption of debate on Question, "That a sum of \$4,611,248 for Head S. 14 stand part of the Schedule."

The Minister of Commerce and Industry (Dr Lim Swee Aun): Mr Chairman, Sir, the Honourable Member for Batu stated that he read in the Annual Report of the National Electricity Board that the Board acted as consultants as well as being contractors to projects belonging to the Government and he stated that this was unsatisfactory. Sir, I have since checked the position and have found that it is partly true and yet partly not quite correct, in that at one time it was correct to say that the N.E.B. acted as

consultants to Government projects and charged fees but, latterly with the existence of private electrical consultants, this work is no more undertaken by the N.E.B. It only acts as an adviser to the Government, advising the Government on the projects and on the load capacity and also on the availability of electricity. On the contracting side, however, there is a Contracts Department in the N.E.B. which perhaps can have given rise to a misinterpretation. The Contracts Department assists the Public Works Department whenever it has any electrical work to be done. The procedure is for the P.W.D. to refer such work to the Contracts Department of the N.E.B., who then calls for tenders from the private sector on behalf of the Government. When the tenders are received, the N.E.B. scrutinises these tenders and then returns them to the proper authority for the final selection of the tender. The actual work is then done by the private contractor and not by the N.E.B. However, there is a Maintenance Section of the National Electricity Board, which maintains Government electrical installations in Government buildings. Now, this Maintenance Section does do minor repairs. So, in that way, one could say that it does do a little bit of contracting work but these are minor repairs in the course of maintenance of Government building, where no consulting status is required. Where general wiring is concerned, whether it is new wiring or re-wiring, this is done by private contractors and not by the N.E.B. So, I hope the House is clear now that this ambiguous position of the N.E.B. being contractors and consultants at the same time is clear.

The Honourable Member for Batu also said that the resignation of the Director, a senior officer, from the National Productivity Centre indicated that there was something wrong in that Centre, and that the number of local counter-parts to the International Labour Organisation's experts was never sufficient. Sir, I would like to explain to this House that the National Productivity Centre is an International Labour Organisation pilot project,