

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE THE PRIME MINISTER,
IN TERMS OF STANDING ORDER NO. 28, MADE IN THE
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY, ON FRIDAY, 23rd FEBRUARY,
1968

MR. SPEAKER,

It gives me great pleasure to inform this Honourable House that, as a result of the considerable measure of agreement now reached between the Government of Lesotho and the Government of South Africa, on the Ox-bow project, the following agreed statement will be published to-day:

"The Prime Minister of the Republic of South Africa, and the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, jointly announce that preliminary technical studies undertaken in connection with the proposed Ox-Bow scheme for supplying water and power to South Africa, indicate that such a project would be economically feasible. It is the considered opinion of the two Governments that such a scheme could only be to the benefit of the people of both countries, and have accordingly agreed to accept it in principle. The implementation of the project will be dependent on further technical studies - which will now be immediately authorised - and the availability of the necessary funds."

Honourable Members will appreciate that this is the most important and most significant development so far achieved in the advancement of the Ox-Bow scheme. We have gained the first and most critical of our objectives in a project which in its realization could bring not only great financial and economic benefits to our country, but also new employment opportunities to large numbers of our people. For these reasons, the project deserves the wholehearted support of all sections of this Honourable House - and, indeed, of all sections of opinion throughout Lesotho. The assurance of such support will provide the necessary basis of mutual confidence essential to the successful conduct of any business partnership. This is a business enterprise and we must do everything possible to ensure that it is conducted with the courtesy and responsibility towards our associates which characterize sound business practice.