THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SESSION 1962

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 26th March, 1964.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 3.30 p.m. o'clock today.

PRESENT

His Honour J. E. T. BRANCKER, Q.C., *(Speaker)*; Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD, *(Minister of Development, Trade, Industry, Labour and Tourism)*; Hon. C. E. TALMA, *(Minister of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries)*; Hon. J. C. Tudor, M.A., *(Minister of Education)*; Mr. J. W. CORBIN; Mr. S. E. SEALEY; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, *(Minister of Communications, Works and Housing)*; Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE; Mr. G. V. BATSON, *(Chairman of Committees)*; Mr. N. W. BOXILL and Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS, *(Minister of Social Services)*.

Prayers were read.

Hon. E. W. BARROW, Messrs. YEARWOOD and CARMICHAEL entered the House and took their seats.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I regret to say that there are no minutes yet ready for confirmation for the past several meetings. It is hoped that by the next meeting of this House, all the Minutes will be up to date and circulated.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Barbados Harbours (Speed-boat) Regulations, 1964.

Mr. LYNCH entered the House and took his seat.

STATEMENTS LAID

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following Statements:-

Statement on the use of funds provided by Resolution No. 83/1963 to meet local expenses of Rodent Liaison Officer; and

Statement concerning the use of funds provided in the 1963-64 Estimates to meet the administrative expenses of the Agricultural Credit Bank.

REPLY LAID

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 172, asked by the hon. junior member for St. Philip, is now ready.

MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE *re* "TRUTH" AND "ADVOCATE" NEWSPAPERS

Private Members' Business having been called,

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, Government Statements will have to come next and there are several Statements to be made on behalf of the Government. Before we come to Private Members' Business, I beg to draw to Your Honour's attention a matter of privilege, and ask Your Honour to take action thereon and to make a Statement in connection with previous Statements made by Your Honour. The matter of privilege to which I want to draw Your Honour's attention is the publication Volume 1X No. 83, dated 25th March, 1964. This publication purports to be a newspaper and on the front page there appear these headlines. "HOUSE DEBATE "UN-ORBIT" U.K., U.S., & U.S.S.R. MAY LOSE SPACE RACE; BARROW TO KICK MAN TO MOON; INJECTION TALK LEADS TO GRAVE DISORDER".

The particular part to which I want to make reference appears on page 1 of the said publication; the particular part to which I want to draw Your Honour's attention is a gross misrepresentation of the proceedings in this House. It reads as follows:-

"When Mr. Speaker heard that Mr. Barrow was objecting "to exactly what he had just read" he promptly ruled there was nothing unparliamentary recorded in the notes and therefore nothing which would have to be withdrawn.

Upon this the Speaker's twenty-five years and what not came under the attack of the Honourable Premier and the House had to be adjourned because of disorder. A fifteen minute adjournment was taken.

There can be no doubt that yesterday's debate was conducted 'in orbit' though on a comparatively low plain, judging by the tenor of things and what escaped the lips of hon. members who spoke in such a manner."

As Your Honour will remember not only this newspaper was guilty of a misrepresentation of the proceedings in this House, but also another newspaper named the "*Advocate*" to which I will draw Your Honour's attention. Your Honour will very well remember that the occasion of the adjournment of the House – whether Your Honour was correct in doing so is a matter on which I reserve my opinion and to which Your Honour is entitled alone to decide; but the occasion of the adjournment was due to the fact that after a division had been called for, the hon. senior member for St. Peter rose to his feet, which is against the Standing Orders of this House. After a motion is put, no hon. member must rise from his seat except on a point of order. Your Honour did not call upon the hon. member to take his place; Your Honour decided that, since the hon. member

was standing at the time, the House should adjourn. There was, at that stage, no kind of disorder in the House. Your Honour will remember that, during the course of debate, I was almost inaudible and I said that I had no intention of raising my voice because I did not wish any disorder and I would not give any one the excuse to say that the House was adjourned in disorder.
3.55 p.m.

I further stated, Mr. Speaker, that the mere fact that I was speaking in almost inaudible tones was not an indication that I did not feel very strongly upon the matter and was calling upon Your Honour to make a ruling as firmly as the way in which my objection, although made *sotto voce*, was made. Your Honour, therefore, will be perfectly conscious of the circumstances under which the House was adjourned; and at that stage it was a considerable time after I made my submission that Your Honour elected to adjourn the House for fifteen minutes. It is rather unfortunate that we do not have procedure resolved without adjournments of the House. This habit unfortunately crept into the practice and proceedings of this Chamber since the tenure of office of the last Speaker. It never used to happen before, but that is one of the prices we have to pay for democracy, in that we have all manner and kinds of men masquerading as representatives of the people and coming into this Chamber, and sometimes letting their exuberance and sometimes their viciousness get away with them. Nonetheless I feel it is the duty of the Chair not to bring the Chair into disrepute merely because a member is out of order standing on his feet. That is not a censure of Your Honour; it is merely a matter for Your Honour; but it gives the misfortunate and mis-informing presses of this Island the opportunity to misrepresent to the general public that there is some kind of fracas or imbroglio taking place from Tuesday to Tuesday in this Chamber, when in truth and in fact all that happened on that occasion was that the hon. member should have spoken to the Chair from the position of his seat, or standing on his feet make submissions to Your Honur.

I cannot entertain that with any equanimity, and in view of the Standing Orders of this Chamber and the necessity that whatever may happen in this Chamber a fair and accurate report should be made of the proceedings, I am therefore calling upon Your Honour — and I am going to make this paper a document of the House — to undertake such disciplinary action against the perpetrator of this outrage as Your Honour deems fit.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I am happy to associate myself with the protest just made by the hon. member who has just sat down for a variety of reasons. It would seem to me, Sir, that one of the disadvantages under which this Parliament suffers is that the best construction is never put on its activities by people who report. It may be argued of course that that is a crime and perhaps the chief responsibility of those who are members of Parliament, but I would say on the other hand that people who report proceedings of Parliament have a right in the first place to be accurate, and that certainly if they are reporting that part of the proceedings which have to do with the discipline of the Chamber, it should be an absolute obligation made upon them to be accurate, and it should be known to all who report the debates of this House and the proceedings thereof that inaccuracy is the one unforgivable thing which members will not tolerate.

When, for instance, it is reported that the House was adjourned or that a sitting was suspended through disorder, and when it is further reported that the incident which caused the suspension of the sitting by Your Honour was at variance with the facts of the case, the whole House, I submit, is affronted by the inaccuracy. Your Honour must be well aware of the fact that there is no let or hindrance on the part of any side of this House to prevent its debates from being accurately reported. Such difficulties as stand in the way of accurate reporting and fair comment are technical difficulties, and not difficulties imposed by the will of the House or by any Party. Any person, therefore, who reports the proceedings of this House and who is in doubt as to any matter falling within those proceedings, is at liberty to enquire of the Officers of the House, or better still, of Your Honour as to the points of procedure involved, so that having grasped, for instance, the particular Standing Order which is infringed, or having grasped the point at issue, he will be able fairly and accurately to report the proceedings of the House.

I myself feel that there is a duty laid on hon. members on both sides of the House to see to it that the best construction is put on the proceedings of the House. That, however, does not absolve people who report the proceedings of the House in whatever way or from whatever quarter from being accurate and from not reporting in such a way as to bring the proceedings of the House into contempt. One consequence of this most grievous evidence, Mr. Speaker, is this: that it not only distorts what actually happened, but it makes it appear as if the Chair itself was not fully *au fait* with the proceedings of the House and with the point under dispute. As the hon. member said, Your Honour, for whatever reasons you did it — and those we do not question — thought fit to suspend the sitting of the House because in Your Honour's view there was disorder or there was likely to be disorder. That is a matter which Your Honour must judge not only on that occasion but on all subsequent occasions. What can, however, reflect discredit on Your Honour is that if a report is made that Your Honour suspended the proceedings of the House for a reason which did not exist or on a set of alleged circumstances which are at variance with the facts, then the reputation of the Chair of knowing its business stands challenged, and I submit, Your Honour, that neither in this House nor outside of it should the reputation, authority and propriety of the Chair be challenged. Even if we ourselves in moments of heat do seem to go near that very inadvisable proceeding, it certainly is no warrant at all for persons outside this Chamber who are not members of the Chamber to take that liberty with Your Honour's reputation.

The misreporting of debates of this House is not therefore only an affront to the hon. member whose position has been distorted; it is an affront to the person who presides over the House, and an affront therefore to the House as a whole.
4.05 p.m.

I cannot dictate to Your Honour what steps you should take, but it still has to be drawn to your attention so that it may be known by those who report for the Press on the sufferance of the House that members of the House would not quarrel with fair and accurate reporting.

What they deprecate is the Press publishing a report which is slanted and distorted so as to give an unfavourable impression of the proceedings of this House and the ability of the presiding officers of the House to discipline the House as they see fit. The protest, therefore, must be strong, Mr. Speaker, and we do feel very offended at it and I am sure you will take the necessary steps in the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am grateful to the two hon. members for bringing this matter to my attention. I was unaware, until the hon. and learned member for St. John referred to it, of the existence of what was contained in the newspaper as I had not read it or even heard of it. I will give the matter my early attention and I will inform the House of my decision at its very next meeting.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Your Honour, I should also like to draw to your attention an issue of the *Advocate* newspaper of the same date. I thought a copy of this newspaper was brought to this House but unfortunately, it cannot be found and I have asked that another copy be submitted to Your Honour if Your Honour wants to read the particular part which I consider to be a breach of the privilege of this House.

I do not think I need remind Your Honour, although the members of the public and the Press may be unaware, that there is the Immunities and Privileges Bill which is part of the Statute Law of this Island and which was passed during this Session and which was adopted and agreed to by both Houses of the Legislature.

STATEMENT *re* DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF CLERKS AT THE TABLE

Hon. E. W. BARROW: I now beg Your Honour's permission to make this Statement:-

Mr. Speaker, on the 18th day of February, 1964 Your Honour made a Statement which had as a preamble the following words:-

"In accordance with an undertaking which I gave to the Honourable House last Tuesday to make a statement clarifying the duties and functions of the Clerks at the Table I now have the honour to present the result of my research."

Your Honour then proceeded to give an exposition of the functions and duties of the Clerks of the House which unfortunately created an impression that the Clerks at the Table had been criticised on this side.

What was said by me on that date and what coincidentally appeared in the official transcript is as follows:-

"Mr. Speaker, there are some hon. members of this Chamber who feel that the employees of this House, and some of the employees too, think that they are the employees of the former Government Party. I do not care when they were taken on in their jobs; the fact that they happen to be employed at a certain time – and I may say that they could not have been employed at that particular time unless hon. members of this House agreed that they should be employed. The hon. junior member for St. Joseph seems to think that he has the Speaker's ear and the Speaker's eye as well. I have drawn to the attention of this House on several occasions the fact that the employees of this House are in the habit of drafting Resolutions and Questions which they feel will embarrass the Government because they do not feel happy with the Government. I am submitting, Sir, that all they have to do in that case is to resign their posts. This Government can reduce or remove the salary of any Officer of this House if the person is not acting in the best interests of the country as a whole on the constitutional privileges which this country is enjoying."

Your Honour will notice that whereas reference was made to employees of the House no reference was made to Clerks at the Table.

Your Honour has therefore erroneously given a Ruling on a matter which arose only by Your Honour's restrictive interpretation of the term "employee".

While I cannot agree that that long exercise of this function mentioned by Your Honour in paragraph 7 of your Ruling is sufficient authority for continuation of what must be an undesirable practice, I should like to make it clear that no reference was made by me to the Clerks of the Table.

I must also draw to Your Honour's attention that you have been misinformed that such service has been rendered to each and every member of this Honourable House since no member of this Government has at any time during his parliamentary career had documents drafted for resolutions or questions prepared by any of the Clerks at the Table or any other employee of this Honourable House.

STATEMENT OF HON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE *re* RESOLUTION 83/1963

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to make the following Statement on the use of funds provided by Resolution No. 83/1963 to meet local expenses of the Rodent Liaison Officer. It reads as follows:-

An amount of $2,880 was provided by Resolution No. 83/1963 to meet local expenses for the period December, 1963 to March, 1964 of the Rodent Liaison Officer of the Department of Technical Co-operation who has been assigned to this Government to investigate rodent damage to sugar crops and stored produce, to plan a campaign of control and to assist in training local staff in rodent control measures.

The following breakdown of the $2,880 provided was given in the Addendum to the Resolution as follows:-

Furnished Accommodation	$1,920
Transportation (hire and Petrol)	800
Contingencies	160
	$2,880

The Rodent Liaison Officer has however brought out his car with him and it will not now be necessary to hire a car for his use. It is therefore proposed to pay him a travelling allowance at the usual Government rates from the amount provided for transportation. This will result in a saving of approximately half of the amount provided by Resolution No. 83/1963 to meet the cost of transportation.

STATEMENT BY HON. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE *re* FUNDS PROVIDED IN 1963-64 ESTIMATES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: The next Statement is concerning the use of funds provided in the 1963-64 Estimates under Head 24, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries to meet the administrative expenses of the Agricultural Credit Bank. It reads as follows:-

An amount of $62,905 has been provided in the 1963-64 Estimates as part of the total provision of $181,243 under Head 24, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Fisheries, Item 112, Agricultural Credit Bank, to meet the administrative expenses of the Bank. The breakdown as shown in the notes to the Estimates is as follows:-

New Loan Money			$118,338
Personal Emoluments			
Manager	$7,080		
Accountant	4,716		
Senior Clerk ...	3,960		
Secretary	2,320		
Four Clerks ...	6,774		
Two Inspectors ...	8,872		
Two Stenographers ...	3,336		
Messenger	1,092		
Watchman and Relief Watchman	1,944		
Acting Allowance ...	5,131	44,225	
Other Charges			
Furniture & Fixtures ...	451		
Travelling	2,520		
Stationery and incidentals (including cleaning office and grounds) ...	1,389		
Board Members' fees ...	450		
Solicitors' fees ...	3,600		
Legal fees	300		
Pension contribution ...	9,970	18,680	62,905
			$181,243

4.15 p.m.

An officer of the Bank who has been seconded from the General Service for duties with the Bank, has applied for and has been granted a leave passage such as he would have been eligible for in his substantive post under the provisions of the Civil Establishment (Leave Passages) Order, 1952. No provision had been made in the Bank's Estimates to meet this expenditure, but it has been possible to effect savings from the amount provided to meet the administrative expenses of the Bank. The cost of passages has been met from these savings.

Those are the two Statements which I wanted to make, Sir.

ORDER NOT PROCEEDED WITH

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business stands in the name of the hon.

junior member for St. George. In accordance with an undertaking which I gave to this Chamber on Tuesday of this week, the Clerk at my direction, wrote and delivered to the hon. junior member for St. George, a letter notifying him that the Government had set aside, in accordance with the undertaking which the Government had earlier this month given, a day and, in fact, today, for the discussion of his motion of "No confidence". The letter reads as follows:-

24th March, 1964.

F. E. Miller, Esq., M.C.P.,
"Solitude",
Brighton
Black Rock,
St. Michael.

Sir,

I have been instructed by His Honour the Speaker to inform you that at a meeting of the Honourable House held on 24th March, 1964, the Leader of the House, prior to the adjournment of the House, intimated that the Government, in pursuance of the undertaking given by the Hon. Premier on 3rd March, 1964, that it would set aside a day for the discussion of your motion of "no confidence", has fixed Thursday, 26th March, 1964, for such discussion.

The House has therefore on motion of the Leader of the House been adjourned to Thursday, 26th March, 1964, at 3.30 p.m. for this specific purpose.

Yours faithfully,
H. O. St.C. Cumberbatch,
Clerk, House of Assembly.

There was personally handed to me this afternoon at my office in this Chamber by bearer a letter which reads as follows:-

"Solitude",
Brighton,
Black Rock,
St. Michael.
26th March, 1964.

His Honour,
J. E. T. Brancker, Q.C., M.P.,
Speaker, House of Assembly,
Barbados.

Dear Mr. Speaker,

I regret that due to the short notice given by the Government relative to my Censure Motion on the Order Paper, and in view of my inability to complete my research or to discuss the final aspects thereof with the National Executive of my Party, I am unable to initiate the debate.

I would respectfully ask that another date subsequent to the reopening of the Legislature after prorogation, be made available by the Government."

Yours respectfully,
Frederick E. Miller.

That letter was received by me at 2.10 o'clock p.m. today.

For the information of the House, I will say that I have compared the signature to this document which bears today's date with the signature on the Declaration of Qualification of the hon. junior member for St. George, and I am satisfied as to the authenticity of the signature on the document which I have this day received. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the letter which I have just read, is a genuine document which was signed by the hon. junior member for St. George under whose name the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business stands, and I shall have it laid on the Table of this House.
4.25 p.m.

RESOLUTION OF NO CONFIDENCE

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order of the Day stands in the name of the hon. junior member for St. George who, I observe, is not in his place.

RESOLUTION *re* BUS SERVICE

Mr. SPEAKER: The second Order of the Day stands in the name of the hon. senior member for St. Michael: to resume debate on the passing of a Resolution *re* the provision of a bus service for the Lodge Hill District.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, as Your Honour is aware, the main purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Censure Motion tabled by the hon. junior member for St. George. We did not say that we were making the day available for discussion, generally speaking, of Private Members' Business. The meeting today is entirely a result of the fulfilment of a pledge made by the Government to make a day available for the hon. junior member for St. George, a member of the Minority Opposition Party in this Chamber, to discuss the Censure Motion.

Normally, Sir, as Your Honour is aware, Censure Motions in Parliament against a majority Party are made by the Official Opposition, and traditionally the Government makes time available from its own time for this motion to be debated. In this case, although the motion was made not by the Official Opposition Party, but by the Minority Party, the Government still went out of its way to make an entire day available for the debate on the motion, and that is the purpose for being here today. Well, now, Sir, at the last moment the hon. junior member for St. George has failed to take advantage of the opportunity, and I am afraid in doing so is trying to make a laughing stock of the House. These tactics ill befit a Legislative Chamber, as when the hon. member tabled the motion, both he and the National Executive of his Party which presumably endorsed the motion, must have then been aware of the source of discontent which they felt that both themselves and the public share, in so far as the regime of the ruling party was concerned. Long before he brought the Resolution in Sir, he must have done whatever research it was within his capacity to do, and he must have felt that the result of this research warranted the moving of the motion of censure; so therefore to send a letter to Your Honour today to state, as he has done, that his inability to complete his research or to discuss the final aspects with the National Executive of his Party, makes him unable to initiate the debate, is to reduce the proceedings of this Chamber to an absolute farce. Normally in any Legislative Chamber any part of the world, a motion of censure is to be taken seriously, and it is more than obvious here today that when the hon. junior member for St. George brought this motion in, neither he nor his Party had the faintest appreciation of what they were really trying to do firstly, and secondly they had no concrete evidence to lay charges against the Party for mis-government or incompetence or neglect of the public affairs; and thirdly; all the hon. member intended to do was to come here and waste the time of the House in one of his normal nonsensical outbursts, or worse still, merely to have this motion clutter the Order Paper and never to do anything about it. Let us even concede that the notice might have been longer. There was no reason why the hon. junior member for St. George could not have come here today, initiate the debate, give us the benefit of all the information he had when he tabled the motion, let us know the events and circumstances which induced himself and his Party to have this motion tabled, and then if he so desired, say he wanted more time and ask for more time further to discuss the matter and adjourn. That is the most simple thing which any rational person would have done.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want to interrupt the hon. member, but he is merely speaking on his own motion. I wonder if the hon. member would care to speak, perhaps, on the motion for the adjournment.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD: That is what I intended to do.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the impression that I got, but I did not actually hear the words.

Hon. W. A. CRAWFORD: Mr. Speaker, I began by saying that we had come here basically for the discussion of this motion of "No Confidence", and therefore since it was not going to be discussed, the only thing left for the Government to do was to adjourn the sitting, and I intended therefore to make the motion as I do now.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn.

On this motion for adjournment I am saying, Sir, that hon. members who are elected to this Chamber should take their duties so seriously and their responsibilities to the public in such a manner as not to bring their general *bona fides* as a member of Parliament into question. What we have seen here today is the action of a four or five year old boy in Preparatory School who played truant, could not get a proper excuse from his parents, and then went to the teacher with some nonsensical statement as to the reason for his absence. There is not a single word in this excuse, Mr. Speaker, which any serious minded individual could accept: "no time for research; no time to discuss the final aspects thereof with the National Executive of my Party." Final aspects of what? A motion of "No Confidence" is a plain, simple, unvarnished motion of "No Confidence". The motion is that the Government should resign and that we should go to the country. That is what he and his Party said they wanted; but now, given the opportunity, rather than accept, they are sheltering behind nonsensical excuses put forward in the letter by the hon. junior member for St. George.

So far as were are concerned, Sir, I want to make it clear that we intend to make no time at all available in future for the discussion of this motion. We were never obligated so to do. Out of our farsightedness and our respect for the members of this House who were elected, and out of a super-abundance of caution and a super-abundance of our Parliamentary responsibilities, we allocated a day for him to debate this matter. If he has the effrontery, if he has the cheek, if he has the bravado, if he is nonsensical enough to bring the motion again, it will take its place on the Order Paper under Private Members' Business to be dealt with one of these good days, if ever we get to it in the normal course of events.
4.35 p.m.

But to ask the Government under these circumstances, again to allocate a specific day for the debate of this matter is to possess a cheek which normally is not expected and which under no circumstances can we entertain.

I now beg to move that this House should adjourn until Tuesday next, 31st March, at 2.30 p.m.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, speaking on the motion for the adjournment, I think it advisable, both to Your Honour and hon. members of the House as well as members of this community in which we live, that we should have a very clear understanding of the issue with which we are unfortunately confronted today.

On the 11th February, 1964, the hon. junior member for St. George who is a member of the Barbados Labour Party and one of the three acknowledged members of the Barbados Labour Party in this Chamber — which is not the Official Opposition Party but which is a minority Party equal in strength only to the independents in this House — tabled a motion which was subsequently substituted to a No-Confidence motion in this Government.

On the 18th February, the hon. senior member for St. Peter and I both spoke on the validity of such a motion and Your Honour thereon adjourned discussion on this matter after promising hon. members that you would give a ruling in due course. Your Honour's ruling is now enshrined in the archives of this Chamber, and on the 3rd March, in the course of Your Honour's Ruling, Your Honour demonstrated that you could find no precedent for any person on the Opposition side of the Legislature in the British Commonwealth — I beg your pardon, I think you said in the United Kingdom — other than the Leader of the Official Opposition tabling a motion of No-Confidence in the Government; yet you were disposed to permit the hon. member's motion to remain on the Order Paper, the inference being that although Your Honour could find nothing in favour of it, Your Honour preferred to give the benefit of the doubt in this rather peculiar circumstance to the leader of the three-man opposition who would be tabling a motion of No-Confidence without any possible chance of support.

Your Honour very wisely said that you were inclined to permit the hon. member's motion to remain on the Order Paper.

I think it ought to go on the record again, as I stated on Tuesday last, that I have never retracted from the challenge which I made as to the validity of that motion. I do not think that any other member who has entertained any kind of doubt in this matter has ever retracted or recanted that attitude which he adopted, but on the morning of the 3rd March, very early in the morning, I took the opportunity to get in touch with Your Honour and informed Your Honour that after discussion of the merits and demerits of the procedure by the hon. junior member for St. George, the Government had decided, provided Your Honour was prepared to give a ruling which would allow the hon. member's motion to remain on the Order Paper, to set aside a day before the end of March, 1964, in order to allow a full debate on the hon. member's motion.

Your Honour will also remember that during the course of that conversation which took place in the early hours of the morning — *prst somnolent* hours of the morning — I said that I did not know what Your Honour's Ruling was, but I thought that I would inform Your Honour what was the attitude of the Government; and the undertaking was that the Government set aside a day, something which we did not have to do but this was an act of largesse on our part, before the end of March in order for a full scale debate to be entered upon on the hon. member's motion.

Between the 3rd March, 1964, and last Tuesday's date, 24th March, 1964, this House was engaged in the consideration of the Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1964-65. This is an exercise which normally would occupy the attention of this Chamber for two or three weeks with sittings of three or four days a week. In addition to all of that, several Civil Establishment Orders have been passed by this Chamber, several constitutional matters attendant upon the changes which we expect shortly to be promulgated within the next few days by Her Majesty the Queen had to be dealt with before the meeting of Her Majesty's Privy Council, and the House very graciously dealt with these matters in order to expedite the Government, Several other outstanding matters on the Order Paper were dealt with by the Government, and 42 out of some 45 questions which had been outstanding for differing periods of time were answered in one day by Ministers, and the others disposed of at subsequent meetings of the House and on Monday.

This is the third day which we have met this week. Two of the sittings which we have had lasted for eight hours, and on Monday I discussed with the Hon. Leader of the Opposition who is the proper person to be canvassed when we are considering an Order Paper for any subsequent meeting of the House, the possibility of allotting Thursday, 26th March, 1964, for this debate which is still-born up to now. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition agreed that it was appropriate, today being the last working day of the week when the hon. members should have the opportunity to have his motion discussed in order that the Government's promise to have the motion discussed before 31st March, 1964, will be fulfilled.
4.45 p.m.

The hon. junior member for St. George attended the House on Monday. It may be true that the hon. member was not at ease during the sitting; he was not at his ease for some days' sitting now because the country itself is somewhat disquieted over disclosures made on the floor of this House by the hon. member. The hon. member was in the House, but at the time of the day when it was appreciated by the Government that there was every chance of concluding

consideration of the Estimates, the Appropriation Bill and other matters on the Order Paper – there was a possibility of the Government getting through its work by Tuesday's adjournment – when we looked around for the hon. junior member for St. George he was no where to be found. He left the House at his customary hour, but certainly a considerable number of hours before the Government members who are accustomed to be sitting here were wont to depart.

As I mentioned to hon. members on Tuesday, it would not be expected that, in this decision, it was any part of my duty or that of the Hon. Leader of the House, to inform the hon. junior member for St. George that he should be present at Tuesday's session when the declaration of the Govenrment's intention would be given. Apart from that, Sir, you will know that the statement which I made to you and which you relayed to hon. members, was that the Government – not I or the Hon. Leader of the House – but a special meeting of the Cabient had to be summoned on Tuesday in order that the Government, as a Government, could make this decision; because the undertaking had been given – not that the Leader of the House or the Leader of the Opposition or the Chairman of the Cabinet would set aside this day, but that the Government would set aside this day. That decision was made about midday on Tuesday, 24th March, 1964.

The House met in the afternoon, and the Hon. Leader of the House informed hon. members that today's date would be set aside for the debate. I want to make the position clear on behalf of the Government. There is no other date in this month other than today's date which could conveniently be considered as a proper date for this debate, for the simple reason that we are in Easter week. To make it Good Friday, which is tomorrow, would be a day on which the House does not normally meet. I quite appreciate that all discussion must take place in the English Language, but I am sure that Your Honour will appreciate what I am saying. Sunday is Easter, Monday is a Bank holiday and on Tuesday, the 31st day of March, which is the last possible date on which this undertaking could be guaranteed, we are fortunate in being visited by Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. Then at 5.30 o'clock in the afternoon of the 31st March, His Excellency the Governor has informed the members of this House that he intends to prorogue the House and it would be appreciated by members of the public outside or those who are initiated in the mysteries of Parliamentary procedure that as soon as the House is prorogued, every single item falls in abeyance and it is not renewed by the renewal of the Legislature. If this Government had committed the error of arrogating to itself the right to decide that the notice given to the hon. member on Tuesday was not sufficient notice, and therefore there could be no debate on the motion during this session of the Legislature, loud would have been the protest that the Government was trying to stifle and criticise debate, and that a promise was made which the Government had no intention of keeping. Now we are being criticised for doing something which we did not have to do.

This is not appreciated except by those versed in Parliamentary procedure like Your Honour. The honourable member's motion was allowed to remain and with the active consent of the Government, although its place on the Order Paper is, to say the least, questionable. Having done what we did not have to do, we are now being criticised because the hon. junior member for St. George has not had time to complete what he chooses to describe as his research, because the hon. member has not had time to consult with what he elects to describe as the National Executive of what he chooses to describe as a Labour Party. But there is one significant aspect of this letter which the hon. member has written here today and to which I should like to draw Your Honour's attention. It is written from the solitude of Black Rock, St. Michael, and it states this:

"I regret that due to the short notice given by the Government relative to my Censure Motion on the Order Paper, and in view of my inability to complete my research or to discuss the final aspects thereof with the National Executive of my Party, I am unable to initiate the debate." 4.55 p.m.

What I should like to draw to Your Honour's attention is this: that the notice was given, not on Tuesday; the notice was given, Sir, on the 3rd day of March, 1964. It was not a question of springing a debate on the hon. member, but giving the outside limit. The last day on which the Government would meet this Session will be the 31st March; not because the Government was trying to inhibit the hon. member's right to enter upon a debate of this kind or to restrict his freedom of speech, but because the hon. member according to the Rules of the House would have no right after 31st March, the day which he then knew was the proposed day of prorogation. When the hon. member says that he is unable to initiate the debate, therefore, I can only take it that he means that he is intellectually incapable of initiating a debate of this kind, not that there has been any restriction of time; and if the hon. member was at all able to initiate the debate, he should have been in a position and prepared and should have been ready at any time at the drop of a hat from the 11th day of February, or let us say the 18th day of February, because that is when his amended motion first came before the public notice.

From the 18th February at the latest, the hon. member should have had at his disposal all of those facts on which he was asking the House to take such a serious and monumental decision as to vote against the competence of the Government which is now running this country, and I can only say, like the Hon. Leader of the House, that the hon. member is trifling with the time of this House. The hon. member has no intention whatsoever of moving this motion, and Your Honour will therefore have to be very careful in future how Your Honour strains the letter of the law in order to accommodate hon. members, and not to appear that you are in any way disposed to one side or to the other. That unfortunately is the danger of democracy, that in order sometimes to avoid the semblance of partiality, we have to lean over backwards to accommodate people and viewpoints which are not worthy of consideration at all. I can only say that in future Your Honour must take this as a lesson that we will have to play straight down the line, and if a motion is out of order, if there is no precedent for a minority Party introducing a motion of "No Confidence" as in this case, then the custom and usage of Parliament on which we rely, in the absence of any express provisions in our Standing Orders, have no application, because there is no usage and no custom. The very nature of the term "usage and custom" imports and connotes some degree of usage and customary behaviour; but if you have had no usage and no custom, if you have no express provision in any Standing Order either of this House or of the House of Commons, in the Mother of Parliaments as it is so fondly called, and I say "fondly" advisedly, then Mr. Speaker, I am submitting with all due deference to your Ruling that in committing this act of supererogation on your part, you may have done yourself and Parliamentary democracy in this country a great disservice.

I should not like to take my place on that note lest anyone may think that this is an attempt to reflect on Your Honour's ruling. It is not so at all. I am only stating that Your Honour has been placed in a position of acute embarrassment in your anxiety to accommodate the conflicting view-points on the floor of this House. As far as the Government is concerned, in view of the fact that the hon. member during Tuesday's sitting was driving around the precints of the Public Buildings and the roads surrounding them on no less than three occasions in an opennecked shirt – I am speaking from first hand knowledge now – we can only consider that his absence today and the flimsy excuse which he has advanced is an attempt to treat the proceedings of this House with contempt and ridicule, and in these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, and in these circumstances alone, even if there were any other circumstances containing on the hon. member's behaviour, this Government is not going to let itself be slapped in the face by the non-attendance of the member; and when in future occasions there is such a motion to be introduced either by the hon. member or by any of his colleagues, it will be relegated to its rightful place on the Order Paper under Private Members' Business.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I did not want to enter into this; I have been into it too long, and I do not like to say "I told you so". The Government is too sensible. The reason why I have risen, however, is this: The Hon. Premier in closing his remarks qualified some of what he had to say. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I do not know whom to blame, whether you, the Chairman of Committees, the Premier or the Government; but what I do say is that your acquiescence in all that has been said today is going to be a very dangerous and poor reflection on future debates. Your Honour is going to find it very difficult indeed if any hon. member reads the speech in Hansard and reads that of another Speaker to know what it is. Your Honour might be wrong in your Ruling; I might not agree with Your Honour's Ruling; but it is very pitiable to find that Your Honour is completely silent on all of the innuedos that appeared to come from the Hon. Premier in relation to what has been stated before. If this is going to be a precedent for what is to take place, I think that if that is the way the Government feels, they should make a substantive motion, I say that because Your Honour has been put in the Chair by the Government in power, and I would say that there are times when a Speaker's Ruling might come into conflict with members of the Chamber; but I feel very ashamed of myself that I am in a Chamber and that the Speaker has allowed what has taken place today. This is going to be the beginning of things to come.

I regret very much what has taken place, Mr. Speaker, but it is within your hands. I do not know why Your Honour has allowed a private letter or a letter written to you to become the subject of a debate. If the hon. member writes a letter and tells you he cannot attend a meeting of the House for any reason, I do not know how you can allow that to be the subject of a debate. The member is not asking the House to grant him leave; it is a letter to His Honour the Speaker.

5.05 p.m.

I do not see how that can be the subject of a debate.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I think the hon. member has a copy of the letter to which he refers as significant as a result of the request from this side of the House when this House decided that this day be set aside. The hon. member having replied to Your Honour and Your Honour having communicated the context of that letter, I think it is quite in order that that letter formed the discussion.

Mr. WALCOTT: The letter should not have been placed in any hon. member's hand. These things are going to be recorded. You cannot be accusing somebody of doing something wrong and then say it cancels out. I am not here to make any request for Your Honour because you have been put there by the present Government. If I were in the position of the Hon. Premier and the Hon. Leader of the House and I had put you there and was not satisfied with your Rulings, I would remove you. If I felt as both of those hon. members felt about your actions in the Chair and I had put you there, I would move a substantive motion to have you removed. The Hon. Premier and the Hon. Leader of the House must bear in mind and should know that if you accept a Speaker, you accept him with all the dignities attached to the Speakership. If he rules and you do not accept his Ruling, you should sit down under it and there is no point in coming in front of Parliament and showing everybody that you are opposed to his Ruling. If the Chair does not get any respect from you, how can it get respect from those persons who did not put him there? Look what kind of treatment the Speaker has been subjected to by you! It has reached the stage where Your Honour is afraid to rule.

Mr. Speaker, I might not agree with your Ruling; I may feel very strongly about your Ruling; but if it is your Ruling, according to our Rules, your Ruling must be accepted. There should be no question about it unless under a substantive motion. What are you going to say when Your Honour can sit down and hear your Ruling become the subject of a further discussion? When the Speaker rules, according to our Standing Orders, there can be no further discussion. Your Honour ruled on the 3rd March, last that the hon. member's motion of "No Confidence" was in order. I cannot see today, the 26th March, how that Ruling can still be the subject of discussion in Parliament. That is where I am amazed.

So far as this motion which has been made, I make my position clear, and nothing which the Government has said today has moved me from it. A parliamentary courtesy is a courtesy which costs nobody any money. As a matter of fact, a courtesy is a courtesy. I do not know now, with regard to the hon. member who has written to say that he could not come, if his excuse is reasonable. As far as I see it, I believe that he could come; but I would say that the Government is stupid in this respect because had it not been done in this way, the Government would be in an excellent position to say that the hon. junior member for St. George after giving notice of the motion would not come in to have it discussed. But it is these little parliamentary techniques and practices which the Government must learn. And they must play down the line and play straight. You should play straight when the ball is hitting you.

What do you find? The easiest thing you should have done was to inform the hon. junior member for St. George through the Hon. Leader of the House that you had allocated either last Tuesday or today as the day when he should come in and discuss his motion, and it would not be a question of asking the hon. member if this day is suitable. That should not be the case. You should have told the hon. member: "We propose to allocate either Tuesday or Thursday for your motion". There was no obligation on you to ask the hon. member to choose a date. The Government said that it would set aside a date. The Hon. Premier said that when he saw that there was an opportunity for doing it on Thursday he informed the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. I would not have got into any business with the Hon. Leader of the Opposition first because the Hon. Leader of the Opposition had no motion before the House; and even if you were going to inform the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, as you had a right to do, the courtesy of informing the hon. junior member for St. George was more incumbent on you because the Leader of the Opposition could not initiate the motion even if he was here. What could the Hon. Leader of the Opposition do if he had come today? If the Hon. Leader of the Opposition said that it did not suit him to come but it suited the hon. junior member for St. George to come, would you say that you would have to set aside another day?

Now, Sir, there is no point, in so far as members go, to say that the hon. junior member for St. George is the leader of a three-man opposition Party. The Leader of the Opposition has four members; therefore you cannot take over the Government with four members.

I agree with Your Honour that the setting aside of a day by the Government to discuss the hon. member's motion was Government Business, and I think the Hon. Leader of the House and the Hon. Premier must agree that as long as it is under Private Members' Business that the question of the Government setting aside a day was not a decision of the House, but a decision of the Government. It would have to be a decision of the Government to set aside a day because when a private member places a matter on the Order Paper, the private member has no right to call upon the Government to set aside a day; all that he has a right to do is to debate the question whenever it comes up under Private Members' Business and so long as his name is called and he is here, there is no question of the Government calling him and giving him the right. Therefore, granting him a day to discuss the motion was what the Government did without any pressure from the House.

5.15 p.m.

When this matter was raised, it was not that the House called on the Government to set aside a day for the debate. I repeat, and I have no qualm of conscience about it, that in the same manner that you could have extended to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition the information on Monday, not Tuesday, the day before the Cabinet met, the day before the decision was made, that if you got through with the business of that day what you would have done, the informa-

tion could have been tendered to the hon. junior member for St. George because he came into the House. If that were operating in your mind, nothing could have prevented you from doing it. Therefore I feel this; I foresaw it; in fact, I do not think that the hon. junior member for St. George was going to debate this question. Far from the Government making any criticism of me, the Government should thank me, because I am the person who liquidated the vote of the hon. junior member for St. George, the vote of "No Confidence" in the Government. I did that publicly outside the House; the matter was put on the Order Paper and if I had been in the House I would have protested against it.

Sir, I did not read that the members of the Government protested that the Resolution was a reflection on the vote of the House and therefore it should not be a matter on the Order Paper. I said that publicly when I returned to the island. When I got back here, the matter was on the Order Paper. During the debate on the Hospital, something was said and I spoke against the hon. junior member for St. George. After that debate, I would say that the hon. member was not going to debate that motion. Now you say you are inviting the hon. member to do this thing; that is when you have everything in your hand and you do not know how to play it. I would say that Government Parliamentary courtesies and political technique are things which you need to acquire and you should never be too wise not to realise when you are making an error. The ones who will cheer at stupidity are not the ones who will correct you, and you must have people capable of correcting these things.

I am satisfied to say that what I have witnessed today could have been avoided if the correct line of approach had been taken, the line of approach which I suggested. I did not suggest anything in defence because that was not my business; but I am happy to see that I can stand here and state quite categorically that any parliamentary courtesy which deserves to be extended should be extended at all times and under all circumstances, no matter who the parliamentary member may be.

Mr. LYNCH: Mr. Speaker, I could not allow the opportunity to pass without making reference to certain remarks which have been made by the hon. senior member for St. Peter. This hon. member does not seem to appreciate that, according to the rule of law, there are certain conventions and courtesies which have to be respected in so far as the Leader of the Official Opposition is concerned. It matters not what is the size of the Opposition. I have not seen any textbook which says that the Opposition is to be composed of such-and-such number of members before these conventions can be applied to them, or before they can command respect. If the hon. senior member for St. Peter is worried about the present size of the Official Opposition, he only has to count the numbers after the next election with single member constituencies.

Mr. WALCOTT: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, I do not deal with the future I do not know what will happen to me tomorrow. I did not say that the Leader of the Opposition should not be his size and should not be accorded the courtesy which was extended to him. I say that, in these circumstances, it was not the Leader of the Opposition who proposed this motion, and if these courtesies could have been extended to the Leader of the Opposition, then they should have been extended to the person who made the motion. There was no suggestion from me that because the Leader of the Opposition and the numbers they represent happen to be the size they are, they should not be respected. I can tell the hon. member this, that his numbers in the next Election may be as they are now, or even a little less.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, if I may rise on a point of explanation, I should like to say this: the whole gravamen of the hon. member's submission – I refer to the hon. senior member for St. Peter – is that the Leader of the Official Opposition was officially notified perhaps some twelve hours before the earliest time on which the hon. junior member for St. George could have been notified, if that gentleman had been in his place. In view of the explanations I have made, I felt it necessary to consult with the Hon. Leader of the Opposition as to when he considered would be a suitable day and the Cabinet did not meet until the next day to allocate to itself a day for this discussion. I really cannot understand the attitude of the hon. member; of course, the hon. member has expressed all of those views during the course of Tuesday's debate. He had appointed himself and I hope he does not misunderstand me, I know he is intelligent to understand – the custodian of the Parliamentary privileges and the Devil's Advocate – a very good Advocate, but for a very bad Devil.

Mr. LYNCH: I did hear the hon. senior member for St. Peter say that there is no question of supplying an alternative Government, and you cannot take over with four. Those were his words, but that does not offend against the principles of alternative government. The Official Opposition deplore the necessity of having to come here this afternoon because very many of us have left duties of some moment and importance to come here. It might well be, knowing the hon. junior member for St. George as we do, whose religious preoccupation can equal only his histronic ability, it may well be that he decided to remain in solitude on Holy Thursday *(Laughter)*. Whom are we to know or to criticise? We are very pleased with the pronouncement made by the Hon. Leader of the House that on the next occasion on which such a motion will be entertained will be at the Greek Kalends.

5.25 p.m.

Mr. CORBIN: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking on this adjournment, because I had prepared all my ammunition for this evening. It seems to me that there are certain people who lay charges upon someone before the evil is committed. Had I tabled the Resolution, I would have faced the test; I would not have dodged it. I remember that in 1958-59 when I came into this House, I passed sentence on the last Government and that sentence has not yet been resolved. With respect to the remarks made today concerning you, Sir, I must say that you have a great responsibility in controlling members of Parliament, and I am sure that you cannot carry it out alone; we as members of this House should help you to maintain order and dignity in this House at all times. What I find, Mr. Speaker, is that when you allow members to go too far off the latitude, that is where you find yourself involved. You know, Sir, that too far East is West, and I would ask you in future to see to it that every man speaks on his latitude and limits his altitude, and by so doing you will be able to maintain order in this House as long as you remain Speaker. You are a man capable enough of doing your job, and I know that you will not allow anyone to bias you out of your good attitude. You have to control from the Hon. Premier back down to myself, because as soon as you let a man get out of order, you cannot get him back in easily.

I trust that in future hon. members will behave themselves as men and keep order in this House, and I will help you, Sir, as long as I am here, to maintain order and dignity.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, as you know, Sir, I am by no means a contentious person. However, I find that it is inevitable that I should join issue with the hon. senior member for St. Peter, if only to correct the records and set the Government's point of view as straight as I can on this whole issue of the alleged discourtesy which the Government has shown to the hon. junior member for St. George who is not now in his place. Before I speak on that, I should just like to correct a wrong impression which has been given by the hon. senior member for St. Peter on a matter which has been discussed in this House today. The hon. senior member for St. Peter seemed to think – and he expressed that quite emphatically – that there was something wrong in your allowing the letter which you had received from the hon. junior member for St. George to be discussed by members, and something wrong that its contents should be passed from hand to hand. I do not know, Mr. Speaker, whether the hon. member was present when you read the letter to the House, but if he were present he would have remembered that as soon as Your Honour had read the letter, Your Honour summoned the Clerk and directed that the letter be laid on the Table of the House. We all therefore understood that to mean that the letter

had passed out of Your Honour's keeping and had become the House's property. That being the case, I submit it was perfectly legitimate to have it discussed and be passed from hand to hand for members to peruse and comment upon.

The second point is this: the hon. senior member for St. Peter still insists that this side has been discourteous to the hon. junior member for St. George. Again I protest that that is not so, and if you want further and better proof that this Government is completely innocent of the charge of discourtesy, the hon. junior member for St. George has vindicated the Government in the letter which he wrote, as he claims that his absence here this afternoon is not due to the shortness of notice which he received from Your Honour, but due to causes which have nothing at all to do with his being or not being notified as late as Tuesday night. He said quite clearly and unequivocally that he could not initiate the debate firstly because he had not done sufficient research, and secondly because he had not consulted the members of his National Executive. Now we are not to suppose, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that if the hon. member had himself been present he would, all in the space between Tuesday and now, have both completed the research necessary and consulted the members of his Party.

Your Honour, I understand, gave immediate instructions for the hon. member to be notified. There is reason to suppose that he was notified about this date as early as Tuesday night, so that when he had received notification it would not have been very much later than he would have received it, had he been present here on Tuesday night when the announcement was made. Further, when Your Honour was yourself not in the Chair but on the floor of this House, and particularly when Your Honour in the last Session was Leader of the Opposition and Your Honour quite properly initiated a debate of "no confidence" in the then Government, if Your Honour will recall, two things were done. Your Honour initiated the debate on the expressed request of the members of your Party, and secondly, research was done by each member before the debate was initiated. That was common practice with us, and we had no reason to suppose that it should not be common practice with other people who take their Parliamentary duties seriously. As a matter of fact, in our case, if you recall, Sir, when we moved the motion of "no confidence" in the last Government, the debate dragged on and on because three of the members of the then Official Opposition had more than enough ammunition to carry the debate on lasting into many months, and we were not as fortunate at the hands of the last Government as the hon. member would have been at our hands, because they did not in any case provide a separate day for a motion of "no confidence" in themselves, although the motion was being moved by the Leader of Her Majesty's Opposition; so that in all cases the charge of discourtesy cannot stand.

If the hon. member has not by now completed his research, there is evidence of his own showing to suppose he had not done so by Tuesday, and if he had not done so by Tuesday, even if he had been here, presumably from what he has said, he would not have been able to consult with his Executive. Having been notified since Tuesday evening that this was the day set aside and he still says he cannot initiate the debate because he has not consulted with the members of his Executive, there is reason to suppose that if he had not done it by Thursday, he could not have done it by Tuesday if he had been here to be notified; so that the hon. senior member for St. Peter is mistaken in levelling his persistent charge of discourtesy, because from the facts as presented by the hon. member in question the charge cannot stand.

5.35 p.m.

The hon. junior member for St. George initiated this motion without being ready for it. He was notified, from the time Your Honour ruled, that a day would be set aside to discuss his motion: and if that were so, he should have no fear if on the 23rd March he was told to make himself ready. He had more time than was necessary because he had given notice of the motion some weeks previously; he had more than a month to invite all members of his Party to deliberate as to the action which he proposed to take.

There is even this to it. We have heard members of his Party say that they did not propose to take part in this debate not because the hon. member had not consulted with them or completed his research but on the ground that he was not present on Tuesday; so on that ground that members of his Party are aware of what he proposed to do and would be assisting him in the preparation of what he was going to do or his business to do, has nothing to do with the shortness of a notice which we gave him.

This charge should not be laid to this Government, of course, because there is an abundance of examples of the way in which we conduct the business of this House to the satisfaction of most of the hon. members of this House. The restriction made on the Hon. Premier about consulting only with the Hon. Leader of the Opposition to my mind is equally weak. If the Cabinet had not yet known that it had been tentatively decided to allocate Thursday for the discussion of the motion — and I must speak as a member of the Government and say that on Tuesday I did not know that Thursday would have been set aside — it would be a very disgraceful thing on the part of the Hon. Premier to go outside of the normal discussion which he has with his Ministers to notify another member of the House. In notifying the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Premier did not say to the hon. senior member for the City of Bridgetown, that Thursday would be the day: he intimated the seeking of the opinion of the Cabinet as to whether Thursday would be suitable and wanted to hear the views of the Opposition. By doing that, the Premier was canvassing the opinion outside of the Cabinet before the Premier settled on the date.

A VOICE: Do you mean that?

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: I do mean that. So therefore, if you, on the one hand, say that the Hon. Premier is to consult about the business of the House with the Official Leader of the Opposition, you cannot accuse the Hon. Premier, or indeed, any member of the Government because informing the member was informing the Government at the same time.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I did not ask if there was any other member; I did not say because you consult the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, you must consult somebody else. I said, that if courtesy was extended to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition in these circumstances, it does not take any amount of argument to show that that same courtesy could have been extended to the person under whose name the motion stands. But it seems as if the hon. junior member for St. Lucy is capable of seeing black and calling it white. The same courtesy could have been extended to the hon. junior member for St. George. What is wrong in doing that? You cannot say when you do that, that you would be breaking the conventions of this House, and for the Government to accord him that privilege, you would be doing something wrong.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The hon. senior member for St. Peter is speaking in turn and out of turn from Tuesday to Thursday repeating the same thing all the time. At the time when I told the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the hon. junior member for St. George had left the Chamber and it was only a question of his being notified the next day. Hon. members are aware that, within the hour of my having consulted the Leader of the Opposition, it was within the knowledge of the hon. junior member for St. George that the Government was proposing to set aside Thursday to deal with that matter, and it is a matter of public and general knowledge on this side of the Chamber that the absence of the hon. junior member for St. George on Tuesday was not entirely unconnected with the knowledge which he had on the previous day. As a matter of fact, the hon. senior member for St. Peter is accusing us of being bad tacticians, because

the hon. junior member for St. George was embarrassed with his own motion and would never have discussed it at all, but that we had put him on the spot. In other words, this animal is very wicked; the more you attack him, the more he defends himself. This animal says that if you want to attack him, you pick the time and the place and we give you that. To sit down and hear the hon. member acting as Devil's Advocate and saying "Discourtesy, discourtesy".....

Mr. WALCOTT: I am a member of this Chamber. The Hon. Premier continues to make use of unnecessary phrases in this House. Are you defending criminals?

Hon. E. W. BARROW: I take it that the hon. member is addressing Your Honour as a criminal lawyer. He is saying "you, you" which is most unparliamentary.

Mr. SPEAKER: My activity today is not confined to criminal law.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: I said before in here that I attributed to the hon. senior member for St. Peter a certain amount of knowledge of these things, and I thought that he would have appreciated what the term "Devil's Advocate" means.

Mr. WALCOTT: What I am going to defend is what is right. I know that I do not understand. That is the trouble with the Hon. Premier. There are too few people who understand you, and therefore, you will always find yourself living in isolation with nobody understanding you. The Hon. Premier is the only member whom nobody understands. He speaks in Latin phrases and tells Your Honour that you understand, but others will not understand. I have not reached that stand where I want to indicate to the world, but the world does not understand me.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, before the interruption....

Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. Saying that Your Honour is well versed in something does not mean that hon. members on the floor of the House are not supposed to be well versed in matters ecclesiastical, particularly to this matter. I know that Your Honour can explain what is meant by "Devil's Advocate". The hon. member may have thought when I said "Devil's Advocate" that I was calling him the worst thing, but Your Honour may be able to explain to him that I was actually paying him the highest compliment.
5.45 p.m.

Why is it that the hon. member who is the "Devil's Advocate" — Your Honour will be able to explain to him that that is the highest Parliamentary tradition. I was actually paying the hon. member a compliment. That is the person who is appointed to argue against the canonisation of a Saint.

Mr. WALCOTT: On a point of order. The hon. member is saying that I have appointed myself the custodian of parliamentary privileges and the Devil's Advocate. But I do not worry with those vulgar phrases; that is the sort of thing which the hon. member is always saying. As you say that somebody has appointed himself to be something, well, I am not a self-appointed person. There is nothing which either the hon. member or his colleagues has said which would make me retract what I have said. I say that there was a parliamentary courtesy to which the hon. junior member for St. George was entitled. If anybody says that the hon. member was not entitled to that, I say that the hon. member should have had it.

Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a final point of order, and it is a final point of order. The hon. senior member for St. Peter has been ranting and waving about the Government not being courteous; but in the same way that he is entitled to say that the hon. junior member for St. George was entitled to courtesy and did not have it extended to him, the hon. junior member for St. Lucy, the hon. senior member for St. Philip and myself are entitled to get up and say that we have more than extended this courtesy to the hon. member. Every time we say that, we see some of the armour of Don Quixote; the plating is being rubbed off him.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. junior member for St. Lucy was addressing the Chair.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: The point is this. The question of courtesy or discourtesy would have been effective if the hon. member was not in Parliament and he was not notified; it would have been discourtesy to force the debate behind his back. The fact is that when we discovered that the hon. member was not in his place, we took steps to notify Your Honour to make good that deficiency. Your Honour did that and the results we have seen in here today. I am afraid that the hon. senior member for St. Peter is really a Devil's Advocate in this sense that he is arguing against the side which he favours. All of his argument when properly examined, even the stand which the Government has taken is a condemnation of the hon. member whose cause he now appears to be vindicating. If the charge against us was that of discourtesy in that the hon. member was absent, we replied that when we notified hon. members, the hon. junior member for St. George was not in his place; and before the reply, in order to make sure that the absent member suffered no disadvantage, we made use of the good favour of His Honour the Speaker to have the hon. member made aware. If the hon. member further says that the fact that the hon. junior member for St. George is not here is proof of discourtesy, then the hon. junior member for St. George has defended the Government by saying: "I am not absent because you only notified me on Tuesday night; I am really absent because I have not completed the research necessary for me to initiate the debate. Secondly, not only because the decision was short to have a meeting on Thursday, but also because I have not consulted my colleagues".

If the hon. senior member for St. Peter would examine the letter forwarded by the hon. junior member for St. George, he would see that it does not end or begin from the House; it absolves us from discourtesy because it is absolutely, wholly and solely proved to be the letter written by the hon. junior member for St. George. In case the hon. senior member for St. Peter feels aggrieved at the remarks of being a Devil's Advocate, I should say that a Devil's Advocate is that you present the side of a story merely for the sake of controversy or merely to hear what the other side has to say. The hon. member has taken the side of controversy but he has given ample opportunity to see what we, on this side of the House, have to say.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I put the question, I will make one or two observations in view of what has transpired this afternoon. In connection with the letter, which I personally read to the House, as it was an ordinary excuse for absence from a meeting, in the extraordinary circumstances, I thought it proper to read that letter and make it a document of the House. There is no doubt in my mind that the decision to have this meeting this afternoon was for the express and sole purpose of providing an opportunity for the making of the motion of "No confidence" which was on the Order Paper under Private Members' Business, but which the Government had intimated that it would set aside a day for discussing.

In respect of my Ruling that that motion was in order and was justifiably being placed on the Order Paper, that is my Ruling and that Ruling stands. If any subsequent Speaker cares to rule differently, that would be a matter for him, either to create his own precedent or to refuse to be guided by any other. I say that in the light of remarks made by the hon. senior member for St. Peter and what appears to be his interpretation of remarks made by the hon. and learned senior member for St. John and the Hon. Leader of the House. So long as that document was laid on the Table of the House, it is entitled to be discussed by hon. members of this Chamber.
5.55 p.m.

There is just this. The discussion has taken place on a motion for the adjournment. Normally such a motion

has to deal exclusively, as provided by the instant Standing Orders, with the question of adjourning, the date and time, but in view of the exceptional and extraordinary circumstances of this adjournment — because what has happened here is that we met to do certain substantive business and we are adjourning without having been able to attempt to begin that substantive business — that is why I have regarded it as reasonable to allow this latitude on the motion for the adjournment, which otherwise would not be allowable.

Now in respect of a previous statement of mine in connection with the Clerks of the House, I merely would remind hon. members of what I stated in paragraph 7 and in particular "that I have obtained assurances from the Clerk and the Deputy Clerk that they have frequently assisted members from all sides of the House in the drafting of their Parliamentary documents," and in that penultimate sentence of paragraph 7, I stated "I have also been assured by both Clerks at the Table that their services have always been, and still are, readily available and have been — and are — rendered to each and every Member of this Honourable House; and that neither of them has ever, when requested for his co-operation, counsel or guidance in drafting, failed to render such assistance as may have at any time been sought by any Member of this Chamber."

When the hon. senior member for St. Peter referred to what he described as my acquiescence, I wish it would always be borne in mind that tolerance and patience are not necessarily an indication of acquiescence and certainly, in my case, not of weakness, but it is not the duty of the Chair, except in exceptional circumstances, to descend into the arena. Immediately he does that, he sacrifices the dignity of the Chair and becomes a participant and not an umpire or referee. *(Cheers).* I need hardly remind hon. members of Standing Order No. 35 — Decision of the Chair Final — which states: "The Speaker in the House or the Chairman in Committee shall be responsible for the observance of the rules of order in the House and Committee respectively, and his decision upon any point of order shall not be open to appeal." That is how our relevant Standing Order sets it out, and it goes on "and shall not be reviewed by the House except upon a substantive motion." In other words, there is no appeal in respect of a decision of the Chair in this House, nor is such a decision subject to review except upon a substantive motion. There has been no appeal and there is no substantive motion, but such a motion will be treated exactly as Standing Order No. 35 requires.

In respect of the House of Commons by which we are so often guided, I must just remind hon. members of page 249 of the 16th Edition of May dealing with Officers of the Commons. It is set out that "Reflections upon the character or actions of the Speaker may be punished as breaches of privilege. His action cannot be criticised incidentally in debate or upon any form or proceeding except a substantive motion. His authority in the Chair is fortified by many special powers which are referred to below. He takes no part in debate either in the House or in Committee. He votes only when the voices are equal and then only in accordance with Rules which preclude an expression of opinion upon the merits of a question."

I will just say this in concluding my remarks; that it is a fact that on the occasion of our last meeting, when in accordance with the relevant Standing Order I suspended the Sitting for fifteen minutes for what I regarded as grave disorder, what actually happened then was that when a vote was being taken, an hon. member, quite rightly, who wanted to say something when the vote was being taken, remained seated as he spoke, but for some reason or other, perhaps an aside which did not reach the Chair, the hon. member who had been speaking seated, rose and quite vociferously and vehemently, and without looking in the direction of the Chair, and failing to see that the Chair had risen and had been standing for about thirty seconds — that hon. member, whom I have no intention of referring to by name, continued, apparently not realising that the Chair had risen, and there was no alternative, as it seemed to me, but to suspend the Sitting for grave disorder, not merely because of the incident and of the vocal powers which really needed no amplifier. I can say that at the time I switched off the equipment, but I could still hear the hon. member, and so when I stood and he did not apparently see me, I suspended the sitting for grave disorder, as I saw no alternative. Disorder may be not only, so far as I interpret it, a matter of noise of voices, but action, and combined voice and action may constitute grave disorder.

May I express my personal thanks to the hon. senior member for St. Andrew for his promise of wholehearted co-operation to the Chair? I am deeply gratified, and as I assume that silence gives consent, the fact that no hon. member appeared to dissent from his promise of full co-operation leads me to think that there will be in future and as from now the fullest co-operation from every member of this House with the Chair, not only to myself, but to the Honourable and Learned Deputy Speaker and to the Chairman of Committees. We will all look forward to that co-operation. We have always been accustomed to it first and foremost, may I say, from the senior members of the House, the more experienced, and the others automatically follow them. Now may I suggest and look forward to all hon. members following the hon. senior member for St. Andrew in respect of what he has promised?

The question that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 31st March, 1964, at 2.30 p.m. o'clock, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

6.05 p.m.