

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1961 - 66

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 11th January, 1966

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12 o'clock (Noon) today.

PRESENT

His Honour J. E. T. BRANCKER, Q.C., (*Speaker*); Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P.; Mr. E. St.A. HOLDER, J.P.; Hon. C. E. TALMA, (*Minister of Health and Community Development*); Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, (*Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries*); Mr. W. R. COWARD; Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE; Mr. G. V. RATSON, (*Chairman of Committees*); Hon. N. W. BOXILL, (*Minister of Communications and Works*) and Mr. J. B. YEARWOOD.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I regret that I have to inform hon. members that there are no Minutes ready for confirmation.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier and Minister of Finance, I am commanded to lay the following:-

Annual Abstract Account of receipts and payments for the year ended on the 31st March, 1965.

Statement of assets and liabilities as at 31st March, 1965.

Statement of the public debt of the Island and the sinking funds as at the 31st March, 1965.

Statement of Loans and Credit guaranteed by the Government and outstanding at 31st March, 1965.

Statement of Advances and Loans outstanding at the 31st March, 1965.

The Leave Passages Order, 1966.

Quarterly Digest of Statistics No. 34, June, 1965.

Mr. CORBIN and Mr. MOTTLEY entered the House and took their seats.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier and Minister of Finance, I beg to give notice of the following:-

A Resolution to approve the Leave Passages Order, 1966.

A Resolution to approve the lease to the Barbados Tourist Board of an Area of land situate at the back of Hometown Police Station.

A Resolution to place the sum of \$28,526 at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates, 1965-66, Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimate, 1965-66, No. 40, which forms the Schedule to the Resolution.

Mr. WALCOTT entered the House and took his seat.

Hon. N. W. BOXILL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve, under Section 10 of the Barbados Harbours Act, 1960, the sum of \$14,558 required to supplement the Estimates of the Port Department for the year 1965-66, as shown in the Schedule to the Resolution.

REPLY TO QUESTION

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Premier and Minister of Finance, I beg to give notice that the Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 85/1964, asked by the hon. senior member for St. Thomas, is now ready.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of my intention to move the House into Committee of Supply at its next meeting in order to deal with the Money Resolutions of which notice has just been given.

RESOLUTION OF SYMPATHY *re* DEATH OF LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, before the business of this House is proceeded with, I should like, on behalf of the Government of Barbados, to draw to the attention of this House the sad passing of the late Lal Bahadur Shastri, former Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of India, who has made such a great contribution towards the cause of peace. The late Mr. Shastri, as hon. members will recall, was one of the martyrs along with the great leaders of India in recent years - I refer to Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru. He was one of the great leaders and martyrs who brought freedom to India, and, indeed, freedom to many parts of the civilised world. The shining example which he portrayed both in the Congress Party of which he was a member, and as Minister of Home Affairs and finally as Prime Minister of India, was a clear indication of his sterling worth and ability. Mr. Shastri in his own right made a very valuable contribution and has proved himself by his nice, quiet and unassuming manner, to be a statesman of great ability and courage, and a leader in his own right.

On assuming office, as hon. members will remember, Mr. Shastri was faced with various crises - and I refer to the struggle between Pakistan and India which finally widened into a greater conflict and open warfare. Mr. Shastri had rallied through a difficult period such as this, 12.25 p.m.

He has stood up and has exemplified in no uncertain way that he has the courage, ability and integrity, as all great leaders have, to face any issue and solve most of his problems. It is very sad, Mr. Speaker, that now that Mr. Shastri had just made a very great achievement, in that he met with President Ayub Khan of Pakistan in Tashkent, a meeting which was arranged by the Prime Minister of Russia, Mr. Kosygin, and deliberated and actually executed the Agreement whereby peace and prosperity may be attained by the countries of Pakistan and India, and at least having laid the groundwork for more harmonious relationship to exist between the two countries, he should have fallen to fate and has gone to the great beyond.

What was most admiring about Mr. Shastri was that despite his frailty in physique and his old complaint, because you will remember that very soon after assuming office he was struck with a heart attack, he still continued in office in spite of his apparent physical disability. Today we join with the Indian Community and with peace-loving people world-wide in paying tribute to the passing of such a great leader, and extend the sympathy of this Government and its people to the people of India, and especially to the relatives and friends of Mr. Shastri, the late Prime Minister of India. I am sure that this name will be enshrined with all the great leaders of India in that he suffered as a martyr and bore the brunt of the day, and he has now made his valuable contribution. We look forward to his successor as being of a similar calibre - able, willing and determined to lead India and carry on where Mr. Shastri has left off. May he rest in peace.

The Resolution reads as follows:-

BE IT RESOLVED that this House place on record the prolonged sympathy at the death of Lal Bahadur Shastri, Prime Minister and Minister of External Affairs of India;

AND BE IT RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the President and Government of India.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, in seconding this Resolution, there is very little one can add to what the Hon. Minister of Health and Community Development has said.

Lal Bahadur Shastri, taking office less than two years ago, succeeded a very distinguished leader. Mr. Shastri laboured throughout his life for peace, and he died after having signed the treaty with Pakistan. Indeed it was a great shock, not only to his country, but to the world to hear of his sudden passing so soon after attending a Summit Conference in Russia. As the Hon. Minister has said, his record is distinguished for his services to mankind, the freedom of India and the fight which he has so validly put up together with such great leaders as Mahatma Gandhi and the great Mr. Nehru who fought for the freedom of India.

In adding our quota to the Resolution which the Hon. Minister has given notice of and which asks that we place on record our profound sympathy at his death and that a copy be forwarded to the President and Government of India, we in this country also extend our sympathy to his sorrowing relatives. We know that India is the poorer of his passing, and not only India but the world.

I have much pleasure in seconding this Resolution to place on record our profound sorrow at the passing of so distinguished and able a man who laboured for peace.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my Party and the people of Barbados, we deeply regret the passing of Mr. Shastri. We all know that when he had risen to the high office of Prime Minister, his qualities had qualified him for that office, and in thinking back on the work which he and his colleagues had to do so as to free his people, one may wonder why good men pass away so quickly. We know also, Mr. Speaker, that the Good Book says that the ungodly shall flourish for a time, and that whom God Loveth He chasteneth; so Mr. Shastri did his bit during his life time, and up to minutes before he departed this world, he was

doing a good job for the people of India. I sincerely hope, Sir, that the other Prime Minister and even Premiers will take a leaf out of Mr. Shastri's book and try to carry on the good work that has been left behind.

With those few remarks, Sir, I sincerely hope that he may rest in peace.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I was deeply moved, shocked and grieved to hear of the sudden death of the Indian Prime Minister. In associating myself with the passing of this Resolution, Sir, I should like this Honourable House to know that I owe a debt of gratitude to the Indian Government.
12.35 p.m.

I, Sir, would be lacking in my sense of appreciation if I did not express my sincere condolences to the people of India and to Indians throughout the world on their bereavement occasioned by the death of their leader.

As you might have heard, Sir, my son has recently completed his studies under an Indian Scholarship. He has been living in that country for over six years and is now a qualified doctor. I am sure that I have got a lot to thank the Indian people for. I am not ashamed to say that without the example of Indian generosity, my son might not have been a doctor.

This is the sort of opportune moment for me to express my sincere sympathy and also to express my appreciation to the Indian Government of the kindness which they have rendered to my son.

Finally, Sir, I say to the Indians at this moment that I express all that I possibly can as regards our sympathy and may God bless that nation and may it continue to prosper.

Mr. CORBIN: Mr. Speaker, I must join in associating myself with the previous expressions of sympathy to the people of India. Mr. Speaker, when I heard of the sudden death of the late Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister of India, it shocked my modesty. It came when the leaders of those two countries - India and Pakistan -- had come together to seek advice and to make peace so that the war between them may come to an end. I say: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God".

We heard that these two gentlemen, the Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan, after the war between the two countries, have pledged themselves to go to Russia to seek peace. Mr. Shastri died of a heart attack just after they had reached an agreement. He really was devoted to what he went for. I am therefore saying to his people whom he governed and to his family: "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." May God bless the Prime Minister in his grave, and cause peace to exist in his country.

Sir, what has caused me great joy was to hear that a decision was reached between Mr. Shastri and Mr. Ayub Khan at that meeting and that it would be implemented soon. I trust that decision will cause peace throughout Pakistan and India as long as the world lasts.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I think it would be a mistake if I do not join with hon. members in paying a tribute to the late Prime Minister of India, Mr. Shastri, who has died in a comparatively short period of time after holding the post of Prime Minister. We heard yesterday of his death from a heart attack in Soviet Russia just after a peace agreement was signed between the two Prime Ministers. He was on a mission of extreme importance, not only of getting peace for India but for the whole world, and trying to settle the outstanding problems in that continent between Pakistan, Kashmir and his country. It is most regrettable that his passing has taken place at this time.

India is a country well known for its contribution to civilisation. Its people can be counted to be among some of

the most civilised in the world, and their civilisation dates back to many centuries ago. There are names such as Tagore, Nehru and Ghandi which would be always enshrined in the history books, and added to those names would be that of Mr. Shastri.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is a coincidence that only recently we have passed a Resolution to go into Independence, so we can say that we have passed through our struggle for Independence without those struggles which his country passed through when it was seeking Independence from the British Government. We say that it is fortunate that India produced such great men as Ghandi, Nehru and now Shastri. They did have the problem to fight for Independence.

Sir, I think all of us in this Honourable Chamber, the people of Barbados, and all peace-loving people can look to the life of Mr. Shastri as one to emulate. He has demonstrated that although he was frail in health, yet his mental capacity could withstand all the obstacles of his physical nature and he died actually in harness. He has accomplished something in his life that will go down in history for the preservation of peace.
12.45 p.m.

I feel that this will have a tremendous impact on the future. We regret it very much; but it may be that this is going to be the turning point in the relations between these two nations, because it takes outstanding monumental events to bring people to their senses. I believe that the death of Mr. Shastri will be a great milestone in the relationship between India and Pakistan. I share with other hon. members the sincere and warm sympathy extended to the people of India on the passing of one of their great leaders.

Mr. SPEAKER: The six hon. members of this House who have spoken on this Resolution have so very fully and adequately expressed my own point of view upon the lamented death of the late very distinguished Statesman who was, at the time of his death, Prime Minister of India, that I find it unnecessary for me to add anything other than that I share the views which they have expressed, and the sentiments to which they have given utterance. In accordance with the conventions of this Chamber in respect of the passing of a Resolution of this nature, I am asking hon. members to observe two minutes' silence in signifying their approval of the passing of this Resolution.

Hon. members stood in their places on the passing of the Resolution as requested by His Honour the Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: A directive will be issued to the Clerk at the Table to see that the terms of this Resolution are immediately put into effect.

RESOLUTION re SYMPATHY WITH MONTSERRAT IN THE DISASTROUS FIRE

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Again, Mr. Speaker, deputising for the Hon. Leader of the House, it is my solemn duty and privilege to move the passing of another Resolution, on this occasion in connection with the recent devastation by fire which took place in Montserrat, one of the sister colonies in the Caribbean a few days ago, namely, on Friday 7th, January, 1966. I should like to extend our profound sympathy with the people and Government of Montserrat in the great loss which has been sustained by that island in their capital city of Plymouth. I refer to the devastation which has taken place by fire of unknown origin which has so greatly set back the hands of progress, in that most of these islands in the Caribbean need development and construction. It certainly gave us a blow which shocked us to hear the loss which has been sustained by one of the small islands of the Caribbean area. We understand that the damages have run into millions of dollars, but we are happy still to know that no loss was sustained by way of human life. In extending our sympathy to the Government and the people of Montserrat, we trust that the necessary assistance will be forthcoming to this Government and people in their hour of need, and that the future progress of the island will not be hampered. On behalf of the Hon. Leader of the House and the Government of Barbados, we extend the sympathy of this island to the Government and the peo-

ple of Montserrat. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass:-

BE IT RESOLVED that this House place on record its profound sympathy with the Government and people of the Island of Montserrat in connection with the recent disastrous fire sustained by the island;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Administrator and Government of Montserrat.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Again, Mr. Speaker, it is not my pleasant duty to support the Resolution as moved by the Hon. Minister of Social Services in respect of the fire which destroyed a substantial portion of Plymouth the capital of the island of Montserrat on Friday last. Whenever I hear these things I remember one of the injunctions in Holy Writ which tells us that things which are done now we may not understand, but we will understand them later. It is true that these islands are in need of building up, and not destruction. Sometimes we cannot see what is behind disasters such as that which has happened in St. Lucia. The Hon. Minister has said that it was a fire of unknown origin; and while we are happy to know that no lives were lost, we still realize the setback which has taken place to Montserrat.

In seconding the motion for the passing of this Resolution, I do hope that if and when the time comes that we, in this island, have got full particulars of the loss to the Government of Montserrat, we will be able to render financial and any other assistance which we consider necessary for the relief of the Government and the people of that island. I want to assure the Hon. Minister that he will have the fullest support from this side of the House - in respect of such an act. I beg to second the motion for the passing of this Resolution, a Resolution which, I am sure, will be passed by this Chamber. I second the motion with much regret that it has been the occasion for me to do so. I hope that assistance will be given to the people of Montserrat, our smallest Eastern Caribbean Island, to recover itself within as short a time as possible. Again, I express the hope that the Government, after getting full information as to the damage which has been sustained by the Government and the people of Montserrat, and more especially such damages which have not been covered by insurance or such damages which have been sustained by poor people not covered by insurance. We will give our assistance to these people by the passing of the necessary Resolution.
12.55 p.m.

Mr. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the remarks of the last speakers, and I sincerely hope that the people of Montserrat will find no difficulty in repairing all the damage that has been done by the fire, and that their future problems will be solved as soon as possible.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, one of the things we dread in life is that what one has taken a life time to build up can be destroyed in an evening. As the Hon. Introducer of the Resolution and the Leader of the Opposition have said, we all regret this and sincerely hope that the time will come when they will be able to repair the damage. We extend our profound sorrow and regret to the people of Montserrat, and I am sure that the Government and people of Barbados will rise to the occasion when it comes to helping our fallen brothers.

As I said on the Resolution in connection with the death of the late Prime Minister of India, maybe these instances are indications to show people the warmth of our heart, notwithstanding our views in other ways, and I am sure that when we come for the Government and the people of Barbados to show in a tangible form how we feel about our brothers and sisters in the West Indies, we will demonstrate that in a manner that is more remarkable and fitting than words sometimes can express. I have the pleasure of knowing that we live in such a way as to share disaster, so to speak, with our colleagues and fellow citizens, and I am sure that the Barbados community, in spite of all we have debated in the last week, will rise to the occasion and give assistance to the people in Montserrat in a manner that will

help them to rebuild their city and rehabilitate them to normal life as soon as possible.

Mr. CORBIN: Mr. Speaker, I was very moved when I heard of the disaster which had befallen the small country of Montserrat. My sympathy goes out to the people of that Island. Although we may at times differ in words and in politics, I am sure that as Barbadians we will not differ when it comes to lending our sympathy to our brothers, and I am sure, Sir, that we are willing to give any possible help that is necessary for assisting the people in Montserrat. I hope that with the contributions from other countries they will be able soon to rehabilitate themselves and everything will return to normal in Montserrat.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately there are a few matters here which are of pressing importance and great urgency, but as copies are not available, I do

not expect hon. members to deal with them. I will therefore just lay the Reply to the Question asked by the hon. senior member for St. Thomas of which I gave notice a few moments ago, and then bring this sitting to a close.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand that the answer has already been laid. It may remain on the Table until next meeting as the Standing Orders have not been suspended and Question Time has not yet arrived.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 18th January, 1966, at 2.30 p.m.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.

1.06 p.m.