THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1966—71

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 30th November, 1966.

Pursuant to prorogation the 1966-71 Legislative Session was re-opened by His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent in the Senate Chamber, Public Buildings, at 11 a.m. today.

The following members of the House were present in their Chamber:

His Honour J. E. T. BRANCKER, Q.C., F.Z.S. (Senior member for St. Lucy) *(Speaker)*; Mr. L. E. SMITH, J.P., (Senior member for St. Joseph); Mr. K. N. R. HUSBANDS, (Senior member for St. Peter); Mr. E. St.A. HOLDER, J.P., (Junior member for St. James); Hon. C. E. TALMA, (Junior member for Christ Church) *(Minister of Health and Community Development)*; Hon. J. C. TUDOR, M.A., (Junior member for St. Lucy) *(Minister of Education)*; Hon. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., LL.D. (Hon.) (Senior member for St. John) *(Prime Minister)*; Mr. J. W. CORBIN, (Junior member for St. Andrew); Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, (Junior member for St. Michael) *(Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries)*; Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P., (Senior member for St. Philip); Mr. W. R. LOWE, (Senior member for St. George); Mr. L. A. LYNCH, J.P., (Junior member for the City of Bridgetown); Hon. N. W. BOXILL, (Junior member for St. Thomas) *(Minister of Communications and Works)*; Mr. J. B. YEARWOOD, (Junior member for St. John) *(Chairman of Committees)*; Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS, (Senior member for St. Andrew) *(Minister of Trade, Labour National Insurance and Tourism)*; Sir G. H. ADAMS, C.M.G., Q.C., B.A., D.C.L. (Hon.), (Junior member for St. Joseph) *(Leader of the Opposition)*; Mr. W. C. B. HINDS, (Junior member for St. Peter); His Honour G. E. SARGEANT, (Junior member for St. Philip) *(Deputy Speaker)*; Mr. C. A. E. HOPPIN, J.P., (Junior member for St. George); Mr. L. S. CRAIG, (Senior member for St. James); Mr. J. B. SPRINGER, (Senior member for St. Michael); Mr. H. B. St. JOHN, LL.B., (Senior member for Christ Church); and Mr. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Senior member for St. Thomas).

HOUSE SUMMONED TO OTHER PLACE

Honourable members being in their places, the Sergeant-at-Arms entered the Chamber and informed Mr. SPEAKER that His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent was ready to receive the House in the Senate Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER, preceded by the Marshal carrying the Mace cradlewise, and followed by the Honourable Members in pairs according to seniority, proceeded to the Senate Chamber and waited on His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent.

His Royal Highness then addressed the two Houses of the Legislature as follows:—

ADDRESS BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF KENT,

Special Representative of Her Majesty The Queen.

I have it in command from The Queen to read the following speech on Her Majesty's behalf:

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Senate:

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of the General Assembly:

Today marks the beginning of a new era in the history of this country. A few hours ago the people of this country saw the end of a state of dependency on Great Britain and the realisation of their hopes and aspirations when at midnight last night the territory became an independent State within the Commonwealth of Nations.

The citizens of Barbados are now completely, formally, responsible for all of the affairs of their country. I extend my sincere congratulations and best wishes to you.

The Constitution of Barbados has been agreed on through the recognised democratic processes. It was drafted by the Government, debated and approved by both Chambers of the Barbados Legislature and finally examined at a conference held in London earlier this year at which all the then major political parties were represented.

The Constitution.

The Constitution which came into effect earlier this morning embodies most of the provisions by which the people of this country have for many years ordained the affairs of Government; other constitutional matters remain enshrined in local Acts of Parliament; and others still are deeply embedded in long respected conventions. In this way with a three-fold origin the Constitution of this new nation may well be said to be sprung from the land itself.

We have today conferred upon our trusty and well-beloved Governor-General Sir John Montague Stow Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, the honour of Knight Grand Cross of our most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George.

Appointment of Prime Minister.

The first Prime Minister of Barbados, the Honourable Errol Walton Barrow, has today taken the oath of office as Minister of Finance and Minister of External Affairs.

Appointment of other Ministers.

On the advice of the Prime Minister the following persons have been appointed to be my Ministers:

The Honourable James Cameron Tudor, M.P., to be Minister of Education and Leader of the House of Assembly.

Senator the Honourable Hilton Augustus Vaughan, O.B.E., Q.C., to be Minister of State and Leader of the Senate.

Senator the Honourable Frederick Gladstone Smith, to be Attorney General.

Senator the Honourable Philip Marlowe Greaves, to be Minister of Home Affairs.

The Honourable Cuthbert Edwy Talma, M.P., to be Minister of Health and Community Development.

The Honourable George Granville Fergusson, M.P., to be Minister of Trade, Tourism, Co-operatives and Fisheries.

The Honourable Arlington DaCosta Edwards, M.P. to be Minister of Agriculture, Labour and National Insurance.

The Honourable Neville Wilfred Boxill, M.P., to be Minister of Communications and Works.

The following appointments have also been made to the office of Parliamentary Secretary:-

Senator Hazeline Odessa Gittens, to be Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Education.

Woodruffe Russell Lowe, Esquire, M.P., to be Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Communications and Works.

John Wesley Corbin, Esquire, M.P., to be Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture, Labour and National Insurance.

Reynold St. Clair Weekes, Esquire, M.P., to be Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Health and Community Development.

Appointments to the Privy Council.

The following appointments have been made, under the Constitution, to the Privy Council of Barbados with effect from today:-

The Honourable Sir Francis Challenor Hutson, C.B.E.

The Honourable Errol Walton Barrow, M.P.

The Honourable Sir Frank Wilfred Holder, C.M.G., Q.C.

Senator the Honourable Hilton Augustus Vaughan, O.B.E., Q.C.

The Honourable James Cameron Tudor, M.P.

The Attorney General, Senator the Honourable Frederick Gladstone Smith.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Senator the Honourable Philip Marlowe Greaves.

Senator the Honourable Ernest Stanley Robinson, C.B.E.

The Right Reverend the Honourable Lewis Evans.

The Reverend the Honourable Derek Maund Lyder.

The Honourable Arleigh Winston Scott, M.D.

The other independent countries of the Commonwealth have unanimously agreed to the admission of Barbados to membership of the Commonwealth. My Government appreciates this acceptance into the Commonwealth and will continue to support the principle of Commonwealth solidarity as long as this principle is consistent with justice and equality.

My Government will, in particular, strive to maintain the most harmonious relations with its neighbours in the democratic countries of the Western Hemisphere and is actively pursuing its long declared goal of membership of the Organisation of American States.

External Relations.

My Government at the same time believes that the United Nations is a force for good in the world, and that it is the best instrument for creating peace and harmony amongst mankind. Accordingly it has today submitted an application to the Security Council for admission of Barbados to membership of the United Nations Organisation.

It is not generally known to our friends in the world outside that from the time of its settlement three hundred and forty years ago up to the present the island of Barbados has been self supporting and self reliant, in no way dependent upon the Government of any other country for budgetary support or grants in aid of administration. With the coming of independence with its added responsibilities my Government intends to maintain this proud record; grateful for such technical and economic assistance as friendly powers may extend but determined to exercise eternal vigilance in the management of its financial affairs.

Steps to maintain and improve expenditure controls are being taken and plans have been made for strengthening the administration of the Inland Revenue Department with the advice of experts lent to us from abroad.

Although this country now ceases to be eligible for assistance under the United Kingdom Colonial Development and Welfare Acts, my Government in the United Kingdom have given the guarantee that the lapsing funds of the former Barbados allocation under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act will be made available.

Economic Outlook.

The economy of the country continues to expand as is shown among other things in the figures for the Gross Domestic Product, Overseas trade, power consumption, and banking statistics.

For the past five years the Gross Domestic Product of the Island rose at an annual average increase of 5.7% whereas the average net annual rate of population increase was approximately 2%.

A number of factors has contributed to the buoyancy of the economy. The island has been fortunate in having relatively good sugar crops with, until recently, quite favourable sugar prices. At the same time the economy has become more diversified and there has been a lessening in the dependence on sugar. Mainly responsible for this has been the emergence of the tourist industry as the most rapidly expanding and dynamic sector of the economy. In 1960, tourist expenditure was estimated to be

$13.8 million whereas in 1965 it was estimated to be $26.1 million. This industry has stimulated other sectors such as distribution, domestic agriculture and construction.

The manufacturing sector has also been developing and, from a relatively modest start, it is now contributing significantly to the creation of more income and further employment.

Despite this encouraging trend, a number of vital economic problems remain, but my Ministers have designed policies which will reduce them. Among these remedial measures are -

(a) the establishment of the Marketing Corporation and the Agricultural Development Corporation in order to provide guaranteed outlets and markets and to diversify the agricultural sector of the economy;

(b) the provision of incentive payments to farmers who are willing to diversify;

(c) direct participation in the local dairy industry and indirect encouragement by the importation and sale of high quality animals from Canada and Puerto Rico.

Tourism.

As an aid to the growth of the tourist industry, a new Hotel Aids Bill will shortly be introduced in Parliament; consideration is being given to the simplification of disembarkation forms which will speed up procedures at the ports; and the promotional campaigns undertaken by the Tourist Board will both continue and be extended.

My Government does not consider the absence of basic raw materials to be an insurmountable obstacle in the path of industrial development, but is actively and positively encouraging the development of light industry. Provision has been made for the establishment of an Industrial Development Corporation and a Development Bank which will each in a specialised manner carry out the functions now performed by the Development Board which they will shortly replace.

Caribbean Free Trade Agreement.

The Caribbean Free Trade Agreement, at present between Antigua, Guyana and Barbados, is expected to come into operation early in 1967. Being aware of the smallness of their individual markets, the member territories have entered into the Agreement in an effort to expand and diversify trade to their mutual advantage.

Tripartite Economic Survey.

My Government in the United Kingdom, the Government of the United States of America, and my Government in Canada have collaborated in an economic survey of the Windward and Leeward Islands and

Barbados. Consideration is now being given to the report of the survey team.

Civil Aviation.

My Ministers wish to see efficient air services operating through Barbados and will provide every facility, insofar as this is possible, for achieving this.

Meteorology.

An Institute of Tropical Meteorology, an affiliate of the Caribbean Meteorological Service, will be established and operated in Barbados on lands in the new urban development area. This will undoubtedly lead to an improvement of the existing meteorological services throughout the Caribbean and will facilitate the training of meteorological staff.

Lands & Surveys, Land Registration.

A Lands and Surveys Department has been established and steps are being taken to recruit suitably qualified staff for it. Legislation for the control of the quality of the work of Land Surveyors, and for a system of registration of all survey plans is under preparation. The introduction of a system of registration of land titles is also being studied.

Town Planning.

Good physical planning is recognised as an essential and effective instrument for exploitation of the country's natural resources of labour and land to accommodate the population. Careful attention will be paid to this avoiding, wherever possible, the creation of undue hardship to individual developers.

Urban Development.

Progress is being made by the Urban Development Corporation on its middle income housing developments. Approximately 600 acres of well located land have been purchased for a satellite town. This scheme is designed to enable many of the citizens of Barbados to own their homes by means of long-term mortgages with low down-payments.

Agriculture: Sugar.

The Island manufactured 171,910.25 tons of sugar in 1966 and it is estimated that the 1967 production will be in excess of 200,000 tons.

Every effort is being made to increase the output of sugar cane per acre in order to make available a larger area of land for the production of other crops in my Government's programme for the diversification of agriculture.

A tripartite committee of representatives of the sugar industry, sugar workers and the Government has been established as a permanent body charged with the duty of reviewing and reporting from time to time on matters affecting the sugar industry.

Soil Conservation.

Work on soil conservation and land reformation will be accelerated with the assistance of aid from such sources as have displayed interest in our efforts to rehabilitate one-seventh part of our available land.

Local Food Production.

The operations of the Barbados Marketing Corporation have resulted in a fall in the prices of green vegetables to the consumer and have, at the same time, provided a guaranteed market for local produce. Steps are being taken to establish markets abroad to provide outlets for a wider variety and larger quantity of vegetables.

Agricultural Credit.

The Agricultural Credit Bank will continue to provide a loan service to small farmers to assist them in the development of their farms with a view to improving their productivity.

Fisheries.

In furtherance of the efforts to develop the fisheries of the Island, my Government is participating in a United Nations research project to determine the commercial feasibility of deep sea fishing in the Caribbean.

Co-operatives.

Considerable emphasis is placed on the development of Co-operatives and training courses will be provided both locally and overseas for co-operators.

Technical Staff.

The technical staff of the Ministry of Agriculture will be increased. It is expected that, notwithstanding that there appears to be a worldwide shortage of scientific and agricultural officers, qualified Barbadians and West Indians abroad will be persuaded to play their part in the expansion planned by the Ministry.

Shop Legislation.

As a result of a review of the working of the Shops Act, 1945, and the Bank Holidays Act, 1905, legislation for a liberalisation of opening hours of shops, for better safety, health and welfare conditions, and for greater protection for workers is under consideration.

Social Security.

The National Insurance and Social Security Act, 1966, providing for a contributory social security scheme under which there will be sickness, maternity, old age, invalidity and funeral benefits, will be brought into operation in April, 1967.

Workmen's Compensation.

The Workmen's Compensation scheme will be incorporated into the national insurance scheme, and the compensation payable to those workers who are rendered permanently incapacitated as a result of an employment accident will be by way of pension instead of a lump sum

payment as at present. The dependents of workers who die as a result of employment injury will be similarly treated.

Petroleum drilling.

There has been much activity in petroleum drilling as a result of which oil has been found in commercial quantities at two wells and crude oil is being delivered to the local refinery. It is expected that beneficial drilling operations will continue for some time to come. Additional sources of natural gas have also been discovered.

Education.

A new Education Bill will shortly be submitted to you. The teaching service will be unified and teachers of both Primary and Secondary Schools will become directly responsible to the Ministry of Education. A separate Teaching Service Commission will be created to advise the Governor-General on teacher personnel matters.

The building of a new grammar school and four comprehensive schools is contemplated, and in addition, a Junior College will be established to provide sixth form education for eligible pupils from private as well as Government grammar schools.

School Meals.

The expansion of the School Meals Service will be continued and accelerated.

Teacher training.

It is proposed to institute an initial course at Erdiston Training College to prepare teacher recruits for the Primary and Secondary schools. The course will run concurrently with an in-service course of training, or re-training for experienced teachers.

Peace Corps.

My Government is grateful to the United States Government for the assistance which has been, and is continuing to be, rendered to the teaching as well as other services by members of the Peace Corps. It is hoped that this assistance will continue.

Establishment of a Technical College and Trade Schools.

My Government has been promised assistance from abroad to establish a Technical College for advanced training in Engineering, Building and Commercial skills. In addition, a number of Trade Schools will be set up to provide training at the craftsman level for young men and women in all parts of the Island.

Further assistance for private schools.

Further assistance and supervision of private schools will be provided, including an increase in the number of exhibitions, extension of teacher-training facilities, and the compulsory registration of all schools.

Training of hotel workers.

It is proposed to expand the scope of training for hotel workers to include preparation for executive and managerial posts in the hotel and catering industries of the Island.

Ecclesiastical.

Negotiations between the Anglican Synod and my Government on the question of a Church settlement will be continued and are expected to be concluded by the end of the financial year.

Local Government.

My Government, having adopted the Report of Professor R. M. Jackson on the reorganization of Local Government Administration, will continue to implement his recommendations to bring public health, medical and welfare services including public assistance under central administration.

It is my Government's intention to institute a national Medical Assistance scheme as an integral part of the health service. Institutional care of the aged and infirm, presently a local government responsibility, will be continued at a reduced number of centres, thus rationalising the existing system and improving the service.

A National Assistance Board will replace the three existing public assistance committees of the Local Government Councils and the central Old Age Pensions Department.

The transfer to the Central Government of functions and responsibilities in the fields of Public Health and medical care entails extensive amendment or replacement of existing legislation, and opportunity will be taken to enact comprehensive legislation leading to the integration of the health services.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Difficulties in recruitment and retention of certain specialist medical staff and of nurses have affected the efficiency of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

A programme of Nursing Education has been devised in collaboration with the World Health Organisation which will ensure an adequate supply of nursing personnel at all levels.

Similarly my Government will institute a scheme for the training of health personnel including medical staff in the scarce specialties.

Training of hotel workers.

My Government proposes to centralise the supervision and management of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Mental Hospital and the District Hospitals under a national Hospitals Board.

Early attention will be given to the elimination of obsolescent and sub-standard housing conditions in the Bridgetown area.

My Government considers urban renewal a matter of high priority in any development programme and the first claim against any offer of external aid.

Construction and repairs of roads.

Roads and bridges are being improved and widened on an island-wide basis.

Aerial and cadastral surveys of the whole island have been carried out recently and a physical master plan for the future development of the island is being carefully studied by my Government's Central Planning Committee comprised of Ministers, officials and technical and professional personnel.

Telecommunications.

My Government notes with interest the improvements in telecommunications which have been introduced in the area.

The legislation under which telecommunication agencies operate in this Island will be reviewed in the light of present day practices and requirements.

Public Transport.

Steps have been taken to have the efficiency of the public transport service improved. The Transport Board has already begun a programme for the replacement of its fleet over the next four years, and improved accommodation will be provided for the Transport Board.

The new bus terminals which are being provided at the Princess Alice Highway and at Constitution Road will be ready for use when the new concessions come into operation in January 1967, and the Fairchild Street terminal will be re-designed in the near future.

Public transport services have now been brought within the scope of the Public Utilities Board by whom, in future, any alteration of the fare structure will be determined.

Water Services.

The development of the Island's water resources continues. New sources of water supply are expected to increase production by at least 2.6 million gallons daily. It is expected that by April 1967 additional pumps will be installed at Hampton Station which will then be capable of increasing its output by a further 2 million gallons daily.

With the aid of a United Nations expert, plans for an improved mains network to cope with the projected expansion of services are being prepared.

Bridgetown Harbour.

Due to the high degree of utilisation of the Bridgetown Harbour and its facilities, consideration is being given to a proposal to seek financial assistance in providing increased storage facilities and berthing accommodation.

It is proposed to expand the duty-free shopping facilities in the port area and to replace the accommodation now provided for the Port Department, the Customs Examination Hall and the other departments located in the area.

Civil Service.

The Public Service, the Judicial and Legal, and the Police Service Commissions will now function under the provisions of the Constitution and I am sure that these Commissions will discharge their responsibility with wisdom and impartiality. I know that all ranks of the Barbados Civil Service will make their full contribution towards accomplishing my Government's plans as outlined in this speech and that they will carry out their several duties with loyalty to my Government, with dignity and with courteous consideration to the public whom they serve.

Mr. President and Honourable Members of the Senate:

Mr. Speaker and Honourable Members of the General Assembly:

In the preamble to the new Constitution of Barbados the people of this Island have declared their intention to "maintain a society in which all persons may, to the full extent of their capacity, play a due part in the institutions of national life". They have also resolved that the operation of the economic system shall promote the general welfare by the equitable distribution of the material resources of the community, by the human conditions under which all men shall labour, and by the undeviating recognition of ability, integrity and merit. My Parliament has in the future, as it has had in the past, no small part to play in the preservation and promotion of these ideals.

I now declare this session of Parliament open and I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may always rest upon your counsels.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent presented a copy of his Speech to the President of the Senate and to Mr. Speaker.

HOUSE RETURN TO ASSEMBLY CHAMBER

Mr. SPEAKER, preceded by the Marshal bearing the Mace, and followed by other hon. members, returned to the Assembly Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER: As hon. members are well aware, when I was accompanied by them to the Senate Chamber, His Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent, read the Speech of Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Barbados. I have been furnished with a copy of that Speech.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Her Majesty's Gracious Speech be taken as read.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

STANDING ORDERS

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Standing Orders of the last Session be the Standing Orders of this Session.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the hon. junior member for St. John be appointed Chairman of Committees of this Honourable House for this Session.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER: The next Item on the Agenda, No. 10, is the appointment of certain Committees and Members of Boards. I would, in view of the heavy commitments which I know all hon. members have for today, venture the suggestion, with the concurrence of hon. members, that this Item stand over until the next meeting of this House.

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: As Your Honour pleases.

Sir GRANTLEY ADAMS: As Your Honour pleases.

Mr. SPEAKER: In view of the concurrence of both sides of this Chamber, Item 10 will stand over until the next meeting of this House, and so it stands.

REPLY TO HER MAJESTY'S SPEECH

Mr. SPRINGER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of an Address in reply to the Speech of Her Majesty the Queen.

The Address reads as follows:-

THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

TO

THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

Most Gracious Sovereign,

The House of Assembly with loyalty and due submission beg to thank Your Majesty for the Gracious Speech delivered to Parliament by His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent on Independence Day.

The House further beg to assure Your Majesty that they will give urgent and effective attention to all the proposals outlined in the Gracious Speech.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. J. C. TUDOR: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 13th December, at 2.30 p.m.

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

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

12.06 p.m.