

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1954—55

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 2nd August, 1955.

Pursuant to adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 3 o'clock p.m. to-day.

Present:

His Honour Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, (*Speaker*); Hon. G. H. ADAMS, C.M.G., Q.C., B.A., (*Premier*); Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS, M.D., C.M., (*Minister of Social Services*); His Honour Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS, (*Deputy Speaker*); Hon. M. E. COX, (*Minister of Communications, Works and Housing*); Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P., (*Chairman of Committees*); Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, O.B.E., Hon. R. G. MAPP, (*Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour*); Mr. V. B. VAUGHAN, Hon. C. E. TALMA, (*Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries*) and Mr. J. C. TUDOR, M.A.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the meetings held on the 26th and 31st of May, 1955, respectfully, have been printed and circulated amongst hon. members. Unless there be any objection—

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I am not raising any objection, but I would like to draw to your attention that a very unsatisfactory state of affairs has occurred in that I have not received even an Order Paper for to-day's meeting. I would like to draw that to Your Honour's attention so that it would not occur again. Yesterday was a Bank Holiday but that should not be any excuse for hon. members not getting their Order Papers. I have had to ask the Deputy Speaker to lend me his Order Paper. I am just drawing this matter to Your Honour's attention so that you can take the necessary action. So far as I am concerned, I have no Papers to deal with any matter at all to-day.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will make an enquiry into that matter. If there is no objection, these Minutes will be taken as read and confirmed. (*After a pause*). There being no objection these Minutes are taken as read and confirmed.

DOCUMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the following letter

from the Auditor of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank:—

28th July, 1955.

His Honour K. N. R. Husbands,
Speaker,
The House of Assembly,
Public Buildings,
Bridgetown.

Sir,
I wish to offer myself for re-appointment as Auditor of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank for the year commencing 1st July, 1955 under the Section 4 (7) (1) of the Act.

I have the honour to be,

Yours faithfully,

P. D. Mc. DERMOTT.

I have also received the following letter from the Acting Chief Secretary.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Barbados.

25th July, 1955.

Sir,
With reference to my letter No. 8249/3 of the 20th November, 1953, notifying you that the post of Fourth Clerk at the Table of the House of Commons had been created with the special duty of advising Colonial Legislatures, at their request, on matters of procedure, I am directed to inform you that according to present plans Mr. Lidderdale, the Fourth Clerk, will visit the Windward Islands for about two months from towards the end of January, 1956, to give talks to members of Legislative Councils on parliamentary procedure.

2. If you wish to take advantage of Mr. Lidderdale's presence in the area to seek his advice on matters of parliamentary procedure, I should be glad if you would let me know as early as possible so that arrangements for his tour may be co-ordinated.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

E. S. BURROWES,

Acting Chief Secretary.

His Honour,
The Speaker,
House of Assembly.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by His Excellency to lay the following Papers:—

Message No. 18/1955 from His Excellency the Acting Governor to the Honourable the House of Assembly forwarding the text of a Resolution passed by the Legislative Council of St. Lucia in connection with the fire at Soufriere, St. Lucia.

The Message is as follows:

MESSAGE NO. 18/1955.

*His Excellency The Acting Governor
To
The Honourable House Of Assembly*

His Excellency the Acting Governor has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that the following Resolution which was passed by the Legislative Council of St. Lucia has been received from the Administrator of that Colony:

“WHEREAS on the 9th June, 1955 a substantial part of the town of Soufriere was utterly destroyed by fire, as a result of which approximately 2,400 men, women and children lost their homes and all their possessions;

“AND WHEREAS this disaster caused a situation of great distress and hardship necessitating the introduction of emergency relief measures on a scale quite beyond the immediate resources of this Colony;

“AND WHEREAS it has been noted with profound gratitude that the governments charitable and relief organisations and people of the neighbouring territories at once made the most magnificent efforts to send supplies and cash donations to the Government of this Colony and to the St. Lucia Branch of the British Red Cross Society to assist at this hour of need;

“AND WHEREAS the Government and the British Red Cross Society of Trinidad played a very special part in the provision, transport and organisation of the relief supplies;

“BE IT RESOLVED that this Council, on behalf of the Government and people of St. Lucia, records its high appreciation and grateful thanks to all those concerned for their great generosity and ready assistance at this difficult time;

“AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Governments of Antigua, Barbados, British Guiana, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Vincent and Trinidad, with a request that they convey to the officials, bodies, organisations and individuals concerned the sentiments expressed in this Resolution.

“Passed this 1st day of July, 1955.”

R. N. TURNER,
Acting Governor,

Government House,
Barbados.

2nd August, 1955.

Message No. 19/1955 from His Excellency the Acting Governor to the Honourable the House of Assembly regarding the reformation of the West India Regiment.

The Message is as follows.—

MESSAGE NO. 19/1955

*The Honourable the House of Assembly
To
The Honourable the House of Assembly*

His Excellency the Acting Governor has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that, as indicated in the Five Year plan, for 1952-57, the question of the Island making a contribution towards the establishment of a local Military Force in the Caribbean has been under consideration for some time.

2. The acceptance by the West Indian territories of the primary responsibility for internal security by means of local forces would seem to be a natural corollary of the progress of these territories towards Federation and their aspirations towards full self-government. The proposal to re-form the West India Regiment, as set out in the attached despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies dated the 11th October, 1954, is intended to provide the Caribbean area with an adequate security force to discharge this responsibility.

3. In paragraph 14 of his despatch the Secretary of State expressed the hope that the scale of contribution towards the annual maintenance costs of the Regiment would be not less than one per cent. of the annual revenue of each participating territory. As a result of exchange of correspondence with this Government, however, he has agreed that the proposals in the despatch may be submitted to the Honourable Legislature on the basis of a financial contribution by Barbados of one per centum of annual revenue less the cost of the Barbados Regiment. It is estimated that, on this basis, this Island's annual contribution would be in the vicinity of \$66,000. In addition Barbados would be expected to meet a share of the cost of non-effective benefits (pensions and gratuities) arising from service of Barbadians in the West India Regiment. The question of the continued existence of the Barbados Regiment would be reviewed after the new Force had become established.

4. The Honourable House is invited to approve that this Island should accept its share of the cost of the West India Regiment on the basis mentioned in paragraph 3 of this Message.

5. The Honourable House is also invited to agree

- (1) that the War Office should be requested to raise the West India Regiment and control it as the agent of the participating Governments;
- (2) that the necessary legislative basis for the establishment, maintenance and discipline of the West India Regiment should be provided by an Act of Parliament in the United Kingdom.

R. N. TURNER,
Acting Governor.

Government House,
Barbados,
30th July, 1955.
(M.P. — 7481 Vol. III)

Report of the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies for 1954.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am commanded to lay the following:

Message No. 20/1955 from His Excellency the Acting Governor to the Honourable the House of Assembly regarding a likely offer to Barbados of technical Assistance by the Foreign Operations Administration of the United States Government.

The Message is as follows:—

MESSAGE NO. 20/1955

*His Excellency the Acting Governor
To
The Honourable the House of Assembly*

His Excellency the Acting Governor has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that it is understood that technical assistance may shortly be offered to Barbados, and to certain other British Caribbean territories, by the Foreign Operations Administration of the United States Government. This assistance will probably take the form of a visit by a team of four or five agricultural experts, who will advise on means of increasing local food production. The team will probably be composed of an agricultural economist, an economic botanist, a market-garden specialist, a soil surveyor, and perhaps an expert on animal nutrition.

2. Although this is not yet certain, it is probable that the financial liability of Barbados will be limited to provision of office space and equipment, secretarial help, assistant personnel, and local travelling expenses.

3. In view of the great benefit to be expected from the proposed visit, and the smallness of the probable expense, His Excellency proposes, if the assistance should be offered on substantially the terms expected, and unless the Honourable the House of Assembly dissents, to accept the offer and to enter into an agreement accordingly. In that event the expenses of the visit will be met from funds voted under Head XXI, Department of Science and Agriculture, Item 44, Contingencies.

R. N. TURNER,
Acting Governor.

Government House,
Barbados,
2nd August, 1955.

(M.P.C. 416)

Hon. M. E. COX: I am commanded to lay the following:—

Statement of Post Office Advances for payment of Money Orders to 30th April, 1955.

The Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1955.

REPLY

Reply to Question No. 10 asked by the hon. jun. member for St. Peter regarding the Sugar Industry funds:

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Government Notices were given as follows:—

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Resolution to place the sum of \$10,300 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1955-56, Part I, Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimate 1955-56 No. 15 which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. M. E. COX: Resolution to place the sum of \$1,500 at the disposal of the Governor-in-Executive Committee to supplement the Estimates 1955-56, Part II, Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimate 1955-56 No. 16 which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. M. E. COX: Resolution to approve the "Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1955."

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at the next meeting to deal

with the Resolutions of which notice has just been given.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of my intention to move the adjournment of the House after tea for five minutes to discuss a matter of very grave public importance; namely, the question of bus transportation of the colony.

QUESTIONS

Mr. J. C. TUDOR: To enquire of the Minister of Education:—

Is the Minister aware of the dissatisfaction caused by the decision to direct the Staffs of Secondary Schools to superintend Public Examinations away from their Schools?

Will the Minister state whether this has been done as an economy measure?

Would the Minister state what financial saving is envisaged by the employment of teachers in Government Aided Secondary Schools in having them invigilate at G.C.E. Examinations?

To Enquire of the Minister of Education:

1. Is the Minister aware of the very low wages paid to Janitors and Janitresses employed in Schools throughout the island?

2. Is the Minister further aware that one Janitress employed at a School in St. Lucy earns only twenty-five (25) dollars for a whole term's work?

3. Is the Minister further aware that no provision is made for these persons during School Holidays and that, consequently they suffer severe hardships?

Will the Minister take immediate steps to remedy this state of affairs both by increasing the salaries and providing holidays' pay?

To enquire of the Minister of Health:—

1. Will the Minister state how many infants under five (5) years have died from Malnutrition in the past year?

2. Will the Minister disclose what percentage of the total infant mortality this figure represents?

3. Will the Minister therefore consider a Scheme for the free distribution of Concentrated Fruit Juices and Cod Liver Oil to all children under five (5) years?

To enquire of the Minister of Health:—

1. Will the Minister state how long has the General Hospital been without a Specialist Anaesthetist?

2. Will the Minister further state how many patients of that Hospital have died under anaesthetic in the past year?

3. Will the Minister take immediate steps to secure the services of a Specialist Anaesthetist?

To enquire of the Minister of Labour:—

1. Is the Minister actually aware that there are now over half million jobs available in Great Britain?

2. Is the Minister aware that the Government policy of requiring people to find employment before loans are advanced is an effective barrier to Emigration?

3. Will the Minister therefore endeavour to seek contracts for Barbadian workers with prospective English employers?

VACANT POST OF CLERK

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the business of the day is done, I should like to acquaint hon. members of

the position with respect to the vacancy of Clerk of the House.

In 1921 subsequent to notifying the House of the death of the Clerk, Mr. C. P. Bowen, at a meeting of the 25th October, 1921, a Select Committee was appointed to "define the duties of the Clerk and of the Deputy Clerk of the House and to make such recommendations as they might think fit with regard to the salaries of those Officers which they might deem advisable."

The Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Charles Pitcher Clarke reported on the 8th of November.

After reciting their terms of reference the Committee said:—

1. That the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk should each be a duly qualified Barrister or Solicitor.
2. That the Clerk be in attendance at his Office in the Public Buildings on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
3. That the Deputy Clerk shall render such assistance to the Clerk as the latter may reasonably require and in the case the Deputy Clerk shall at any time be dissatisfied with respect to any demand for service made upon him by the Clerk he shall be entitled to refer the matter to the Speaker whose decisions shall be final.
4. That the Salary of the Clerk be £400 and that of the Deputy Clerk £150 per annum.
5. That an appointment to the Post of Clerk be made without any further delay, and also to the Post of Deputy Clerk if necessary.

This was the first time that stipulations were made that a legal man should be Clerk or Deputy Clerk. Consequently of the five applications for the Post of Deputy Clerk (inasmuch as Mr. F. A. Layne desired to stand for Clerk) two of the applicants Mr. J. W. Parris and Mr. Herbert Emtage were ruled as ineligible for the post.

At the meeting of 8th November, 1921, Mr. F. A. Layne was appointed Clerk and Mr. H. C. Sealy Deputy Clerk.

In 1936 Mr. G. L. Taylor having resigned as Clerk on 27th October, the House appointed a Committee with the same terms of reference of that of 1921. The Committee presented its report on the 10th November. The Report stated:—

1. The Committee recommend that the duties of the Clerk should be as hereunder defined:

- (a) That the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk of the House should each be a duly qualified Barrister or Solicitor.
- (b) That the Salary of the Clerk should be £500 per annum payable monthly.
- (c) That the Clerk should discharge the duties and in addition he should perform any duties required of him by the Speaker.
- (d) That the Clerk should attend daily at his office in the Public Buildings from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. except Saturdays and Bank Holidays, and such vacations as may be granted him by the Speaker.

2. The Committee further recommend that the consideration of the duties of the Deputy Clerk shall be postponed until later in the current session.

The House accepted the Report of the Select Committee and Mr. D. L. Sarjeant was appointed on the 10th November, 1936.

3.35 p.m.

REAPPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR S.I.A.B.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, if I am in order, before Order No. 1 is called I should like to ask leave of this House to propose that Mr. P. D. McDermott be re-appointed as Auditor of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank from 1st July.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to second that.

The question that Mr. P. D. McDermott be re-appointed as Auditor of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

PETROLEUM REGULATIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day stands in the name of the Hon. Premier:— To move the passing of the following Resolution:— Resolution to sanction the Regulations entitled The Petroleum (Amendment) Regulations, 1954.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: This Order has been on the Order Paper since November last year; It is the last of all the proposals for increased taxation to provide money for the Five Year Plan. A sub-committee of the Executive Committee met and made suggestions as to stamp duties, water works etc.; and one of their recommendations was that the money payable under the Regulations of the Petroleum Act 1892 should be doubled and rounded off. If hon. members will refer to section 2 of the Regulations they will see that Regulation 13 of the principal Regulations is hereby amended as follows:—

"(a) in sub-regulation (2) for the words "five pounds" appearing in the eighth and last lines thereof, there shall be substituted the words "fifty dollars"

Honourable members will also see that they have changed "two pounds" to "twenty dollars"; the amendment reads as follows:

"(b) in sub-regulation (3) for the words "two pounds" appearing in both the ultimate and penultimate lines thereof, there shall be substituted the words "twenty dollars" respectively."

The matter has been held up for a long time because interested parties concerned in this matter of selling gasoline, have approached the Government and suggested that progress in the sale of gasoline was a little hard. This has been since November last year; and the Government felt that they would reconsider the issue. However the objection has been subsequently withdrawn, so that I am now asking the House to approve of these Regulations on the ground that, as far as I know, the people who will be hit by the increased taxation have no objection to these Regulations. The sub-committee of which the chief members were the Hon. Minister of Communications and the Hon. Minister of Social Services made several recommendations for the collecting of money to finance the Five Year Plan, and this is one of them.

I do not know if I can say anything more. I believe that this is the last of the recommendations for what one might call minor efforts (such as income tax, additional taxation on rum et cetera) which we have dipped our hands into for the purpose of producing additional revenue.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the hon. Introducer has just said that the people concerned in this gasoline business have altogether agreed to the increase. Well, as one would know, I am also interested as one of the sellers; and I would not object on the ground that I have agreed to the policy of the Five Year Plan

and to the increased taxation. If I did not object to it, that would be my reason as a representative of the people who have already agreed to it.

I do not know if the other sellers who have not committed themselves to the policy of the Five Year Plan are all satisfied with an increase of this sort. You will notice that this is an increase of over 100% taking into consideration the services that are being rendered to the travelling public today by some of these gasoline stations having to increase their staff 100%; especially the attendants who deliver this gasoline. They are governed by the Shop Assistants Act and you cannot work these attendants more than 42 hours a week. In order therefore to avoid breaking the law you have to increase your staff.

3.45 p.m.

For instance, as regards the business with which I am concerned, when we first started we began with four attendants, two to a shift; and the Labour Department wrote us a letter drawing to our attention that we were breaking the law. I did not take much notice of it because you cannot take them seriously in everything; [laughter] and the Clerk came up to our station one afternoon and the men informed him that they were quite satisfied to work under the present rates and hours. The Clerk said, "We are nothing to do with that; if the Manager employs you for more than 42 hours a week, he is breaking the law and we will have to charge him."

We have had to increase the staff by two more men. Taking into consideration the facilities which are being given, and the service which is rendered to the motoring public, while one of these men is delivering gasoline, another is cleaning the wind screen, checking the oil and the conditions of your hose and fan belt. I know that I had to sleep in Cleland Hill in St. Andrew one night on account of a burst radiator hose; and many machines come to our station and it is discovered that the fan belts are on the verge of breaking and the hoses are bursting. All of these things you get checked and you have to employ a staff for that; you also give free distilled water. The station is opened until midnight.

When you are taking all these things into consideration, you are really taking advantage of those people who are supposed to give that service to the motoring public. In my opinion the garages which would be able to carry that service do not open after 4 o'clock; and if they lose anything by the sale of gasoline they can make up for it in supplying spare parts. You have to consider the station which is serving gasoline, and you will be hit very hard because they are making this increase from \$24 to \$50.

I will draw this to Government's attention: one of the things which reduces the sale of gasoline is that the factories can erect their own pumps. These factories have a chance of delivering gas to motor trucks and thus reduce the sale of the gasoline station. I understand that these people are only paying a small amount for the storing of the gasoline; they do not have to pay this increase or license cost. They supply themselves and others with the gasoline. That is one of the things which is causing this tax to be a hard one for these stations.

The Electric Company, the Coca-Cola Company the Ju-C Company, all have their own pumps. The companies will not be losing anything because they will still be selling the gasoline; but it is the small fellow who has a staff and overhead expenses to pay who will lose by this tax. You will find that the sale of gasoline is going away in a very smart way by the diesel motors. You have tractors drawing two or three cane carts at a time and these tractors are displacing the gasoline on the motor trucks.

Year after year the sale of gasoline will go down, but the Government has seen fit to carry up the cost. In my opinion a profit of four cents a gallon is too small. If you are given that profit for the last ten, or fifteen years, you will find that it will pay sellers because after 4 o'clock you cannot get a drop of gasoline in this island since all the big garages are closed down. If you do not get your gasoline before 4 o'clock you have to wait until next day for it; but today you have up to midnight to get your gasoline, and the cost of electric current is very high; it carries away about 25 to 30% of your profit.

Another point I would raise relative to the sale of this gasoline is this: you are supposed to do a large amount of credit and you have to keep employees so as to look after the books. Mr. Speaker, there is another item: you have to keep a Charge Book with 400 bills and that book costs \$3.60. You can quite clearly see that the Bill which you have signed for the gasoline costs nearly a cent; and then the statement sheet at the end of each month costs three cents and then there is the question of the stamp. I can afford to say that my firm spends \$661 per annum for postage alone, and \$1,300 odd for stationery. You can clearly see that you will have to make a tremendous turnover on the gasoline.

In other words, you will have to be selling no less than 5,000 gallons of gasoline so as to show a profit of some sort. You have to pay so much for postage and stationery and then there is the question of batteries. I am sure that the hon. Introducer of this Resolution does not know anything about those points which I have just raised, because he is not in the business; and I do not think he had anyone to draw his attention to it. However, it is a most serious thing; of course, these companies are installing these pumps into the yards of Tom, Dick and Harry, and that is cutting down the sale of gasoline immensely.

Here it is we are trying to help the unemployment situation of this country by employing these gasoline assistants. I am sure that four cents on the gallon of gasoline is not sufficient for sellers; and I would be very glad if Government would make a review of this whole matter and see if something can be done. Of course I am not saying that you should increase the cost of gasoline; but I do think that in some way or the other Government can go into this matter and help the sellers because it really is a very serious matter.

3.55 p.m.

Added to that, Sir, gasoline vendors have to pay for inspection of their premises every year; they used to pay \$20 by way of tax, but from next year they will have to pay \$50 according to this new regulation. I am sure that it will cause a great loss and heart-break to those gasoline stations which operate up to 12 o'clock at night. Of course they operate until that time for the benefit of the general public.

Speaking on behalf of the station which concerns me, I would be only too glad to close at 4 o'clock; but I only operate until 12 o'clock because it is a service to the public and definitely a very good service; one for which we should be compensated in some way or another. I can definitely say that if something is not done in the matter, something will have to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I have understood that gasoline stations in country districts do not have to work under this 42-hour a week basis because the Shop Assistants Act only spreads to a certain area out of St Michael; that is to say a Gasoline Station situated in Worthing or Top Rock does not operate under the same Shop Assistants Act as similar stations in

Bridgetown. If I am wrong I suppose the Hon. Minister of Labour will enlighten me on it. Now, those stations in the country do not comply with the Shop Assistants Act, but they are getting the same price for a gallon of Gasolene as we are getting; we are not getting more than they. Because of that, I feel something should be done even if it means that you change gasolene stations from operating under the Shop Assistants Act.

It is true to say that Shop Assistants have to toil all through the day and they get very little time to sit. I do not know if that is the reason why Government has seen fit to regulate that shop assistants should not work longer than 4½ hours before having a break of 1½ hours and then not working more than 4½ hours afterwards. That is very well for a shop assistant; but with respect to gasolene assistants they idle more than they work. In other words gasolene assistants sit down for about two hours before they may have to attend to anyone, but during the next half hour they will have over one dozen people to attend to; so you can see that out of six hours they only work for about two hours.

I feel the hours of work should be lengthened so far as gasolene assistants are concerned. Do not keep them under the Shop Assistants Act if you want gasolene vendors to help the motoring public. Let me say again, that gasolene vendors are different from garage repair shops. Garage owners have their motor car sales to help keep them up; they do not depend on the sale of gasolene. Even if they effect a loss on the sale of gasolene, they will recover it on something else. Gasolene stations which depend on the sale of gasolene alone will find it very hard under these new Regulations.

I am suggesting to Government to think over this particular Regulation and see what can be done to help gasolene vendors. I think the time has come when we should put our foot down on the installation of gasolene pumps by those other people. If you are not going to put your foot down on it, you should tax them as well, and you should tax them in a way in which it will not pay them to install one; or, they should be made to employ gasolene attendants. I am sure that if they were made to employ gasolene attendants, they would find out that it will cause them great loss and they would not worry with it.

If you leave those people to sell to themselves, you will not get the taxes you are aiming at to run the country, nor will you be helping the gasolene vendors. Some of them consume as much gasolene per week as some gasolene stations sell during the same period; and when they are doing so you are not collecting the taxes from it. I feel something should be done in the matter.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I really and truly did not know exactly to what these Regulations referred; and it was also very difficult for me to find the original Regulations on Petroleum. However, I have found them and what strikes me most is that on the last occasion they were made 4 months before they were approved by the Legislature, and on this occasion they have been made ten months before approval. I feel some publicity should be given to the matter by those concerned so that members of the Legislature would have been apprised of the reaction of those affected by this Regulation.

It is unfortunate that we have to wait until the last minute to hear that gasolene station owners feel that this is a big increase—this increase from £5 to \$50. However the last Regulations were made in 1929 when it could be said that there was a small percentage of motor vehicles as compared with the present number. I do not know if the hon. junior

member for St. Joseph has good grounds for his condemnation, so to speak, of the large increase today.

What I do think is that he might have moved that further consideration of these Regulations be postponed so as to allow some publicity to be given to the views expressed, and I would have gladly seconded such a motion. I think it is a good thing to have this matter aired; it would at least let the public know that these Regulations are here. 4.05 p.m.

I am suggesting this for the attention of the senior member for St. Joseph: if we are to number all these regulations, should we call these Regulations the Petroleum Amendment Regulations of 1954. It is true that they were made in October 1954, but really and truly I think that other Regulations have been made and passed before; and it is now 1955.

There is an obvious mistake in the Regulations, and I hope that they will get it changed. The mistake occurs in paragraph (b) of Regulation 2. In the second last line, there is the word "submitted" instead of "substituted". I would not like these Regulations to leave here having the word "submitted" and not the word "substituted."

In case the hon. senior member for St. Joseph did not hear what I was saying, I should like to know whether we should not, in the normal course of events call these Regulations "the Petroleum (Amendment) Regulations 1955." [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: In my opinion the word should be "substituted"] And what about 1955? October 1954 is the date on which they were made; but after all even if a Bill was sent in 1954 and we considered it in 1955. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: The procedure is quite in order.] All right if you say it is in order, it is in order. I am perfectly willing to move that further consideration be postponed since the hon. member intimated to me that he would like to do so.

I beg to move that further consideration of this Resolution be postponed.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: The word "submitted" is a misprint. It is the hon. member, my colleague, who first approached me on behalf of himself and others about not letting this Resolution go through at the time it was laid. Subsequently he has assured me that any objection to these Regulations would be withdrawn; therefore we can now go ahead.

As I have said before, this Resolution is a question of helping to find revenue from all sources; this is one of the sources.

The question that this Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES BILL

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, as regards the next Order of the Day, I would be glad if the Hon. Minister of Agriculture could be allowed to deal with it as he knows more about the details of it than I do. I am therefore asking leave that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture be allowed to deal with Order No. 2 as the next Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Premier is asking leave that the Hon. Minister of Agriculture be allowed to proceed with Order No. 2 as the next Order of the Day; and unless there is any objection leave will be granted.

There being no objection leave was granted the Hon. Minister.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks to provide for the exemption of societies registered under the Co-operative Societies Act from certain taxes and duties including income tax. When it went to the Other Place, it was sent by them to a Select Committee which made certain recommendations. The recommendations resulted in the amendments which are now contained in this Bill. These amendments have been incorporated in the Bill and have been adopted. The main object of these amendments is merely to provide exemptions in cases where transactions do not result in profit or in case of profits arising from the sale of any article produced by a member or obtained by the industry of a member or members.

In other words, it is a means of restricting exemption. Exemption is not given *ad lib*. The exemption only comes into force in transactions involving articles either sold to or produced by the members of the Society. This will be seen from the proviso which reads as follows:—

“Notwithstanding anything contained in the Income Tax Act, 1921, the income of any Society registered under this Act, shall be exempt from payment of income tax.

Provided that this section shall not apply to any income arising from profits or gains in respect of the sale of any article unless such article is either sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members.”

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, if you will allow me to say so, I think the Hon. Minister of Agriculture should move that the amendments be now read a first time and afterwards debate the second reading.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to move that these amendments be now read a first time.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

The question that these amendments be now read a first time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

4.15 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I was merely saying that the main object of these amendments is to restrict the exemption to members of the Society in question. As you know, these provisos set out that the exemption can only be applicable when articles are sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members. These provisos apply both in the case of income arising from profits or gains in respect of the sale of any article sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members or in the case of any profits or gains arising or accruing in respect of the sale of any article sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members.

The object of these amendments is merely to restrict exemptions, not allowing them to be granted to the general public, but allowing the consumers or producers of the article to be assisted when they have no transaction with the public at large; and when they are dealing with their own individual members of a co-operative Society. I beg to move that these amendments be now read a second time.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The amendments which the Government is willing to accommodate from the Other Place surprise me. It is a question of the structure of co-operative societies that you give these exemptions; you either give them or you do not give them. You do not say that you only sell to your members; you give a privilege.

All over the world co-operative societies are regarded on the basis that you have a nucleus of members; when you give them a privilege you do not say that you give that privilege only to members. Imagine that you are doing a business! For income tax purposes at what are you assessing the profits sold to members of the society as against articles sold otherwise? What kind of book-keeping can you keep to show that these profits were made on articles sold to your members? How much are you going to take off when you are selling a man who is a member of the society and how much are you going to take off when you are selling a man who is not a member of the society? How are you going to determine the profit with the sale of an article to a man who is a member from one who is not a member?

If any member of this House had moved these nonsensical amendments to this Bill the Government would walk all around the country telling people that he did not want to give co-operative societies any aid. Now, they are accepting an amendment or proviso which means nothing. This means that a co-operative society should not sell to the general public.

You have certain rules to work under; you have to comply with certain rules of the Registrar before you can run these societies. The idea of giving exemptions was to encourage these societies; but you are now putting them on the same basis as if you are selling to the general public. If you put in this Clause you may as well cut it out, because you cannot determine the profits made from the sale to a member of the society or to the general public. How are you going to say that the profit made from your members is so much and the profit made from non-members is so much? Are you going to work on a costing basis?

These amendments in themselves do not mean anything; this is putting something on the Statute Book which means nothing at all; but you are accepting something so as to get the Bill passed. You are putting a nonsensical Act on the Statute Book because you are not sure of what you are doing.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: All that is nonsense. I have bought articles from co-operatives outside and they are under the same regulations. Thousands of people have bought articles from Co-operatives in Great Britain and the same thing applies. What has happened is that the Other Place has said the exact reverse of what they mean. They say that you should have this exemption from income tax and they added this proviso. What they mean is that you should be exempted only when you sell to your own people.

Co-operatives open their doors and thousands of people buy from them every day; and the same thing applies to a co-operative all over the world. For years I have bought from a co-operative shop; I have lived for years in England and I have bought goods from such shops. A friend of mine persuaded me how reasonable it is to buy from these co-operatives, but I did not get the same advantages as people who belong to them. But the doors of co-operatives are open and any human being can go in and buy from them; they get income tax concessions when they sell to their own people.

These things can be arranged; a member of a co-operative society buys articles and gets a percentage, but other people do not get any thing. If you read the Bill carefully the particular Clause says this:

“Notwithstanding anything contained in the Income Tax Act, 1921, the income of any Society registered under this Act shall be exempt from payment of income tax.”

The Other Place puts in this proviso:—

"Provided that this section shall not apply to any such profits or gains so arising or accruing in respect of the sale or any article unless such article is either sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members."

I can quite see that this is capable of meaning what they say, but I would word it differently. I withdraw what I have said, earlier; I can quite see that the Court could interpret it as giving exemptions on these profits. I repeat, it is fanciful in the case of co-operatives which have been running for many years to suggest that this provision does not work; this is the whole idea of having a co-operative. 4.25 p.m.

It is true that some co-operatives may work only for their members. There are co-operatives, on the other hand, which have shops in Great Britain where everybody can go in and buy. There is a co-operative Branch in St. Kitts just like Messrs. Cave Shepherd & Co., Ltd., where anybody can go in and buy anything for a shilling while a co-operative member can go in with his card and pay 20 cents for it. It works on some card system like that. How do you get income tax from a theatre? The Income Tax Department works on a system whereby the theatres have to produce the tickets which the people paid for admittance, and by the number and price of tickets sold, they will show how much income tax is due to the Government. Co-operatives work in the same way.

We started a Co-operative at the Barbados Workers' Union and we started it wrong by declaring a dividend like how Messrs J. N. Goddard & Sons would do; that was wrong. Let me say that you can run a co-operative by merely selling things for cost plus what you pay your staff for running it; or you can run a co-operative for profit and then plow your profit back into the business.

The whole idea of co-operatives is that people come together for a specific purpose to help themselves; but as soon as you open your business to the general public then we the Government say that you should pay income tax. It is purely a matter for the Income Tax Department to say how you should separate the sheep from the goats. A co-operative must keep its trading methods in such a manner that you will know that there are so many people who are members of the co-operative and so many who are non-members; and Government can take income tax out of the profit made out of those who are not members.

Mr. LEWIS: Mr. Speaker, I have all along wondered how co-operatives are taxed; and it is only recently that I have had the opportunity of getting a little light shed on the method employed in the United Kingdom. I do not know what is in our Income Tax or Co-operative Societies laws, but perhaps if the method of taxation as applied here is the same as that applied in the United Kingdom, I think this will be necessary. So far as I understand a consumer's co-operative (and I think that is what we are dealing with) a member gets a rebate at the end of a period by either his purchase tax or something of that sort. That is to say he will pay the price or he will have charged to him the price on the item as it is normally sold, but he gets a rebate at the end of a period; and that is regarded as a saving to the member, therefore it is not taxable. But over and above that, you do not have to discover what the others have bought, because all the members get theirs; therefore what is left must form some part of the profits. You can see what is put to reserve

therefore they will have to pay tax on that whether it belongs to the members or not.

I have always thought of these co-operatives as running in the same way as a Cricket Club is run today in Barbados. That is, they consist of a certain number of people and any profit which is made is made for the interest of the Club. At present Cricket Clubs do not even pay a licence fee for the privilege of selling intoxicating liquor, because it is known you must restrict the sale of liquor to the members only. That is how you conceive all Co-operative Societies should run; therefore, whenever they go outside of that, I have always wondered what was the method of determining them.

I have been made to understand that this rebate which is given to the members is regarded as a saving out of their own capital, therefore, it is exempted from taxation; but whatever is left over is liable for taxation.

However, Mr. Speaker, perhaps it would not be amiss if I were to read section 35 of the Co-operative Societies Act, 1949, at this stage. It reads as follows:—

"At least one fourth of the annual net profits of every registered society as ascertained by the audit prescribed by section thirty-six of this Act, shall be carried to a fund, to be called a reserve fund, which shall be employed as prescribed by the rules. The remainder of such profits and any profits of previous years available for distribution may be divided among the members by way of dividend or bonus, or allocated to any funds constituted by the society, to such extent or under such conditions or may be prescribed by the rules or by-laws:

Provided that in the case of a registered society with unlimited liability, no distribution of profits shall be made without the general or special order of the Registrar.

(2) Any registered society may, with the sanction of the Registrar after one-fourth of the annual net profits in any year has been carried to a reserve fund contribute an amount not exceeding ten per centum of the remaining net profits to any charitable purpose."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like the Hon Minister of Agriculture to look at the proviso "53B". It strikes me that this will create some difficulty. It reads as follows:—

"Provided that this section shall not apply to any such profits or gains so arising or accruing in respect of the sale of any article unless such article is either sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members."

That is the same as above, but does this mean partially or wholly? [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: If what is partial?] The part about "produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members." [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Well it means that he grows something.] Suppose he is a partial producer, is that going to be taken as being produced by him? When you say something that is produced by a member, it seems to me that— [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: There is no difficulty in that.] I suppose if it is wholly produced it would not come out of this.

I cannot think of an example, but it is possible that you will get somebody willing to sell say ground provisions which they have produced on their own lands or some other land which that person together with others have been working; and it seems to me that it should be provided for. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Look at the section which talks about "profits or gains accruing or arising to persons carrying on a trade"; that means where they band

themselves together. A man who may not be a member of the society may sometimes produce provisions as a result of his own efforts. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: The Income Tax Commissioner will have to look after that.]

I must say that at one time absolutely none of the profits of a Co-operative Society was taxable. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: As soon as there are profits from outside they are taxable. I understand that: unless it is a bonus it is taxable. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Even a bonus is taxable.] Well, it is regarded as what a member of the society has saved by trading in the society.

Let us suppose that a co-operative member bought household food; what he gets back at the end of the period is regarded as a saving to him. Any amount above that, I understand, is taxable. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Anything over the cost price is taxable.] There is no doubt—[Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: What cost price is he talking about; the Hon. Premier knows nothing about it.]

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, the Bill as originally passed dealt with total exemption. Under bye-law 28 of the Co-operative Societies Act, 1949, it is stated that at least, 75 per cent. of the business must be done by members of the society. In other words, only 25 per cent of the trade can be done by members of the society. The Co-operative Societies (Amendment) Act, 1954, provides for exemption from stamp duties and other fees, exemption from income tax, and finally exemption from trade tax.

Now we were satisfied that only a limited amount of trade could be done by non-members of the societies; but the Other Place has gone somewhat further in restricting exemption and making it more specific; so that exemptions will now only be allowed as stated in the amendments as passed by the House of Assembly, subject to the two provisos added to the two new sections "53A" and "53B," by the Other Place.

The hon. junior member for St. Peter raised the question as to how it would work. In practice, there will be two sets of books; and bills and vouchers will be granted on all sales. Vouchers will be made out in triplicate showing that the customer is a member (having the distinguishing mark, if a non-member) and bearing the date of purchase. These vouchers will facilitate matters internally as well as externally. Those are some of the provisions of bye-law 28.

Mr. Speaker, the Government has gone into these amendments thoroughly and is satisfied that these amendments have been dealt with very competently by the Other Place.

The question that these Amendments be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that these amendments be agreed to.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I am objecting to this for reasons which I shall soon show. But first, let me reply to something which the Hon. Premier said a few moments ago.

We all know that the Hon. Premier knows practically nothing about the workings of co-operative societies; he knows practically nothing about business for that matter. He talks about paying you back in your tickets. Whether you are paying taxes or not, the member gets back his tickets.

Now, to get back to my reasons for disagreeing. When the Hon. Minister introduced this Bill, he said that it was for the purpose of the development of the island. No society can progress if you are go-

ing to tax its profits. The co-operative societies movement is a similar venture to pioneering industries. You exempt them from certain taxes and duties because you want them to thrive. As I see it, these exemptions from taxation should not apply to members. Members of the societies get the rebate because they get things cheaper. But the whole idea underlying exemption from taxation, is to give the societies an opportunity to prosper and to build up themselves. If the Government had had this in mind, what was to have prevented them from saying—[Mr. TUDOR: It was so in England.] The hon. junior member for St. Lucy says that it was so in England when he was there some 13 years ago. 4.45 p.m.

A blind man on a trotting horse can see what is happening; these people do not want these co-operative Societies to exist without taxation, because it is a threat to them in their business. The honourable junior member for Christ Church is not going in for any Co-operative Society at this stage of his life; do you think he will join with ten other people to sell a pair of shoes. They have their own Society.

The whole idea of exempting small people from taxation is not merely that you exempt them from taxation, but you want to encourage the whole idea. Last week we passed a Bill giving pioneer industries the right to have their raw materials brought in free of duty; these societies do not have that, but if you give them the privilege of not taxing their profits you are encouraging these societies of which you do not have many in Barbados.

The Minister cannot do otherwise but I would say this: the Minister of Agriculture agrees with me because before he was a Minister he always tried to encourage co-operative societies, but now they are preventing good social legislation from being passed because in the figment of their imagination they will stop such legislation because it did not come from them first. What could be more anti-social to a Trade Unionist than not encouraging these societies? Here in Barbados the Government introduces a Bill exempting people from income tax and the Conservative element in the Other Place can put in an amendment which is the very antithesis of what the Government has sent down! Do not tell me that the Government was not serious about it; the Hon. Premier knows as much about a co-operative society as I know about the going down of the aeroplane in the Mediterranean.

Thirty years ago he was anti-socialist in his thinking; as regards a co-operative society he would be the last person to come in. Thirty years afterwards he is telling people that you do not know about this and that. I had a British Council Scholarship; he had a Barbados Scholarship; I hope that he will be grateful to those who did not have anything. That is the attitude of the Premier; this insulting of people will have to be stopped. Whenever he insults me he will get it back inside the House, outside the House, or wherever he wants it.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: I do not mind what reference the hon. member might make to me. Co-operative societies sell everything on earth. You do not pay income tax on anything you sell to your members, or anything in the way of industry which your members produce. You buy anything on earth from co-operative societies; you buy meat, butter, furniture, anything at all.

There was a lady in St. Kitts who Professor Simey informed me on one occasion was the best co-operative manager he had seen in the West Indies. Where did she get her goods from? Half a dozen people in St. Kitts? There were people in England

who sold her material cheaply. No law says that a co-operative society should sell only what its members produce, and that it should not sell what its members do not make. This Amendment says:—

“Provided that this section shall not apply to any income arising from profits or gains in respect of the sale of any article unless such article is either sold to a member or produced or obtained by the industry of a member or members.”

Co-operatives in Barbados can be agents for Rolls Royce Cars in Barbados. Let us say we have a Co-operative for making baskets; the law does not say that you should stick to that. What the law says is that if you can sell to your members and make a profit, you do not pay anything on that. If you grow your own fruit which you sell you do not pay on that. If you have a banana co-operative and you should provide the hotels with 500 bananas every day, and you can only produce 200 and get the other 300 outside, if you make a profit on that you pay income tax on that 300.

A Co-operative is not bound to sell only what its members produce; if it sells anything and makes a profit out of it, provided it does not sell to its members and provided its members have not produced what it is selling, you are trading just as everybody else and therefore you pay income tax or trade tax.

If you have an arrangement with the Sugar Producers' Association to send in 100 tons of canes at \$10 a ton, if you have less than 100 tons and you are getting only \$9, a number of people can make up 100 tons. They are co-operatives and therefore they will not pay half cent of taxation; but suppose a number of people around Bulkeley Factory started to co-opt and bought canes from all around and sold them to Bulkeley Factory; every cent they made they would have to pay tax on it.

Why should a man buy and sell and not pay taxes? It could not be simpler. I am not taking any notice of the hon. junior member for St. Peter, one of these days I will.
4.55 p.m.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: And I will take notice of you, but you will be sorry.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: The hon. member once made a threat that if you get him out of a job, somebody will not live too long. I will remember that threat always. I have no desire to die young and I am going to protect myself.

The question that the Amendments be agreed to was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

SELECT COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Hon. Dr. H. G. CUMMINS: Before the adjournment for Tea Mr. Speaker, as you have intimated that in accordance with precedence a Committee should be set up to report on the terms and conditions of the Clerk of this House and the details of the appointment. I think we all would agree with that. I therefore beg to move that a Select Committee be appointed to review the conditions and service of the Clerk of his House.

Mr. LEWIS: I beg to second that.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The Hon. Leader of the House said he intimated to Your Honour that he was making this motion about the terms of appointment of the Clerk of this House. I was of the opinion that the office of Clerk of this House was one which should have a man with legal qualifications and that it was set out in the Statutes of this Island.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not an Act; it is a recommendation from a former Committee.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: The reason why I asked that Mr. Speaker, is because I was working under the hypothesis that the Clerk of this House must be a Solicitor as well as the Deputy Clerk. However I do not want to be any party to creating terms of employment for somebody to get the job.

I want to say that the office of Clerk of this House should be under the same terms and conditions as it was with the last Clerk; that is that the post should be a wholetime post. The salary which is being paid out is enough I think to be able to get a wholetime person with the same qualifications to do the work. I repeat, I am not going to be a party to creating terms and conditions to give some person a job.

The question that a Select Committee be appointed to review the conditions and service of the Clerk of this House was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to appoint the following to serve as a Select Committee:—

His Honour the Deputy Speaker, (Mr. A. E. S. LEWIS); the hon. senior member for the City, (Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY); the hon. senior member for St. George (Mr. E. W. BARROW); the hon. senior member for St. Philip (Mr. W. A. CRAWFORD); the Hon. Minister of Social Services (Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS); and the Hon. Minister of Trade, Industry and Labour (Hon. R. G. MAPP).

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I am asking that you be associated with this Committee as Chairman.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think it will be bad precedent to appoint a Committee of this sort and leave the Hon. Leader of the Opposition out of it. I observe that the Hon. Leader of the Democratic Party has been made a member. I do not want the Leader of the Opposition to think that I should be placed on it in preference to him; I think he should be placed on it in preference to me.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: As a matter of fact, I have to apologise for that. Instead of nominating the hon. senior member for the City, I should have nominated the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: I, too, say the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. If it is a Committee on a subject on which I specially know something about I am prepared to serve, but I beg to decline to serve on this Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. senior member for the City has declined to serve on this Committee. I have the honour to appoint the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the junior member for Christ Church (Mr. F. C. GODDARD), to serve on this Committee.

Hon. Dr. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for half an hour.

Hon. M. E. COX: I beg to second that.

The question that this House do now adjourn for half an hour was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
5.10 p.m.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT SITUATION

On re-assembling,

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the adjournment of the House for five minutes to discuss a matter of grave public importance: the transport facilities or difficulties which at present exist in Barbados. No doubt, hon. members are aware

that within the past weeks, and more especially over last week-end, great anxiety and concern have been exhibited by the general public on the state of transportation by omnibus to-day. This seems to have reached some climax on Friday when the public, through the Press only, were informed that Sunday last would be "B Day;" and that there is now little hope of people being able to get to and from work furthermore to say nothing of persons who wanted to go out of the stuffy City to enjoy themselves at the various recreational centres yesterday.

Now, this matter has been pending for some time, and the public I am sure, is looking forward to some expression of opinion in this Chamber in order to know what is the true state of affairs; and not only to know the true state of affairs, but to be able to intelligently follow things as they are and to be able to know the views of hon. members of this Chamber upon it.

As I said just now, this matter has been pending for some time; and the general public knows nothing about it except for the fact that in certain sections of the local press they have seen extracts from a Report giving expression to the findings of a committee; which Report, I understand, has been laid on the table of this House only recently, but not yet circulated to hon. members. It therefore, follows, that none of us can with any authority, lay claim to having read the Report; which means that we ourselves know very little about the matter. I therefore, take this opportunity of discussing the matter on the floor of this House (the right place where it should be discussed) that the public might know something about it.

The next thing I believe, is that the public is aware that an Emergency Powers Bill was recently passed in this House designed to give the Government certain powers in case of a threatened strike; in point of fact, in case the threat of the 'bus Concessionaires should be carried out. This is one of the factors which renders this matter to be of very grave importance; and it is one of the prime reasons why I consider it should be discussed. Besides that every now and then, the Minister of Communications should give to hon. members of this House an interview to keep them informed on the matter; and in addition to that, the Hon. Minister of Communications should give a two-minute talk over Rediffusion Service every night, so as to keep the public informed. But in my opinion, even that is not enough, and I again contend that we should take this opportunity of discussing the matter in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, the history of the transport system immediately after the first World War, during the time of the Government Railway etc., is I suppose, too well-known for me to recall. I suppose it is known that the Railway which served one side of the island from Bridgetown to St. Andrew, has in Barbados, as in other countries, been out-moded and ousted by lorry, automobile and 'bus transportation. Then there was established a transport system under what is now known as the Highways and Transport, but which was then known as the Central Road Board. About that time, a great many people returning from the United States, Panama, Canada and Cuba saw an opportunity to invest their money in 'buses. These were only make-shifts for the purpose of transporting people from the countryside and from a few of the suburban areas; and the Central Road Board, perceiving that they must save people from themselves, intervened.

The pioneers of those days certainly threw away a lot of money in order to build up what present-

day Concessionaires now enjoy. However, I think it was as far back as the early 'thirties that the idea of the 'bus transport system was born and the awarding of these concessions to 'bus owners for the purpose of transporting the public was made by the then Central Road Board. Many changes have taken place since then, both generally and directly connected with the transport system. Amendments to the law governing the system have been made, and regulations introduced.

We have passed through another World War; the economy of the island has improved; the standard of living has been raised; more money has been put into circulation etc; but within recent years, however, we have heard, time and again, of the need for increased 'bus fares. If hon. members will recall, not only have we heard talk about the need for increased bus fares, but after the Central Road Board was displaced by the Department of Highways and Transport, there was seen in the local press information to the effect that an increase had been agreed upon; and regulations came to this House which not only dealt with the question of increased fares, but also the question of removing what are commonly known as the "pirate" buses which have been detracting some of the money from the regular Concessionaires.

I have to say (despite one or two enemies) that I was in the forefront then of getting these regulations the right place where they should be or where they were wanted. Some hon. members pleaded ignorance of the fact, saying that they knew nothing of the regulations, yet they agreed with the rest of Government that they should not see the light of day; and for that matter they went through the window. I should say, though, that at the time there were some suggestions that we could very well have allowed those Regulations; but because of no authority for amending the regulations having come to this Chamber and the presence of the offending paragraph relating to the removal of the 'pick-ups,' the House rightly saw to it that those Regulations went through the window. Well, so it has gone on. I believe that five years ago representation was made to the Highways and Transport on the question of increased fares.

I know that at the time evidence was taken during the period when a member of the St. Michael Vestry, by virtue of his office as Churchwarden, Mr. D. G. Leacock, Jnr., was present. Of course, this had nothing to do with Government. What happened then was that the Concessionaires were asked by the Board of Enquiry to produce facts and figures to them before they could do anything. Among the facts and figures produced, it was learnt that some Concessionaires had to keep spare parts beside the normal set of spare parts, entire engines, entire sets of tyres, etc. Those statements left the businessmen on the Board in some doubt as to whether it was really necessary to keep a spare engine for a motor car, or whether a 'bus company should have to carry spare parts, set of tyres, etc.

5.55 p.m.

Immediately after the cessation of hostilities, the public had been clamouring and rightly so for better buses and more and better accommodation without any result. The only results they have got were that as a result of a few industrious Barbadians going abroad and coming back with small savings, found that they should make a living by getting "pirate" buses. These people found that they could put up something and make buses get around, because the clamour by the public for better buses and better accommodation fell on barren land.

We find that as the Concessionaires stand to-day in Barbados, they organised themselves into a body known as the Bus Concessionaires Association. In other words they were small people; you have now the big Concessionaires like Dowding Trading Co., coming in but there were the smaller people.

Mr. Speaker, I have been and always will be an advocate for free enterprise; I will always be an advocate for allowing people with the "know-how" and ability to do work and make money out of it, and let the Government stand by as a silent partner and draw its taxation. Lest it be thought that I am afraid of anything, I am convinced that if the service is taken over by the Government it will be subsidised so heavily that they will be losing some taxation which they are now getting from it. I am convinced that free enterprise, especially in this case, is the correct thing; but I think that as I go on, I will have to admit that if the attempt is one to recommend free enterprise, in my opinion, you will have to change some of the horses. With the clamour of the people of this colony for better buses and better means of transportation, we find the smaller Concessionaires coming together and presenting a united front.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose I am speaking with more authority on this subject than any other member of this House. I say that for this reason: it was about four or five years ago when, speaking in my capacity as a parochial politician and a member of the St. Michael's Vestry, we had a shock one morning and a rude awakening in the month of February or March four years ago to find that seven of the bus companies doing business in this parish, (I will say here that of the 160 odd buses registered in this island only one half or a little over that carry on business in St. Michael; I speak with great authority on this matter because of the interest I take in it) when this Association presented a statement with facts and figures as a forerunner to what we are going to see in a couple of weeks; the statement coming like a bolt from the blue, showed that they had lost money and that they had made no money.

Some people believe that in public life you get friendly with people and you must be told that "X" is a White man and "Y" is a Black man. Those persons who consider that they could play up to my friendship so as to make me turn myself into a hypocrite, withdrew their friendship; but I am still here and I will be here as long as my breath lasts, no matter what system of local Government you have. Because we had the courage and tenacity, (unfortunately the Government did not have a little more courage in this matter,) to say that we were not accepting certain things and we sought refuge in the law courts, we found a good number of Concessionaires backing down and agreeing to submit returns; and those who did not submit returns took up the position that they would fight us in court and the law gave them the right to withhold their books.

In our first case we won triumphantly over one company; as regards the other company we were defeated ignominiously. You have running in St. Michael, the Diamond Bus Company and others. Fortunately for me, because I have become Churchwarden this year, I have gone on the Advisory Board of the Department of Highways and Transport. It is not because the Government would like me to say things which I do not want to say, because if they do not like me there I will go home. I made it clear that I would express my view and if they did not like it, they could not do anything because I am an elected representative of the people.

I was saying, sir, you have the Diamond Bus Company with seven buses, the General Motor Bus Company with 30, the Liberty Bus Company 5, the Lincoln Company 10, the My Lords Hill Bus Company 5, the National Bus Company 12, and the Yonkers Bus Company 12. That is nothing to do with the Central Bus Company, the Leeward Bus Company, the St. George Bus Company and so on. When we fought that particular Company in St. Michael it made nothing, four years ago. In that year six of these companies, not the General Bus Company, sent in returns saying that they had made absolutely nothing. One man had the guts to sign as Auditor and Secretary; that is how it worked.
6.05 p.m.

Now, sir, I have just got figures which I propose to give to this House. Perhaps, when this is over, somebody will say that I am no longer a protagonist for free enterprise and that I have changed my views, but that is not so. As I have said, five years ago representation was made to the Director of Highways & Transport, but he refused to do one thing.

Let me say at once that I have a tremendous amount of criticism for the Government on this matter. Let me also apprise you of something before I give you these figures. Before a man runs a bus company, he must be given a concession. When he makes a return to the Vestry, he makes that return on his net profits, that is to say, before he makes his return not only for trade profit but for income tax, he takes out 20% of the profit. In other words, if his bus company makes \$7,000 when he trades this year, before he decides what profits he has made to tell the Vestry, he takes out 20%. He then takes out what he pays his staff, what he pays to buy his gasoline, and what he pays for spare parts before he sends in his return. Accordingly one Concessionaire said: "I had to buy a new engine and six tyres this year;" but before that 20% had to be taken off for depreciation. I am not criticising that; rolling stock like that of bus companies depreciates rapidly.

Now, I have got these figures from the record to quote to this House, and these are the figures of the Diamond Bus Company after the Concessionaire paid himself, and all of that. In 1950 he returned a profit of \$758, and said that was made on the buses of his company. In 1951 the profit was \$560. In 1952, no return was made of profit; that was the year when every Concessionaire lock, stock and barrel sent in a return saying "We have lost money."

Now, that particular year, this company did not go to court when the St. Michael Vestry rated those bus companies. The Vestry reasoned this way: it would not be fair to rate a man with a motor lorry on a profit of \$240 and then not to rate buses at all. So that company was rated on a profit of \$2,667, and it did not oppose that rate as I have said already. In the next year 1953, because the Vestry showed courage and did no namby-pamby nonsense the previous year, a return came in from that same company showing a profit of \$1,407. The following year, 1954, it sent in a return of \$1,894. Now, this year 1955 (and this is not rating them arbitrarily) that company has sent in a return of a profit of \$1,685. The only year that the Director of that company said he lost money was in 1952.

It is said that of the members of the House, the two members who can afford to say that you should increase bus-fares are my colleague and myself, because it would not affect our constituents; we being the representatives of the City of Bridgetown. Of course, I can say you should increase bus fares; I am not put here just to represent the City of Bridgetown. I will say this in all decency to the concessionaire of the Diamond Bus Company: he

never quarrelled or made any row in 1952 when the Vestry rated him on a profit of \$2,667 although he had sent in like the others to say he had lost money.

Naturally the bus business is a fraternity; so he went along with people in it. I remember on that occasion that I looked at the proprietor of this bus company and told him this: "people like you should have concessions; to my dying day I will see no big concern swamp up people like you in that business; but if the big people adopted that same attitude, what do you think will happen to the people in the Almshouse and Nightingale Home? Let me tell you that if the day should come that the big people want to swamp you, I will back you to the end, but you must contribute your quota of taxation."

Let us now take the figures of the Liberty Bus Company. Now the Diamond Bus Company of which I just quoted figures has seven buses; the Liberty Bus Company has five. Let me say at once that the Liberty Bus Company on that occasion did not associate itself with what was going on. This is the return which the Liberty Bus Company sent in from 1950:—

1950	....	....	....	....	\$ 390
1951	....	....	....	....	468
1952	....	....	....	....	1,905
1953	....	....	....	....	1,426
1954	....	....	....	....	738
1955	....	....	....	....	924

Watch the ups and downs. Of course every year's profit will not be the same.
6.15 p.m.

This year \$9,246; that is the Liberty Bus Company. These things should be discussed that the public might know. I noticed that the Concessionaires are planning to get more money to pay drivers etc. The owner of the Lincoln Bus Company is a member of the St. Michael's Vestry, and he stood side by side with the others to make these fellows pay taxes. In 1951 \$772; in 1952 \$3,007; in 1953 \$3,883; in 1954 \$605; in 1955 \$454.

Now, you have the figures of the National Bus Company. [A VOICE: How many buses?] The National Bus Company has 12. This Company is a limited liability company. I do not know if the solicitor of this Company is in the House now; and even if he were, it would make no difference to me. The following are their returns: In 1950 \$1,214; in 1951 and 1952, they put on a 'black-out'; that is, in 1952 they paid no taxes.

Mr. Speaker, you know the law. In 1953, again they paid no taxes; but we were not daunted. A case was brought by the Vestry, and if I remember correctly, the Hon. Premier was in this case, and he argued what they paid him to argue. That is the right way; in his place, I would have got up and done it myself. The Hon. Premier argued that they made no money. [Loud Laughter.]

In 1954, they again claimed they made no money. Mr. Speaker, this company actually went to the Vestry for four consecutive years with the similar claim: they made no money. But the Chief Justice ruled then that the books could not be called for because there was no auditor. Listen, Mr. Speaker, we calculated no taxes. In other words, even if you have used the five year average, at no time during the

three years, (1951—53) was the National Bus Company made to pay one cent. But I am trying to draw the attention of the House to the fact that in 1955— [VOICES: Order! Order!]

Mr. SPEAKER: There seem to be some unhealthy asides meant to detract the honourable member who is speaking.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: In 1955, without any prompting, the same Company who had previously refused to pay taxes, this particular company having gained increased bus fares through claiming that they had made no money said at last—[Mr. BARROW: That is not true.] Do not tell me it is not true. The very next year after they said they had made no money, the Company made a return of over \$2,000. [Laughter.] But that is not the most amusing thing; the Yonkers Bus Company in 1951 returned \$415. In 1952 when we went into Court, we had to rate them at a figure of approximately \$4,000, and the Judge increased it because it was known that they had taken out money from the business, which it was not lawful for them to have taken out. In 1953, the returns were: over \$4,000. In 1954 they paid \$2,618 and in 1955 they paid approximately the same.

Now, I want to draw your attention to something. It is a point which I believe the honourable junior member for St. George is doubtful about. I am going to deal with the National Bus Company first. Here is a Company with 12 buses on the Black Rock route. Any member of this Chamber can, at 7 o'clock in the morning, get in a car and follow the buses from Paynes Bay to Bridgetown, and he will find that at every stop pole with three or four buses running one behind the other, there are people still waiting and nobody can get a seat. You will also find that people working in Bridgetown are forced to pay an additional three cents from Harrison's corner to the bus terminus so as to ensure themselves of an early seat in the homeward bound buses.

6.25 p.m.

On the other hand this is what was revealed in the Court before the Chief Justice; that this Company after operating for all these years, is making no money. This Company has not even got a garage in which to put its buses, but the National Bus Company pays \$200 a month to the only shareholder in the Company to put up the buses in his garage. The National Bus Company is a separate entity owned by one man who made all the money; but the owner of the National Bus Company would not put anything in the name of the company, puts a garage in his name and pays himself \$200 a month. That is rank dishonesty and that is not all.

It was revealed that the National Bus Company owed away \$26,000. When I asked the Director of Highways and Transport the other day: is it not a shame that you cannot get better buses? The reply made to me was this: "I have gone to some of these Concessionaires; I have driven from Paynes Bay to Bridgetown and there is the need for more buses." The argument is that they have not increased our bus fares and therefore we cannot put on any additional buses.

It is the easiest thing to run between Bridgetown and Black Rock; you take off 20% for depreciation and you are keeping the same buses which you had in 1940 running on the road. What has become of the money for depreciation if you have not built up your business? If you were a man about town you would know where the money is.

The one mistake which the Government has made is that they did not take away the buses already; the

same buses which produced the money, buy a gasoline station, and pay \$200 a month for rent. It was revealed in the Court what salaries are paid to certain people; and then it came out that they never got more than \$20 a week. Both Counsel in here know it; it was sworn to in the Court that they paid \$35 a week.

Mr. Speaker, if these Concessionaires could say: "I have been running this business properly, I have to take the money and get up-to-date buses," then you would begin to talk about a case. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition has come from a family who has been prosperous in this country throughout the war. Of course they made money during the War; but if you walk down Broad Street, from the Premier to Tal-a-la-la can see the present improvement; you can see that they have improved their business. You must make money, but you cannot take all the money and do not put back anything in the business.

The late Sir Laurie Pile made money out of his plantation but he took that money he made out of the business and put down factories; but this Company has taken the money to run Servicenter Limited which must charge the National Bus Company out of all proportion, and then the Company shows that it is not making any money.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of educational geniuses in this House, I remember when as a little boy, I got into the third standard and was taught the Rule of Three; I could find all the answers, but I could not work out the problems. And I never copied! [laughter.] Well, sir, this report reminds me of that; they arrive at a decision that bus fares should be increased but they cannot show how much money buses have been collecting, how many passengers they have been carrying and the like.

This is the argument used: in 1939 you awarded the concession, and you have not increased bus fares; that is true, but it is also true that per ratio per mile you have the highest rate in the West Indies. When they were awarded these concessions they had to run a bus four times an hour on this route. As time went on they carried three and four instead of one.

I am submitting that the public has to decide; in those days when you run four times an hour, the bus had to make four trips and the capacity was 30 passengers. The buses had to run empty because the economic position of the people was such that they could not afford to travel.

6.35 p.m.

You are going to find that for the same four movements in and out in an hour, that a bus if it carried 300 passengers then, carries 1,500 now.

During those days, buses just ran up and down. They only carried a full complement of passengers at the peak hours. I remember in 1945 when I caused electric lights to be put along Grazzettes Road that you used to see plenty people walking along that road on their way to work coming from Cave Hill. Show me now anybody coming along Grazzettes Road from Cave Hill. The people drive now all the time. You see buses bringing into town 500 people nowadays to work instead of 50 people in those days.

The Report of the Committee appointed to look into this question recommends an increase in bus fares but we have not had the honour of reading it or doing anything about it; all that we see about it are the little sketches that were published in the newspapers. What I have to say about that is this, Mr. Speaker: I feel that the Government blundered in passing the Emergency Powers Bill instead of dealing with this matter. I was not in the House when that Bill was passed but if I were here, it

would not have been passed. I would say no more on that. The Government should have given this House the opportunity to discuss this Report from every possible angle so as to let the public know what is the situation.

Let me say now that the Government has blundered severely in actually expressing the view that they have adopted the report and actually committing themselves to giving bus Concessionaires a 15% rebate on gasoline. That is an acknowledgement that the bus Concessionaires are entitled to some increase, and I am saying that that is not so.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member. It was made very clear that the Government said that they were dissatisfied with the transport service as it is, the way in which it was run by some people, and the low wages paid; and for that reason Government was prepared to offer a 15% rebate on gasoline subject to the approval of the Legislature.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Even that I say is wrong. The Government says it is dissatisfied; if you are dissatisfied with the way the bus service is run, the first thing you should have done was to find out what the industry could pay. You have no right to say that you are going to give them a rebate; that action of yours is questionable. You should have first asked: what money are you taking in? What are your profits? The Hon. Minister of Communications should pay great heed to the economy of this industry.

I am told that there are 160 odd buses in this country. I have not had the time to read the report, but I am saying that you should have approached this matter from a scientific and economic point of view. You should have found out what the industry is worth and for what would you capitalise 160 odd buses. Would you capitalise them for one million dollars or two million dollars? If you capitalise them at one million dollars and the people in the industry tell you that they have lost \$37,000 in a year, what do you say to that? If they say their loss is \$37,000 a year, how is that apportioned? There is no justification, nor any reason why this Government should have committed this country to giving this 15% rebate on gasoline to bus Concessionaires. What I am saying is this: because they say they lost \$37,000 a year, is that sufficient to say that you are justified in giving a rebate of 15% on gasoline?

Now, Mr. Speaker, you have two sets of buses; one which runs in the City and the other which runs in the country districts. Let us take the buses which run in the country districts. I am asking how is that loss of \$37,000 apportioned to those which run in the country districts? I am submitting to you that not one cent can be lost by those which run in the City area. I do not think they are losing anything; it may be a question of whether they are making sufficient money.

A man should be allowed to take out his 20% depreciation, pay himself, and be allowed interest on his money invested; because if he has put that money which he had invested into the hands of a Solicitor, he would get 6% on it. I say again, you must approach this matter in a scientific and businesslike manner. The first thing which you have to do is to apportion this loss of \$37,000 to the industry.

Let me say that when I read these cases about bus Concessionaires I smiled, and when I read something of the report on the industry I smiled greater. When you awarded concessions in those days, people clamoured from the country districts to come to town. Since then there has been a tremendous change in those people coming to town.

What has brought about the change is (a) your Shop Closing Act; in other words the buses which brought a tremendous number of people from the country districts on Saturdays no longer do so, since the people do not come to town owing to the early closing of city shops. And (b) the merchants in the City have carried their shops in the country; hence the buses when you made your first award of concessions and fixed your price, used to bring a tremendous number of persons into the City and back; but now there is a substantial change in those people coming to town from the country districts. But there is also a substantial change in the travelling public in the City; it has been improved to about ten times as much as what travelled in 1939.

6.54 p.m.

Hon. members will recall that there was rationing of gasoline during World War II. One wonders if you give a 15% rebate how you are going to control a company like the Self-help Enterprises Ltd., in the selling of gasoline only to a bus company. The Hon. Premier would perhaps have an answer for that. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: The mileage should show the number of gallons you have used.] The Hon. Premier says you know that when you have travelled six miles you have used up six gallons. Well, that to me is a blunder you have made, and cannot be regarded as a straight forward honest transaction. Let the Hon. Minister say what he wants to say now.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: On the floor of this House, Mr. Speaker, I said I did not believe that the bus Concessionaires were sustaining losses; but our attitude is that the service as a public service was hopeless. We want new buses and we want to see a general improvement in accommodation.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: You are telling the public that you are going to give the Concessionaires a 15% rebate because you want them to bring in more new buses. The point I wish to impress upon the Hon. Premier is this: consider this from a business point of view; when a company with 15 buses says they are making no money, one sometimes wonders how that could be. Take the capacity of those 15 buses at its highest; with the buses on the route so many times a day, one would have to be a superb mathematician to prove that that company is losing money under such circumstances. Naturally, I may have to say something in reply, and some hon. member has suggested to me to deal with the General Bus Company; I am going to deal with the General now.

When I first went to the St. Michael's Vestry, I observed that Eckstein's, for five consecutive years, paid not one cent in taxes. For all the time they were running buses—[Hon. G. H. ADAMS: I never worked for the General Bus Company as owned by the Ecksteins.] I never said so. I know that they never, during the period to which I referred, paid one cent. But you must give credit where credit is due. Immediately as the Dowding Trading Co. took it over, there was a great change; and since then they have made upwards as high as \$40,000; and that has always been taken as a guide for those of us who have the responsibility of taxing people in this country. We felt that if this Company could make money the Balls route, the Eagle Hall route and other such routes were making money too. The same concern with 30 buses in the year 1950 made \$26,439, and the National Bus Company with 12 buses, \$1,214. Now the next thing I am coming to is this: in 1951 they made nothing.

I know that some hon. members of this House may be inclined to say that the senior member for

the City lamb-based these Companies on the one hand, and then defended the General Bus Company on the other; but what I am saying now, I am saying in fairness. I must draw this comparison to show that if a Company with 30 buses could make such returns, what we must expect from the others.

I am going to make this point: even the Government, Mr. Speaker, cannot fail to admit that in the business of facts and figures showing how many buses you carry and every other detail, you have no right to allow this. On the other hand this is what hon. members must address their minds to: there is the General Bus Company which is a separate and distinct entity from Dowding Estates Limited. [A VOICE: What did they pay?] The Premier is asking a question; if I were a member of the Government I would have got the facts. Legislation can do anything. I bet if you had a Commission you would find out the difference. Here, you have Dowding Estates doing the work and providing the service: frankly, I do not think that that rebate is fair to the people of this island.

6.55 p.m.

I say this: the Government has seriously blundered; they have blundered, in that their duty is to the people of this country and not merely to the Concessionaires. I would like to say this: there are no two ways about it; in private places, in secret places it is rumoured that a promise was made by some members of the Government to increase busfares. In other places it was even stated that this increase had been recommended. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Impossible.] It is being said with a lot of justification and truth that a promise was made to increase busfares [Hon. R. G. MAPP: By whom?] By some members of the Government. It is said that that was recommended by the transport authorities; I challenge them to say that that is not so. You cannot help hearing these things; in all corners you hear that they have promised to increase bus fares; but now that they do not know what the position is they are giving this rebate.

I say that they are wrong twice. If there is any justification for an increase in bus fares let us face the position and say: "let us increase the bus fares". But until you can prove what money you are spending and in what you are spending it it is wrong to increase bus fares. I repeat that the Government has made a mistake; all they have to do is to advertise in the *Advocate* concessions for ten years and not for five years. I say ten years because if you are asking for a proper service nobody will take up \$150,000 and give a proper service otherwise.

A Jew would teach his son that even if he does not know money he should talk about it [laughter] Nobody would take \$150,000 and put it in a proper service for under ten years. The Government must advertise these concessions. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: We are going to do that.] Well, do it quickly. I would say this: both the Government and the Transport Board are bluffing; they are playing poker and nobody is showing his hands. Do not think that I would be satisfied to have any concession given to anybody again, and that person treat people as he likes.

I would like to say that all over the world you have a proviso that all school children during school hours should be allowed to travel at half fare; that should be done with the Concessionaires. Another thing is this: in the new concessions I hope it will be made perfectly clear that some of the practices which have been carried on with the awarding of the concessions will be dealt with. Let us take the

Pine; you have about 700 or 800 houses in the Pine now, and a man must get out at the bottom of the district and walk. You have to provide feeder routes.

Now there is the indication by the Minister of Communications about removing "pirate" buses off the roads. Show me the person who would get into one of these "pirate" buses if we had proper buses, take these buses of the road and you lose your seats in here. The trouble about these Ministers is that they get sufficient money to get a motor car and they just forget.

7.05 p.m.

It is so easy for my colleague and myself to say that you should increase bus-fares; but we feel we represent the island, therefore, I can speak of the service by the Pickups. Do you think persons would sit choked up and pressed together in a Pickup if you had a decent bus service? Read what the Hon. Minister of Communications said about the matter.

Mr. Speaker, I throw this out as a warning: rather than get Pickups off the road, rather than to remove the converted trucks which carry their ware, you should make regulations to keep them. I have been told that the regulations which came down here to get them off the road went through the window.

If the Government's attitude is to retain "pirate" buses let me say I am on your side. [A VOICE: "pirate" buses that carry passengers with luggage.] I hear *sotto voce* that they will retain "pirate" buses which carry passengers with luggage; but let us say that a bus runs from Mile-and-a-Quarter and leaves fifteen and twenty passengers there without any luggage, how are they going to get to work? [A VOICE: Borrow some luggage and put into it.] Let me say again that if it comes that the Government are allowing "pirate" buses to remain I am with them.

Let me say sir, that this report from the Bus Enquiry Committee is absolutely flat. I am throwing this out to the Government: I do not like the attitude of being unreasonable on the other hand; I do not like to be fooled.

I do not think personally, that sufficient evidence is in the report by the Bus Enquiry Committee to put before this Chamber. Let us get at the root of this matter; let this matter be dealt with by a Commission. Can it be done that way? Let a Commission find out what capital there is in the industry and all of that as well as how this loss is apportioned. If your idea is to give them a 15% rebate and you prove your case I am with you; but if you do not prove your case that is a different matter. Have you proved your case? Let me know how many passengers you are carrying and how much money you are taking first, if you prove your case, that is, that you are running at a loss, and your answer is a 15% rebate on gasolene, I will say let us do it.

I say again that if they say they have lost \$37,000, it is my belief that is due to the changed circumstances in the country districts since you have fixed your price. I feel if a loss can be proved that it will be proved on buses that run the short routes, but I will not be convinced unless you give me the real facts. I feel that the fares charged on the short routes where the great number of people are travelling are adequate and sufficient for a reasonable profit.

The Hon. Premier has said that bus Concessionaires are to put on 30 new buses. Is it not a fact that for the past 14 years you have been allowing these people to take off money for depreciation of these buses? Tell me how many buses they have

put on for the last 14 years; is it not a fact that you have ten-year old buses on the routes? What has been done with the money that you allow them to take out for the purpose of replacement of buses? Why should it be necessary to take the people of this country and subject them to a decrease of taxation by the 15% rebate you promised to give these Concessionaires? I hope, Mr. Speaker, that some honourable member will say something on this matter to give me the opportunity to reply.

Mr. BRANCKER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second this motion that this House do now adjourn for five minutes in order that I can make a contribution to this debate. It is only a few weeks ago that I formally in this House raised the question of the nationalisation of public passenger transport in this island. A long time ago, (years ago) I advocated the nationalisation of public transport; and once again I formally propose in this Chamber that it should take place.

Let there be no misunderstanding about that at all. The people of this country from the time they voiced their opinions via the secrecy of the ballot box in 1951, contemplated and intended at the earliest possible opportunity that this Government should nationalise healthy concerns, interesting commodities or any line of activity which the public must have and which could belong within the category of public utilities. That was not merely because of the promise which the honourable and learned member for St. Joseph made many years ago in respect of the Barbados Electric Corporation, but because of the example of Great Britain which he had in mind; that is, the nationalisation of the various industries which the British Labour Government carried into effect during the period they were in office. And it was confidently expected and looked forward to that no opportunity would be lost in nationalising anything which was thought to be for the public benefit, despite the capitalist's pressure. Certainly, public passenger transport comes within this category.

7.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid that the acoustics of this Chamber are deteriorating; or is it that unless one shouts like a certain vociferous member who has just sat down, one is not noticed by the hon. members of the Government. However, if the hon. senior member for St. Joseph would not pay so much attention to those on his immediate left, and would pay attention to what would benefit him [VOICES: Hear! Hear!] I am certain he would be able to hear; and there is no reason—

At this stage Mr. Speaker left the Chair and Mr. Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

Mr. BRANCKER: And there is no reason why he, and the colony as a result should not benefit. Anyway, as I was saying, not only is nationalisation of such a public utility as bus transport necessary, but it is what the people of this island have been expecting from 1951; it is what is clearly desirable; and it is what is presented in simple fact, as a result of the state of affairs at present existing. Unless I did not hear correctly, in a certain letter which was read the other afternoon, reference was made to the Government's taking over this service.

Nationalisation is just a question of Government, arranging to run the public transport of this island, having agreed to take it over at a reasonable figure. You would not have to have a lump sum; a reasonable figure is arrived at and the rest is paid *ad lib.*

One must not let the impression get around, as well it might, that now is not the ideal time to nationalise this service; it is the duty of a socialist government.

It is, in fact, absolutely necessary for any Labour Government to do. Even a Conservative Government would have the foresight to see the benefits that would accrue to the people as a whole. But if there were any diffidence on the part of this Government it is quite possible, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to arrange for consultations with the leaders of the present Opposition in the United Kingdom as to the best means of affecting the nationalisation of a public utility such as this. The hon. senior member for St. Joseph might take a trip to the United Kingdom (with our blessing) and confer with Mr. Attlee as to the manner in which nationalisation of certain utilities and industries was so smoothly affected during the tenure of office of the United Kingdom's Labour Party.

I think I have said enough to let it be clearly understood as to how strongly I am willing to support the policy of nationalisation in connection with this public utility. This is the system to show the initiative and the resource of a certain set of people who have come into power; and whenever an opportunity arises for nationalisation, (and even if an opportunity does not arise) every attempt should be made to nationalise. If the will to nationalise is there, then I see no insuperable difficulties in arriving at the question of finance.

I will now speak on what has been described as "pirate" buses; these are the vehicles which are marked "Luggage Vans". I must also confess that there will be no compromising in any attempt to remove these vehicles off our roads. You cannot contemplate any improvement of the bus service which would be so elaborate as to provide a system of bus transport for every village in this community, and at every reasonable time that persons might want to travel from town to country. The luggage van is the poor man's taxi.

There is a system at the present time of unfair and unreasonable prosecutions by the Police Department of the luggage van drivers and owners on the leeward coast; and it would be interesting to hear the views of my colleagues who represent the people on the windward coast.

Luggage vans have saved the Concessionaires of the leeward district. I am not saying whether the Concessionaires should have more buses or whether the existing buses should run more promptly; but I am saying that the service is not half as good as it should be; that is, the normal service for the specific routes; the routes say, from Pie Corner to Bridgetown. That requires at least to be doubled.

By the use of two additional buses they could run a relay or half relay service; so that all increases in the bus service will help to cater to other people who are not on the main highways. [A VOICE: There is no law to stop that now.] There is where the luggage van is no more than the poor man's taxi. 7.25 p.m.

People who are living in the northern part of the headquarters of the Barbados Potteries Limited, and apart from the employees of that concern, in order to get to Speightstown, what have they got to do? They have to take a bus from Upper Orange Hill to Bridgetown and then get a bus from Bridgetown to go to Speightstown. They have to travel two long routes in order to cover what should be a comparatively short cross country journey, and that is where the luggage van is nothing less than the poor man's taxi.

Now, sir, there is one thing which I omitted to refer to *en passant* of nationalisation; and it is that automatically every employee of the bus companies will become a Government Servant with pension

rights accruing to him. That is why those who work at the private firm which does the printing are always saying to me: "We will become Government employees and be certain of our pension rights accruing to us; can you not ask the question every three months?"

That will be the happy lot of the employees of these bus companies when the Government nationalises the public transport. I do not say "if and when" the Government nationalises it and I hope that I was audible on the other side of the table.

I hope that some other hon. members who have a more intimate knowledge of the Windward Coast of this island will make their worthy contributions to this debate *apropos* to these luggage vans. I have a fairly extensive knowledge of them not only because my constituents would not be able to reach the City or my colleague and myself with the facility with which they reach us without the use of the luggage vans; or because I live in a parish which is served by them because as a practitioner in a profession which at least one hon. member of this House had to forsake because there was nothing remunerative in it, I have an inside knowledge of the running and the necessity of these "Pick-ups" as we call them.

These "pirate" buses are disagreeable, unpleasant, obnoxious and unsuitable; they are "Pick-ups", they pick you up [laughter.] In order that you may look after your luggage they pick you up as well. If anything went wrong with your bicycle you would be able to accompany it to the City so as to ensure that the bell or anything else was not removed from it. They are the means of transportation which enables people from the country to come to Bridgetown as often as they like.

People are entitled to come to Bridgetown whenever they want to do so; they should not be told: "You should do your business in the City once a week, and you should not have any need to come into the City more than once". They should have the opportunity to be able to come to Bridgetown and not be forced to leave the City at 5 o'clock or 6 o'clock in the afternoon because the buses do not run after that hour; and they have to get the convenience of a "Pick-up" to take them from a cinema or friends or anything else in the City of Bridgetown which they want to see. A terrible thing would be done if these vehicles were eliminated from our streets.

The hon. senior member for Bridgetown was speaking on the question of bus fares. Perhaps the fault might be mine, but I could not quite understand which way he was leaning; but he eventually got where he was going by a process of agility which very few of us would ever hope or try to emulate [laughter.] However the longer the route, the cheaper in proportion should be the fare. In the City sometimes people take buses when they could really walk; if I lived in the City I would walk from there to the General Hospital, but people in the City cannot walk at all.

When it comes to the country districts, the wear and tear on a bus must be very much less than it would be in the City. You have a bus running along a route but the Leeward bus is not supposed to take up any passengers until it reaches Sandy Lane. It would be running from the Parochial Buildings to Sandy Lane on a nonstop run on a perfectly good road; and then it continues until it gets to Huletown and then it makes its first stop in order to collect or drop off people who have business in Her Majesty's Court there. Then it goes on to Trents Corner, it is usually required to stop there; then on to Mount

Standfast, St. Albans, Road View and so on. In the City you have the heavier wear and tear on the buses because of the frequency with which they have to stop; but in the country districts people who live in particular villages have very few stops in the areas. When you reach St. Lucy and you get to the Parish Church or Nesfield, the bus does not get another stop until it reaches Durham.

7.35 p.m.

Although the hon. senior member for the City has claimed that he is a representative of this island and not only a representative for the City of Bridgetown, yet one could not help seeing what is resting on his mind; that is, if there is to be any differentiation, the people in the City must get the benefit while the country people would have to suffer.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member hinted that there may be justification for some increase in country bus fares.

Mr. BRANCKER: I am saying that there should be no increase in bus fares even if the Government have to nationalise the concessions. Do not let there be any misunderstanding about that.

The fare of 26 cents is more than what the people in the northern parts of this island can afford to pay; and there is no justification to increase it, because we have that long smooth, non-stop ride on that route except for twelve or eighteen stops in the whole journey.

I hope there is no ambiguity in which I am putting to the House; that is (a) you should nationalise, (b) do not trouble the Pickups, because you can never have with our island so honeycombed with roads, a bus service to deal with all these thickly populated villages in the island and to deal with the transport at the various hours which the people require.

Let me say that the people in St. Lucy and St. Peter are as much entitled to see the nonsense which is exhibited at the Plaza, Empire and the Olympic Theatres as the people from Haggatt Hall and Brittons Hill. Do not let there be any feeling that it is the inherent right of persons born in the metropolitan parish alone to go to a cinema; the people living in St. Lucy, St. Peter or St. Andrew have to regard that as a special concession or Sunday privilege.

Those people who have been so good as to purchase their luggage vans have come to the rescue of the people in the country districts; and it is the people who are clamouring for the retention of these luggage vans and are asking us to do all we can to see that they remain on the road. And if the people of the Windward district are insisting on the retention of these vehicles as the people on the Leeward district, I cannot see the Government so foolhardy in risking any legislation which would cause them to be put off the road to the direct inconvenience of the people who live in those far out districts and who have no motor cars.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the two points which I have stressed and which I trust that the Cabinet will realise, and are being demanded and consequently expected of this Chamber and Legislature of this island are: (a) that we nationalise public passenger transport, and (b) that we do nothing to interfere with this auxiliary service which is provided by the luggage vans. It may be that when you increase your omnibus service out of reasonable proportion that you may consider the limiting of luggage vans to the existing number to-day, and not to allow a greater number to do business; but if you double your bus service in the leeward district—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. member correctly that the luggage van should not be nationalised?

Mr. BRANCKER: I am saying that there is still ample scope for the existing number of luggage vans which are supplying a long felt want on the leeward route; and I was saying that if you double your bus service on the Leeward route you will still need those luggage vans.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the last occasion when I had cause to speak on this matter, it was on the occasion when we were dealing with the question of Emergency Powers Bill. On that occasion the report of this Bus Fares Enquiry Committee was not before this House. I have been fortunate since then to have seen a copy of that report, so I can more intelligently discuss this matter now. On that occasion an attempt was made to justify the report of the Committee on the grounds that it did not necessarily need to have its terms of reference expanded. Now, these are the terms of reference of the Bus Fares Enquiry Committee:—

“To investigate the claims of the Bus Concessionaires for an increase in bus fares and to make recommendations to the Government before the 28th of February, 1955”

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me remind the hon. member that the report of this Committee was laid on the Table of this House previously. It is therefore a document of the House; but you will realise that it has not yet been printed and circulated to hon. members. I am wondering if you made reference to it, whether you would not be putting some hon. members at a disadvantage.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: They will not be at a disadvantage; it is not my report; it is a report to the House.

7.45 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am merely asking the hon. member just to refer to it.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: You will very well understand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the terms of reference of this Committee were sufficiently broad as to have merited a better composition than it had; but be that as it may, we can still examine the terms of reference, because the principal one was to investigate the claims of the Concessionaires for an increase in bus fares and to make recommendations to the Government. Therefore my contention on the last occasion, (which I reiterate to-day) was that the Government was asking a Committee to go into the question of investigating a matter in which they would have to impose an increased burden on the travelling public of this island; and in my humble opinion it should not have been confined to Mr. McDermott, Mr. Alkins, Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Clairmonte.

I have nothing against these gentlemen; but I do say that in an island that professes to be evolving a sort of self-Government, it is surprising that no attention was given to having representation of a wider character in order that the community who use the buses might be able to express their views on the question. Even the workers were not asked to send a representative there. But Mr. Alkins is a gentleman who represents one of the big firms in this island while Mr. Clairmonte is an ex-civil servant and Mr. Armstrong is a member of the Fire Insurance Company. I have said that because of what I have heard hon. members to have said in connection with this Report.

Now I do not think you can discuss anything relative to this bus question without quoting from some document that bears a reference to it. I was out

of the island at the time, and I understand that the report was printed in the local Press. But if I may be permitted to draw Your Honour's attention to the paragraph which deals with the bus fares, I will deal with this phase first to show that there is no validity in the argument as to why this type of representative should have been excluded from this Committee; because the terms of reference were to deal with an increase in fares; and when we think of broad representation, we think about putting people on a Committee who can serve in that capacity.

Now the Committee says: "The fares in use to-day were fixed in 1939, and it is indisputable that wages and all other operational expenses have increased out of proportion to revenue; and this was clearly seen from our comparisons of the accounts for the years 1948 and 1953. We are satisfied therefore that the present fares are inadequate to-day and should be increased."

I am only going to speak on this Report because I intend to show that even on the basis of this Report, the Government had no basis to agree to give a 15% rebate to the bus Concessionaires. Now the Report goes on "We have found it difficult to determine on what basis the present Schedule of fares was originally fixed and it appears that no attention was paid at the time to certain relevant factors such as mileage involved, nature of routes or density of potential passengers. It is assumed, therefore, that the fares adopted approximate as closely as possible to those which were in existence at the time the concessions were first introduced." Then it goes on to show where in agreement with the Director of Transport that an increase should be based on a reliable formula; then in another paragraph it states "unfortunately, it is not possible for us to say, from the figures available, what will be the net result of these increases in terms of revenue, but we are satisfied that they represent a reasonable estimate which should improve the financial position of the concessionaire etc."

This Committee was set up as an expert Committee; and you Mr. Deputy Speaker, know in the context of the experts how that term is used in this island today. Here you have a committee of experts investigating a matter with a view to discovering certain things; and they say: "well, we cannot examine facts and figures but here is what we say: we are satisfied with the information before us; unfortunately, it is not possible for us to say, from the figures available, what will be the net result of these increases"

Now if you set up a Committee just as the English set up a Committee and they cannot give some formula as to what these figures should be, what is the use of this Report? Now this Committee has not in itself produced a formula; all this Committee has said in effect is: "we are working on the old formula and on that formula we are asking a half-way smile."

When you examine that Committee, if you take a layman's approach to this matter, it is just as if you went out in the Green and said to the people: "Well, from 1939 fares have not been increased; therefore is it not fair that they should have some increase." I myself have had a Trade Union Scholarship and I know something about trade unionism.

Now, for a Report to express the relationship between the fares fixed in 1939 in one sentence and then in the next sentence you mention that wages itself is out of proportion, you give the layman a feeling that wages in 1939 were fixed in relation to

fares. That is, you fix a fare because wages were involved. No such thing. These were arbitrary fares. In 1939 there was not even a workers organisation in this island; therefore the question of wages was dealt with on a different basis.

The question of wages in relation to fares never was in the picture at all; and the idea that because wages have been tied to fares these fares have increased does not necessarily answer the point for the simple reason that these fares were fixed in 1939. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the criterion of increasing these fares should not be based on the fares fixed in 1939.

Now the Government has made just as big a blunder as the Committee. Why have you given them a 15% rebate? Government's answer to that question would be: "We have given them a 15% rebate because we told them that at some future time they will have to put on a better service. You are asking for an increase; I say the increase is not justified; but I am going to give you a rebate now which is tantamount to capitalising a service which is not your own service but the service of the capitalists. In that case therefore you are asking the public to pay for the capitalisation of private buses."

If you go by the Government's figures, they are something like \$70,000 per annum and they have to put on these new buses. When the new buses are on the road, do you realise what you would have been taking out of the public purse? The economics are not based on the fact that you are asking a man to capitalise; you have a good claim today.
7.55 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think the amount mentioned was \$60,000.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Well \$60,000. The Government's offer of this rebate is an admission that they are satisfied with what these people are saying here; otherwise you would have to tell them that they must provide a better service without offering them this rebate.

Where the Government has erred in my opinion is this: if an arbitrator went into this matter, the Government would be on very sticky ground. You have admitted just as the Committee has admitted that you have not got the figures.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Perhaps it might be appropriate for the honourable member to move the adjournment of the House at this stage.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: If it is appropriate for the adjournment to be taken at this stage, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn for three quarters of an hour.

Mr. TUDOR: I beg to second that.

ADJOURNMENT

The question that this House do now adjourn for three quarters of an hour was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
8.00 p.m.

On re-assembling.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT DEBATE CONT'D.

Mr. SPEAKER: On the adjournment the honourable junior member for St. Peter was addressing the House.

Mr. F. L. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, on the adjournment I was making the point that when you review the Report of the Committee and analyse it, the Report in itself is a contradictory document, in that certain portions of it speak about giving an in-

crease in bus fares; and in the same Report it says that enough statistical information was not available. The relative portion in the Report in that connection reads as follows:

"In the course of this enquiry we found ourselves at some disadvantage in that adequate statistical information was not available from many concessionaires to enable us to make proper comparisons and reliable estimates. For example, important information such as numbers of passengers carried, mileage covered, etc., was lacking in many cases. We recommend that concessionaires should be required in their own interests to keep full records of such details in the future."

You get this situation and it would not be amiss for me to say that it had been stated on some occasions that some members have been giving the bus Concessionaires the impression that the Government of Barbados would be willing, if not to give an increase in bus fares, to give something else. I do not like to repeat what I hear or everything I hear, but I know it is an open secret that some of these bus Concessionaires were given the impression privately that a raise in bus fares would not be any thing which they would not receive if they put up a good case. [A MEMBER: Who said that?] I do not know. [ASIDES] I do not know who lives at "The Rock," but the people who live at "The Rock" live nearer to the Premier than they live to me. But it has been said that if a good case is put up the bus Concessionaires would get increase in bus fares.

It would seem to me that the impression given to these bus Concessionaires was that they were apparently promised some sort of gift; because for the life of me, I cannot understand how any Government reading this Report could ever think of asking the taxpayers to pay more money. If you give this rebate which is the equivalent of \$30,000 for operational expenses, you are taking it out of the taxpayers in another way. If you do not want the odium of saying that you have increased bus fares, why go about doing it in another way? This rebate is some of the taxation you did not budget for in the Five Year Plan. Your Five Year budget was based on the increase taxation you got from rum and various other items; but now you are depleting the Treasury of this amount of money so as to give the bus Concessionaires a subsidy out of the Treasury, though you do not want to give an increase in the bus fares.

If you make an enquiry into the accounts of any business and you are satisfied that the business is making enough money and it should be examined—What is more, I understand that some of these bus companies although the owners do not work for the companies as employees, a salary is taken out for themselves.

9.00 p.m.

Why is it that you have asked them to put on 15 new buses when those buses should be put on out of the same business? Are you going to allow a man to take out for depreciations and then you propose to give him money to capitalise the same business? That should not be so. Now, sir, I see it this way: if the Government is satisfied that the Concessionaires are not giving the public a good enough service and is satisfied that they are not getting enough bus fares, say so in a straightforward manner. You tell the public that you are not increasing the bus fares, but you are giving the Concessionaires a 15% rebate on the petrol they use. Treat this with a little bit of commonsense. Do not tell us that you are giving

this 15% rebate although you are dissatisfied with the service and the way it is run by some people. Did you say that you are going to give this 15% only when they increase their buses, or will this rebate continue *ad infinitum*? If you said that, it shows that you are not only capitalising new buses but you are also helping them to maintain the running of their service.

I go further by saying this: you must have a bold policy and real imagination in this matter. If you have a transport service and you have a policy for it, you can do what the Labour Government in Great Britain did in 1945; that is, they took over the transport service in the interest of the people; and when they took it over the United Kingdom owed the United States Government more money than we can think about. In other words the British Government nationalised transport at that time. I do not know what policy this Government has for nationalisation; and I say that because the question of departmental nationalisation is not the kind which I mean. I will say that departmental nationalisation of transport would be of no help to the public.

Now, what is revealed from this report by the Bus Fares Enquiry Committee? The Committee agreed that the Concessionaires should have an increase of bus fares. I also have come to understand that the idea of giving them a 15% rebate on gas olene as the Government proposes to do is the idea of the present Director of Highways and Transport; not necessarily the policy of the Government. The Hon. Minister of Communications can get up and challenge that statement.

Now, the serious thing about this is that matters which can be regarded as national policy do not emanate from the Ministers. It is known that the bus Concessionaires have been meeting the Director of Highways & Transport for some time and talking to him on this matter, and in sessions which can be regarded as not secret. I do not blame the Director of Highways & Transport for putting up this proposition, because I have heard one of the members of the Government speaking of a compromise. The members of the Government should regard this arrangement as a compromise between what the Concessionaires were asking for and what they propose to give them.

When it comes to the "Pirate" buses let me tell you that the people who own and operate them are doing so without any subsidy from the Government; they are not asking the Government for one penny as a rebate. They came into operation owing to bus Concessionaires saying they could not put more buses on the routes; and I will tell you that if given a chance, the owners of these "Pirate" buses will put more on the routes without any subsidy from the Government than all the Concessionaires would ever think of putting on buses.

This is not a matter of political significance because people travel by buses. You just had a railway strike in England, and the British Government took a long time before they regarded it as an emergency. I have heard the Hon. Minister to make the statement that the Government has all their plans ready about this matter. I am asking: what are the plans that the Government has to put into operation if the Concessionaires do not decide to run their service after a certain date? You should be able to tell the public that your policy is say, to make public transport a public utility service to be run by the Government by public co-operation. That should be told to the public whether you have a threat or not. As some members may remember, the late Captain Cipriani of Trinidad had

a threat with respect to the electricity and the lighting of that country. Now, that is under public control in Trinidad. It is not so here.

I can give you a suggestion as regards this public transport service, and it is one which the hon. senior member for St. George in his debating days at the Workers' Union used to expound from a theory by Harold J. Laski.

Where you have a public utility service like ours, you should try and integrate the service so that it will become a common service; and the losses and the gains should go into one pocket as a result of which you will not have this unfortunate idea of one Concessionaire saying he lost money while the other made a gain. You should have your public transport service as a common service. You can even attempt to do what the Americans have done. If the standard of living is not high enough to employ the fare system as they use in New York, then you can use the English system where you work up by stages and therefore you know what the fare is at certain stages.

In all of these systems you have a common service where all the funds are paid into a common fund; but as long as you have a Lincoln Bus Service, a Yonkers, General Motor Omnibus Service, a Liberty, a Progressive and all like that and when six or seven of such companies are making a profit while the others are run at a loss, you are not in a position to know if your transport system is run at an advantage or disadvantage to the public. That is what the report could not reveal; it could not reveal whether the Concessionaires were performing a service that you need.

9.10 p.m.

Now there are certain things you should begin to nationalise and nationalise in the public's interest. Now you do not nationalise purely on unintelligible grounds, because in that case you will nationalise every peddling shop in the country; but you should nationalise in the public's interest. You have water in this island for instance and you do not allow water to be sold at whatever cost they like.

What I am prepared to show by facts is that there is a better service to be available to the public by the institution of one common service, rather than having a eight or ten separate services. If I were a financier, I would take the whole road system in this island and show the public how to get a better service. At present you use a lot of vehicles on the road run at low wages, but you are not providing the public with the adequate service they should have.

The whole system should be transformed into a network. There are more buses running in London than they are in the Caribbean area put together. Between four o'clock and six o'clock p.m. in London, some ten million people are removed from place to place in a matter of hours. Imagine the ingenuity of people overseas!

Mr. Speaker, the point that you can clearly see is that in big countries transport is regarded as essential; whereas in Barbados we have now come to regard it as essential, because you have passed emergency powers to preserve its continuity. But the opportunity that has now presented itself to the public—And this is where an answer is needed: at every stage the bus Concessionaires swing, a decision has to be made by Government. I have never seen a Government pushed around as now.

You are begging for time; you must be a boxer or a cricketer in the dark! Now the Government asked this Committee to report on the 25th February and the Committee asked that its time might

be extended. If you have a Ministerial system, those of us who have given some thought to constitutional Government, must bear in mind that the person whom this concerns must have an idea as to how to deal with it and to let the public know precisely where it stands, not looking through the window to see if you have enough votes. Some day you will see that you may have not enough votes to do something.

You should not say I cannot make a decision because I may be out voted; there are going to be times when the public cannot be with you.

Now what is the position here today? The Community is asked to pay out of the Public Treasury for a service that they are not satisfied with. Do you realise the number of new businesses that people have had to set up in this island. We are putting up a new building now in Fairchild Street. Have we asked Government for any subsidy? [A VOICE: Not yet.] You are going to ask a community to provide a subsidy; and this is where you have the whole community laughing at you: you are giving them a subsidy if you are satisfied that they do not need an increase in bus fares. This is the likely answer from Government: "Oh! This is necessary because you are a capitalist and are putting on a new bus". It is a Conundrum.

I do not know where you can ever get a statement like that from [A VOICE: You are talking too early.] I can afford to talk early. This is not a matter of maintaining an old bus; you are capitalising new units which means then that with that same subsidy you will be carrying on the old units. I consider that the Concessionaires would be fools not to take advantage of it.

If I were a Concessionaire I would make money out of my buses. I would have exploited it because it is clear that if you give a company a subsidy that is equivalent to \$60,000 per annum based on the new units, they have to put on these new units; and as long as you get them agreeing to a subsidy you cannot then claim that they are making money. All the Concessionaires are going to do is to take your subsidy, and you will never be able to prove whether they are making money or not. In Barbados we have not yet achieved a high standard in accountancy nor can we say what is what. In cases like these you have to console yourself that if a man gets a little 'rake-off' here and there he is only a clever man. These accounts could not be clearly stated concerning these Reports and this Committee could not be otherwise than hesitant about them.

9.20 p.m.

I am sorry for these gentlemen; it is clear to me that the Government should have asked some independent body, (I mean people who are not mixed up in the Transport service) if it were their intention to have an independent enquiry. It is true that the Government was not bound to accept the Report of this Committee or that of any other Committee, but the terms of reference are a little dubious. The terms of reference are: "To investigate the claims of the Bus Concessionaires for an increase in bus fares and to make recommendations to the Government before the 28th of February, 1955." That means that the Government was setting up a Committee to investigate the claims of the Bus Concessionaires and to make recommendations. From their very terms of reference, this Committee was a Bus Fare Raising Committee.

The Government was pressed for a long time; they said: "We do not want to come down and grant any increase in bus fares unless a Committee had investigated the matter." It has been used against the

Government that now they have set up their own Committee and the Committee says that there is a claim for increased bus fares; now they find themselves in the position that wherever they turn it is a question of "heads I win; tails you lose!"

The Government say that they are not accepting the Report of this Committee; they never had any intention in our life time of raising bus fares for political reasons. This question has been raised during my time as a member of the Executive Committee and since I have left the Executive Committee; and now there is this question of giving this rebate as an increase in bus fares.

Well if the Devil brings it, it does not matter; it does not matter if it comes out of the right hand pocket or the left hand pocket according to the reply which the Premier has been giving to the hon. junior member for the City. You have not actually given an increase in bus fares but you have given them a subsidy. It is just like the case where a gentleman went to Mr. Murphy for money; when Mr. Murphy gave him 2/6 he said "you take back your 2/6 and give me my 2 shillings" [laughter]; he wanted two coins. The fact is that two units are more than one and it does not matter how much the one unit amounts to.

You do not know if the travelling public is already paying enough; the statistics are not given. In London you pay 4 cents and you drive for a further distance than in Barbados, and the drivers get higher wages than what we are paying. Here you can only come to the conclusion that in 1939 the bus fare should have been one cent. You raise bus fares when it is shown that the public is getting so much service; the community feels that if they get service for the money they pay they will have to pay for that.

To-day the island is paying more for the Government than what was paid before; and it is surprising to know that some of the Ministers say that the members of the House are getting too much money, although we are paying more for the Government. If your service demands the payment of more money, you want to pay more because the people who are running this service are running it better than they were running it before. The question is, what it will cost the community of Barbados if this service becomes a public service. The Government has taken over a Cinderella in Bridgetown known as the Gas Company; you have to draw a match under gas lamp to look for a penny. [Mr. LEWIS: To see if the light is burning!] You wonder if the light is burning. That is the only thing that the Government has taken over.

9.30 p.m.

You do not know what the service would cost to take over. Let us know what it would cost; let us know if it is beyond our means; let us also know if the buses which are operating now are the sort of thing which you need.

The hon. senior member for St. Lucy talked of nationalising a public transport service. That may be a very good thing, but when you talk of setting up such a service and giving employees a pension and what-not, I will only say you have not yet reached that stage. I would like to see Government set up a public transport service but not as a departmental service; and for this reason: the mental attitude of the Civil Servants of Barbados is not geared to modern and quick action. The mentality of Civil Servants, even with Ministerial Government is that of looking to see if the Minister would be pleased. You are gradually throttling down the initiative in man-

kind by your actions. The question of "can I please you" is a carrying on of the oligarchic system; one in which you have an oligarch ruling without any semblance of democracy whatsoever; that is, you take democracy and use it for whatever means you care.

Now, I am satisfied in my mind that the departmental system of nationalising public passenger transport service would not give the public a good service, but I am satisfied that if you nationalise a public transport service and have men with initiative responsible to the Minister of Transport and Communications, they with public co-operation can give this community an excellent service. In Great Britain the British Overseas Airways Company which we were clamouring to bring here is a public service. It is owned by the British Government; but a Board is set up to run it with Sir Miles Thomas as Chairman. If you have a public passenger transport service with men who are not willing to kowtow to help a chap, who are independent in their feelings, that is the kind of Committee which would be of some good.

I am satisfied in my mind that no Concessionaire would have dreamt of pushing around the Government if a blunt and forthright statement had been made to them all along. It is true that this report by the Enquiry Committee has been a cue for the Concessionaires to act as they please. Because of that, the Government has to look to people who possess the guts to tell the Concessionaires what they think about them. Personally, I can speak to any Concessionaire because I have never borrowed any money from any of them. That is one thing which a man in public life should aim at. You should not leave the House of Assembly and go cap in hand asking favours of people.

I do say, Mr. Speaker, that on an issue such as this there can be no qualm of conscience. If bus Concessionaires have a qualm of conscience, it is my considered opinion that we have dealt with them more directly than other members of this House. Personally, I can say that in my dealings with them, I have always found them very hard people to deal with. In fact, they are the hardest set of people to deal with in the island. [A VOICE: That is not true.] Well, the only people who are harder to deal with are the people in the St. Michael's Vestry.

Again I would say, if the Government wants to take a particular view of this matter, I would suggest that it take over the whole transport system. Government has the idea that in order to do so, it would have to go into Barclay's Bank and put, say, \$89,000, in somebody's hands. Government always asks the question: "Where is the money to come from to do it?" You had a Labour Government in England which nationalised all the things it wanted to nationalise and it did not ask "where is the money to come from to do it?"

I will ask the Government of Barbados to look at what Jamaica is going to do. That Government is going to have a State Bank. I bet you that if anybody makes a motion that the Banks of Barbados be nationalised, that people would believe you are getting ready to go to Mars. [A VOICE: They are not going to nationalise the Banks in Jamaica.] [ANOTHER VOICE: He does not know what he is talking about.] Sir, imagine the Hon. Minister of Labour saying that I do not know what I am talking about. He should be the last person to say that. I have never met in all my life any single man like the hon. member, who so many people are so ready not to call him a wise man. I said, that in Jamaica there are going to have a State Bank. In this state of ours, you must

get the thin edge of the wedge in before you get in the whole wedge.

That reference was given only as an indication to show you what is taking place in the world to-day on the question of public ownership. There was a time when Governments never took any part in public utilities, no matter whether it was managed by public or private concerns. Today, we have seen a change in that respect all over the world.

I am satisfied in my mind that the capitalist system will never serve the world well, because fundamentally it is based to serve private interest, not the community. I am not afraid to say that although I live in a capitalist society. Therefore, if you have any public utility which is not serving the public interest it should be taken over and run by the Government. Public transport as we have it, is not going to serve this community well because it is not geared to serve it well. I say again, the capitalist system was never born to serve the people it was born out of feudalism. [A VOICE: What about America?] That is the only monstrosity where the economic resources of that country is so vast and wealthy that the people never had the real impact of what the capitalist system means to them.
9.40 p.m.

I make this charge: the Government seem to be afraid to say that we feel we have had enough of this system and we are not having anymore of it. This system should be transferred from private ownership to public ownership; until the Government decides to do that the community will always be burdened by the Concessionaires. It has gone to such a stage now that the Government has produced another of these infants to which they have given the sobriquet "pirate" buses.

Now, it seems that the "pirate" buses have come to stay. I noticed that the Hon. Minister of Communications has made a statement about the "pirate" buses; but I will make this personal statement now: as long as the Minister remains Minister of Communications you will never see the "pirate" buses go off the road because they have become part and parcel of the community. I have no compunction in my mind that the "pirate" buses have now integrated themselves into the life of the community; that is what has happened. That is why I say that you are not going to live long enough to see the "pirate" buses off the road; because politicians will always be politicians; and they will say to themselves it is not going to be meet for me to do it?

Mr. Speaker, I will end by saying that this debate has given opportunity to assess public feeling; and by public feeling I mean those who represent public thought in the community. Do not be too smug about it; if the members of the Government think that what I am saying is just words, let them take a little time off and go through the country as I have done and they will be able to assess some of these things for themselves. I repeat that a little bit of smugness is not too good. Try it out by holding some meetings; in that way you will be able to get a better idea. I think it will give the hon. senior member for St. Michael an opportunity of realising what is the true feeling of the public on this bus affair.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. junior member for St. Lucy may speak if he wants to.

Mr. TUDOR: Yes, Mr. Speaker; but I reserve the right to speak until later.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid if no other hon. member desires to speak I will have to put the question.

There was a pause.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this House do now adjourn—
9.50 p.m.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY You will pardon me, Mr. Speaker, for not rising especially in view of what you said sometime last week about hon. members not rising promptly when they wish to speak; but I have purposely detained myself because I was hoping that some hon. member from the Government's side would join in the debate and in that way avoid a solo proceeding from the Opposition's Bench. It is sad to think that so far there has been no further contribution to this debate from the Government.

Last week I was not here and there was some opinion that a motion for adjournment would bring about an explanation in a matter. Besides the fact that the Premier had risen to explain the decision of the 15% subsidy, there seems to be no attempt from the Government's point of view to say anything. It remains therefore for me to ask leave to withdraw the motion if I care to do so. I need not do that because the motion has been seconded and therefore it can be put to the vote.

There is very little for one to reply to except for the fact that I cannot be too strong in saying that the Report which has been actually laid in the House has not been circularised to hon. members as yet; but from the gist of it, we can say that there is much to be desired.

However this debate this afternoon has done some good. Surely in a matter of this magnitude in which the general public is so interested, everyone expects to hear something besides the speech made by the Hon. Minister of Communications recently. There is one point which I should like to stress and it is that the two hon. members who have spoken have been advocating that the Government should take over the transport system, but I do not subscribe to that idea. I want to make my position abundantly clear to the Government because it does seem that the Government will not be committing itself to any reply or anything of the sort. However, I see difficulty in taking over; I am still of the view that free enterprise should be allowed to handle this matter. The Public Utilities Board seems to me to be the proper authority to handle this matter when it reaches the stage where it appears that the Government is not prepared to run it.

I condemn the Government very strongly for suggesting this 15% rebate. I do not want it to be felt that I expressed my view and others might have to go to the public with it; but it strikes me that there is no justification for the Government to give this 15% rebate. No case has been made out for any increase in bus fares and I think the Report states that they have found out how much money you are spending but do not know how much money you are bringing in. The Acting Chief Justice actually suggested to one person that he should keep books; these people have been unable to prove their case because they have failed either wilfully or by design to bring forward any facts. I am not saying that if a case is made out that there should not be any increase in bus fares; the anxiety with which the public has been faced during recent days and the admission which the Government has made about offering this 15% rebate would be tantamount to collusion with the Concessionaires in saying "You have not made out any case for an increase but we will be generous to you and give you this 15% rebate." That cannot be condemned too strongly.

On the other hand if you are going to admit the fact that the concessionaires who for the past ten years have been operating buses and they have been allowed 20% depreciation on their buses, and they have still for that period been operating with the same old buses, the question to which you should address your mind is this: what have they been doing with this 20% depreciation?
10.00 p.m.

The Hon. Premier in his reply to me stated that the 15% rebate which is being offered to bus concessionaires is offered because they have got to supply 30 new buses. I will ask him to address this question to his mind; they have been operating for the past ten years and they have not added one new bus to their service, but they have taken from out of their general revenue 20% for depreciation before making any return for income tax. What have they done with that money? There can be no argument that you should take money to lend to a Concessionaire. That 20% for depreciation comes out first before they make any returns or do anything at all. If they take it out of the bus business and put it into real estate, then Government would be guilty of rank dishonesty to talk of taking up one set of the people's money to offer them to rehabilitate the bus industry.

Sir, it is your duty to the people of this colony to stop bluffing and to stop them from bluffing you. I am going to suggest to you to advertise for new concessions; I have suggested it to the Hon. Premier earlier. I am also going to suggest that you make the concessions for a period of ten years for the simple reason that people will only go the bank or invest big sums of money if they have a guarantee behind it for a given period. I am sure if you advertise for concessions to-morrow and you make it clear that you are relaxing some of your restrictions which you have the power to relax, you can get in some English-made or American-made buses within a short space of time. It is well known that the bodies and chassis of those buses change so often that you can get almost new bodies in the market at any time.

If you let Concessionaires know that you are calling for tenders and that you are making the stipulation that you are not going to let them use their buses, they are not going to quit. Let me say that the only body who has anything to lose is Concessionaires. When they refuse to run their buses, what are they going to do? Let me repeat that they are not entitled to an increase; let them prove that they have lost money. You can prove in each individual case from 1939, when you gave them their concession, that they have taken out that 20% for depreciation; and it is a fact that they have taken out that money and put it into real estate and other businesses. Now, they find that the public is demanding a better service than what they are supplying, they are asking for an increase in bus fares. I am sure that they are sufficient people in this country who will be willing to accept the concessions providing that they are given the same bus fares as prevail now.

It is amazing to think that you have people who say that they are losing money and that they have been losing money for some years, and not one of them has gone to the Government and said: "Here you are, we are losing money for so many years; take the concession." I am sure that not one of them will do it to-day, to-morrow or the next five years. They are bluffing; as a matter of fact, both sides are bluffing. Neither the Government nor the Concessionaires are prepared to see the other's end.

I am very mild in this matter to-day; but I am serious. A few moments ago somebody reminded me that a report was sent in to Government and recommendations were made. I will repeat what I said earlier today: there are certain feelings among the community that a promise has been made to increase bus fares and I hope that is not correct. In the recommendations there is a proposal for an increase in bus fares, but I am warning you that whether you can get it through this House is another factor. While the Hon. Premier may be responsible for a number of seats in this House when it comes to this increase in bus fares, he must give members of his party a lot of latitude. Let them think for themselves.

I understand from the Hon. Premier that your regulations for this bus industry is coming in this Chamber next week. I also understand that they have agreed to get the "pirate" buses off the road. Let me ask you again, do you think, if people could get decent buses to drive in, they would sit down squeezed and choked up in "pirate" buses? [A VOICE: They would be able to carry people with luggage]. He says that he has agreed to allow them to run for people carrying luggage.
10.10 p.m.

Can you imagine that with a substantial road and buses running from Mile-and-a-Quarter that somebody is going to cloak up with 50 million people in a pick-up? I warn the Hon. Premier about his promise. The slightest flaw in these Regulations is going to be the same as those Regulations which — [A VOICE: Go to the law.] He says: go to the law. [F. L. WALCOTT: But the Law is not amended.] I know this: if there is one good thing that this debate has done here tonight, it is to let the Government see that they cannot give that 15% rebate; and for what I know it *cannot* be given.

Look at the position of every Concessionaire and you will see that they have been able to spend from five to fifteen thousand pounds outside the rehabilitation of the bus business. If that is so, why should you find money to give them. If, for example, the hon. junior member for St. George's Ice Factory went bad, are you going to give him money to rehabilitate his Ice Factory? It is the same thing as saying that we are going to give him money to put back the Spa. He has taken his money and invested it in that; he is making money out of it.

Mr. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, there is no truth in that statement.

Mr. E. D. MOTTLEY: Well, if there is no truth in that, then the hon. member is making the wrong returns to the St. Michael Vestry. I want the Hon. Premier to get this straight. What about the thousands and thousands of people who buy their own houses? What about the Bus Company which did not pay any taxes?

I notice that no amount of talk seems to be able to bring the Government out tonight. But later when a statement is made — [A VOICE: A statement?] Well, what else must we do? We see that we are going to have to resort to all sorts of tactics in order to get a reply from the Hon. Minister.

Anyway, what I feel about it is this: as I said before, I never agreed with the Emergency legislation that was passed; because just a few days ago when it was brought home forcibly to me, it was said among other things, that drivers could be found etc.; but if you should find carburettors taken off from vehicles, have you got means of proving that the Concessionaires took them off? I know the Hon. Premier will say, what should be done in a case like that; he is a lawyer. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: The

police courts will decide that.] The Concessionaire can go to St. Lucy in the evening before half past six, (the buses are put up at ten o'clock.) and at five o'clock in the morning not a bus comes out. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: That will call for another Order.] The saying is: let us have new Concessionaires; but Mr. Speaker, I feel confident that you are not going to have new Concessionaires; the 'boys' are going to take it up and a way will be provided.

Before I sit down let me say this: it is a true adage that "silence gives consent"; and I wonder if the silence of the Government means that they are going to improve bus fares. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Over our dead bodies.] I hear that said *sotto voce* both politically and otherwise. Well, I do not profess to be as strong as that. The answer is "no", and other hon. members would like to hear him say "no". [A VOICE: He is not the Minister of Communications.] He is not the Minister of Communications, but he is the Minister of everything. Stop making sport! If the Hon. Premier died tomorrow morning — [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: I said: over our dead bodies.] You said: over my dead body. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Ask the Reporter.] Anyway, whatever you have said, it has amounted to saying: over our dead bodies, but Mr. Speaker, you will have to have a pathological doctor to say if the others are dead.

In this discussion tonight, none of the Ministers have got up to say anything; but I can quite appreciate what the Hon. Premier means when he says: bus fares will be increased over our dead bodies. I should like him to realise that to give a rebate on gasoline is another way of increasing bus fares; and that I am asking him to give weighty consideration to it too. That would convince the general public that there had been some private arrangements made. I am referring to the truth of the rumour; and it was because of public sentiment that the Opposition has been so strongly opposed to giving this rebate in place. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: That also is not true.] The Hon. Premier says, that also is not true. I know the Hon. Premier does not want to pay attention to rumour; but he is going to have to pay attention before long.

10.20 p.m.

To give a rebate of 15% to the Concessionaires is a very difficult thing; it is not an honest thing. You have appointed a Committee to go into the matter, the Committee has made a recommendation and not one Minister could stand up with honesty, integrity or sincerity and say from that Report that he is satisfied with it. The Report itself says that it cannot tell you how much money these Concessionaires are making. As soon as you give this rebate that gives point to the rumour. I have been fighting this matter for so long that I begin to get afraid of getting in a bus.

Mr. Speaker, I see that nothing will bring out any Minister, but if I really wanted to bring out one of them I would say some things to which they would take objection. But I am calm tonight. I am not saying these things now; I am waiting until the Regulations are brought forward. What justification could there be in giving this 15% rebate when one can spend £5,000 in one year in buying real estate? Would that not be dishonesty and lending colour to the rumour which is going around? I repeat: what justification could there be in giving these people this rebate of 15% when the Income Tax Commissioner could say that over this period you have to pay \$36,000? If they can prove to you that they have been carrying under capacity, that they have been taking so much money—Let them see that

we do not believe the statements which they are making.

Somebody has said that if we had reputable auditors; (I do not question the reputation of the auditors, I question the accuracy of the books which have been put before the auditors). Even an auditor compiles his own figures and works by them; but however respectable an auditor you might be, you get the books put before you and you can only go by them. Years ago Mr. D. G. Leacock asked: "Can you tell me how much money you have been bringing in?" You can show the facts for every tyre, every gallon of gasoline and the stationery, but you cannot say how many people you have been carrying in the buses. Something is wrong; and now the Government says in a Press release that they will give these people a 15% rebate! By what stretch of the imagination are you doing it?

Mr. Speaker, there does not seem to be any chance of hon. members on that side of the table saying anything; but we have one assurance: that the bus fares will not be raised; I think we can safely say that we had that assurance when I stood on the floor of this House two months when the hon. junior member for St. Peter was speaking and said: "Do not bring this matter of increasing bus fares in here because you will have this roof blown off." I did not expect that the Government would have had this idea of giving these people this 15% rebate; I do not know how this idea originated.

10.30 p.m.

One last point I am going to make, Mr. Speaker. (You can take this back to the Concessionaires) if you go into the law courts and search up the records over the past six years, you will find that in every case where bus Concessionaires had an accident with a motor car or other vehicle, that they have told the Chief Justice: "Our takings per day by that bus is an average of \$40."

I wonder why you put some of these people on Committees. Those bus Concessionaires tell the Chief Justice: "I am Managing Director of this business. My bus has been struck by Mr. John's motor lorry or motor car, and my bus has been out of commission for so many days. The average taking from that bus per day is \$40." Now, let us see what that means. Take out \$2 for a Conductor and another \$2 for the Driver. Now, say that it takes 20 gallons of gasoline to run it for that day. That is about \$14 or thereabout. Now, call his units six, see if that is not over \$20 a day profit per bus which would be \$120 for the six units. Before he does anything with that he takes out 20% for depreciation. If you take everything into consideration you will see from that figure that Concessionaires are making more than 15% on their investments.

I was amused when I sat in the law courts to listen to a case in which a Concessionaire was called to show that he was not making any profit out of his service. He had buses which were twelve years old and they were put at \$4,000. If I remember correctly, the Hon. Premier was in that case. If you give me a bus company to run I too can show you that I am losing so much money; as a matter of fact, I can go as far as to show you that the bus company does not exist. You can make figures prove anything.

Let me say that the Hon. Premier is a lawyer. It is your duty to go into the courts and search the records and if you do so, you will see to what those bus owners have been swearing. You can then get from the gasoline people in this country what is the consumption of gasoline by people in the bus industry. Divide it properly amongst them and you will

see what they are making out of it. I suggest to you if the gas industry to them is a subsidiary to the business, and as some of them say they are only making money from that side of the business, that they are taking it from themselves. I have a knowledge of the figures. [A VOICE: It is \$4,000,000] Someone said the gasoline industry which is a subsidiary to this business is worth \$4,000,000. If that is so, ask yourself how many of these Concessionaires are able to supply themselves with gasoline. If they are making all that money as the result of a subsidiary to the business, then I say to you it will be rank dishonesty if you take up the people's money and give them to get new buses. You will be stealing the people's money if you give them a 15% rebate on gasoline.

Of course, I know that there are solicitors and lawyers in this country who are willing to see the people freezed by arguing a case for their clients, but if you have 14 people who have concessions and 5, 6, or 7 of them say that they are losing a total of \$37,000, apportion it. I am sure that if there is a loss it will be found that the greater portion will be by those concessions which are running in the country. When it comes to those who are supplying themselves with gasoline, you know very well that if a bus uses 20 gallons per day and you give 4c. per gallon for the selling of it, that is 80c. per bus. You can apportion that to the number of buses in the particular concession. I know that not one of them is run with water.

Mr. Speaker, I know when I am finished speaking on this matter and the Government votes for this 15% rebate that the whole public will adjudge them as dishonest. Let me say here and now that I will support you 100% if you come in here tomorrow and say that you are not going to increase bus fares or give them anything at all; but if you say you are going to nationalise the bus service, I am going to vote that these same Concessionaires be given back their concessions.

I can imagine what will happen when Government takes over. It is bad enough now; what will it be then? I warn the Government that that rebate is not honest. [Hon. G. H. ADAMS: No promises were made.] But the paper said you made a promise and rumour had it that certain members of the Government had made a promise.

10.40 p.m.

Hon. G. H. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker I beg to move that the question be now put.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nobody has seconded this motion?

Mr. BARROW: In the first place I have listened to the remarks made by the hon. senior member for the City; but it is our feeling that the debate which took place to-night is a bit premature, in view of the fact that the indications of the Government up to now have only served to becloud what are the vital issues regarding the transport system of the island.

I should like to congratulate the hon. junior member for St. Peter on the rather illuminated speech which he made on certain aspects of the Report; but if I may be brief, I should like to say that it is our feeling that the Minister of Communications displayed his ineptitude in the pronouncement (if it can be called a pronouncement) which he failed to make on Sunday evening last when the people of Barbados were looking forward to (certainly not some world shattering) but certainly to some explanatory provision in this particular issue. We also feel that the Report of the Enquiry Committee should have been debated in this House before

the Report was published in the Press and before the Executive Committee entered any negotiations with the bus Concessionaires. We were alarmed at some of the suggestions which have come from the hon. junior member for the City, suggestions in which charges emanated, as well they might, from the hon. junior member for St. Peter; and I should like to say now, Mr. Speaker, that if any member of the Government's Bench has any pecuniary attachments to any of the bus Concessionaires that he should be man enough to get up and disclose such interest and to withdraw from this matter before the Government makes a peaceful decision on it.

We do not feel that in a democratic community it would be very worthy for responsible persons of the Government to be professing one thing in public and having a show down with others behind closed doors. I noticed that the hon. senior member for St. Michael said in his very brief and inadequate statement on Sunday evening, that the door was not slammed. It was very interesting to hear that particular terminology used by the Minister of Communications; and I wonder if the Minister meant that he had closed the door quietly and tiptoed out without slamming it. Mr. Speaker, if what the Minister of Communications intended is that he did not slam the door but that he tiptoed the course which I have just suggested is almost implicit. I should say that we should treat the Minister of Communications the same way as Socrates was treated. Perhaps we should crown him with laurels and usher him out of the State.

Mr. Speaker, if it would not be amiss, I will also quote from Revelation:

"I know by thy works that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot; so then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

And that is what the general public will feel after this Minister has been treated. As I said before we, on this side of the House, in contradiction to the hon. senior member for the City the hon. junior member for St. Peter and those members who have already spoken, do not feel that the time is yet right for us to enlarge any more on the few remarks that I have made. We are watching the index of the Government with interest. At the same time we deplore the fact that when the Committee was in session, the same report which was published was not sold, and that no representations were made by the travelling public or even by the Trade Unions who would be most intimately concerned with the wages and conditions of employment of the bus conductors, drivers and mechanics.

It is rather remarkable that in one of the most vital services in this community, despite the fact that the one working class organisation was at the time in the throes of their Labour Day fulminations, the Government should make a demand that the conditions of employment and wages in that particular industry are below normal because of that circumstance. I do wish that the hon. junior member for St. Peter had dealt more fully with that point and expressed the attitude of his organisation on that particular issue.

The next thing we want to say is this: That with regard to the Emergency Regulations which were introduced into this House some time ago and which have not yet been in vogue (not reflecting in any way on the House, Mr. Speaker) we feel that it would be more in nature of political back talk held over the heads of the bus Concessionaires and perhaps the citizens of Barbados in general, than

the inducement of the rebate which the Government is now offering the Concessionaires. The economic aspects of that transaction from the general public back to the Concessionaires themselves, will have full criticism from this side of the House if and when it is done.

As to the merits or demerits of the increase envisaged by the Report of the Committee, in view of the fact that the Minister of Communications has not vouchsafed any clear or adequate information to this House or treated this House with the courtesy of a debate on the pros and cons of the increase recommended by the Committee, since they have the information and they have refused to state either over the radio or in the Press clearly what were the ground for granting this rebate, we will withhold

our fire motives which led them to this particular decision until such time as that information is vouchsafed to us.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. Dr. H. G. H. CUMMINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move as an amendment to the motion of the hon. senior member for the City, that this House do now adjourn until this day week at 3 o'clock p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to second that.

The question that this House do now adjourn until this day week at 3 o'clock p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
10.55 p.m.