THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 1971 - 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 4th July, 1972.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 2.35 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour N. G. A. MAXWELL, LL.B., (Speaker); Hon. C. E. TALMA, C.B.E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, (Minister of Health and Welfare); Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS, (Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology); His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, (Deputy Speaker); Mr. L. S. CRAIG; Hon. P. G. MORGAN, C.B.E., (Minister of Tourism, Information and Public Relations); Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND; Hon. P. M. GREAVES, B.A., (Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance); Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Home Affairs); Mr. A. MORRISON and Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport).

Prayers were read.

Mr. SPEAKER: Our Chaplain is on vacation and will be away until the 3rd August.

(Hon. F. G. SMITH, Messrs. ADAMS, HINDS, BOLDEN, MOTTLEY and FORDE entered the Chamber and took their seats.)

PERMISSION GRANTED TO TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY AND THE MACE

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the Session formally begins, I should like to draw to your attention "that this Honourable Chamber has been requested by the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, through its advertising agency Messrs. Advertising and Publicity Service Limited, to provide them, the I.D.C., with present photographs of His Honour the Speaker, the Mace, and members of Parliament in the House of Assembly." Continuing to quote, "The purpose of the photographs is for use with others in the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation promotional presentation." They would like to have these pictures taken at this Sitting of the House.

I have spoken on this matter to the Leader of the House and the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and, on balance we thought that we should permit this application so that the photographer, a member of Willie Alleyne Associates Limited, could come here and take these photographs as requested.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the 14th March, 1972, the 6th June, 1972, and the 13th June, 1972, are before the House for confirmation. Is it the wish of hon. members that these Minutes be confirmed? *(pause.)* There being no objection, these Minutes are confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Minister of Finance, I am commanded to lay the Statement showing the Net Customs Excise Receipts for two months ended 31st May, 1972.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Post Office Act, 1911, and, in the course of the afternoon, permission will be sought by the Leader of the House to deal with this matter in all its stages today.

I also beg to give notice that the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 24 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph is now ready.

Further, I beg to give notice of

(1) A Resolution to approve the revision of the postage rates in respect of postal packets being transmitted from Barbados overseas other than by air mail; and

(2) A Resolution to approve the revision of the postage rates in respect of air mailed postal packets.

Again, I will ask leave, through the Leader of the House, to deal with these two Resolutions in all their stages today.

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

(1) A Resolution to grant the sum of $15,555 out of the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of Government to supplement the Estimates 1972-73, Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1972-73, No. 1, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

(2) A Resolution to grant the sum of $34,585 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of Government to supplement the Estimates 1972-73 Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1972-73, No. 2, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

(3) A Resolution to grant the sum of $33,583 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of Government to supplement the Estimates 1972-73 Part II – Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1972-73, No. 3, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to amend the notes to Head 35 – Ministry of Education, Items 6A and 7, and Items 8 and 9 of Sub–Head (3) Secondary Education.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:

WHEREAS by tradition the youth of this country have been playing cricket and other games on bits and parcels of plantation or other private lands wherever possible or available;

AND WHEREAS the need for more organized public parks, playing fields and recreational centres throughout Barbados is still acute;

BE IT RESOLVED that this House requests the Government to consider approaching estate and private owners of land commonly used island-wide by the youth, for leases or gifts of the said bits and parcels of land, so that better amenities and facilities can be added to bring happiness and more comfort to the same users.

Mr. Speaker, I have two other Resolutions that are not in my possession: one was given to you, to the best of my knowledge, in the time set out in the Standing Orders. It was a Resolution to raise the old age pensions from five dollars to fifteen dollars a week. The other Resolution was to allow old age pensioners to travel on buses owned by concessionaires as well as buses owned by the Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have looked at both of those Resolutions and, after careful consideration and consultation with the appropriate authorities, I have ruled both of them out of order.

Mr. CRAIG: Sir, I do not see how you could rule them out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: I ruled them out of order, because if they were passed by this House they would have created a charge on the revenue of this country, and the Resolution would have come from an hon. member other than a Minister of the Crown.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am not moving the Resolutions now, therefore, you cannot say that they are out of order. There is nothing before you to move. All I am reminding you of, Mr. Speaker, is that I gave the appropriate person the notice of the Resolutions of this nature. Mr. Speaker, you are not telling me that the Resolutions are out of order. They cannot be out of order when I do not have them here. I expected that you would have told me that the Resolutions are still in your possession and you would like to give them more careful consideration.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have given the hon. member enough latitude; I have ruled them out of order.

2.45 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Resolution which you have brought before this House which you have just read is quite in order. Any attempt to move the other two has already been ruled out of order.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I have not brought a Resolution before this House, therefore I humbly submit to you that it cannot be out of order. If I had brought this which I gave notice of, you could rule it out of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the hon. member on his feet on? Will you please take your seat. The hon. member has already moved a Resolution; We are under Private Members' Business and having moved the Resolution that is the limit of your jurisdiction as far as standing is concerned.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I think ...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to hear the hon. member any further. The hon. member has risen and moved his Resolution which has been accepted. We are under Private Members' Notices.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, may I then say to you that I am appealing to you that I gave ...

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no point. I have already ruled.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, you should hear what I have to say first.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are obstructing the business of the House. We are under Private Members' Notices and there are rules and regulations.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, in respect of the last matter, it is fair to tell Your Honour that the constitutionality of these Resolutions is going to be tested by a Resolution in the House, and it will necessarily, however, much we might respect Your Honour's ruling, have to be framed in the form of a challenge to Your Honour's ruling, and therefore we would be obliged if the Clerk could make available at an early opportunity the ruling so that we can put down a definitive motion. This matter has been the subject ...

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the hon. member talking on? Private Members' Notices?

Mr. ADAMS: I wish to give notice that we are going to challenge the ruling you have just given and I am asking for it to be reduced to writing so that we can give proper notice.

I am now giving notice of a Bill to amend the Marriage Act, 1904, to provide for the avoidance of all marriages of persons below the age of sixteen years.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, I am just trying to seek Your Honour's guidance on a specific point for my benefit.

Mr. SPEAKER: What point are you rising on? A point of order?

Mr. HINDS: On a point of privilege. If I or any hon. member on this side were to bring a Resolution before this Honourable House asking the House to call on Government to set up a housing scheme, say, in the parish of St. Peter ...

Mr. SPEAKER: With due respect to the hon. member, I see no point of privilege. That is a hypothetical question. Will the hon. member take his seat please?

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, it is as soon as I have completed what I have had to say that Your Honour ...

Mr. SPEAKER: This is the second and last time. I am not here to deal with hypothetical questions.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, I rise again because I heard you say this is the second and last time. Why in reference to me am I to hear that this is the second and last time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member take his seat?

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I have heard hon. members ask Your Honour to consider certain matters. Hon. members on this side are relatively quiet about this, but the notices which the hon. member for St. James sought to give notice of are not notices of questions, and there is nothing in the rules saying that a Resolution can be ruled out of order. I just mention this in passing, and this is why I am asking that the matter be reduced to writing. All the rules say is that the House shall not proceed on a motion, but there is nothing saying that a Resolution or a motion can ever be ruled out of order, and I am suggesting with great respect ...

Mr. SPEAKER: I must interrupt you at this point. That would therefore mean that you are doing two things: you are questioning my ruling, and also suggesting that any Resolution which comes in here and in my opinion would impose a

charge on the revenue cannot be ruled out of order, and that is precisely what I have done.

Mr. ADAMS: With respect, the rules say ...

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not hearing the hon. member any further.

Mr. ADAMS: You have heard the hon. member ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member take his seat at once?

QUESTIONS

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following questions:

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:

1. (i) Is the Minister aware that there is no refuse bin at the corner of Marshall Gap and 4th Avenue New Orleans?

(ii) Is the Minister aware that stuff is now being dumped on the road and is at present causing a nuisance to residents of the area?

(iii) Is the Minister aware that the area of New Orleans is not properly serviced by a refuse collector?

(iv) Will the Minister take steps immediately to remedy these complaints?

(v) Will the Minister state what steps, if any, will be taken to remedy these complaints?

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:

2. (i) Is the Minister aware of the need for proper drains and/or gutters in the New Orleans area of Bridgetown?

(ii) Will the Minister state what steps will the Government take to remedy this lack of drains and/or gutters in the above mentioned area?

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:

3. (i) Is the Minister aware that during the last session of the House of Assembly, the House passed a Resoluiton calling upon the Government to purchase land at New Orleans to erect a community Centre and Pavilion?

(ii) Will the Minister state what steps, if any, have been taken by the Government to give effect to this Resolution?

(iii) If no steps have been taken to give effect to the Resolution, will the Minister state the reason for the failure to do so?

(iv) Will the Minister state whether it is the intention of the Government to give effect to the Resolution, and if so, when?

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:

4. (i) Will the Minister state what is the Government's policy in relation to the playing field known as Weymouth "C"?

(ii) Will the Minister bearing in mind the lack of adequate playing grounds within the City of Bridgetown, make this ground available to the residents of the City of Bridgetown in particular the residents of the Beckwith, Wellington, Queen, Vine and Chepstow Streets area?

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:

5. (i) Is the Minister aware that there is need for streetlights (a) at the corner of Chepstow and Queen Street (b) on King William Street at the junction of King William and Vine Streets?

(ii) Will the Minister take steps to remedy this situation?

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:—

6. (i) Will the Minister state whether the Committee appointed during the 1960's to consider and make recommendations in respect of bringing child legislation up to date has handed in a report?

(ii) If the answer to the above question is in the affirmative, will the Minister take steps to have the report laid in Parliament if it has not yet been laid?

(iii) Will the Minister state what steps the Government is taking to implement the recommendations of the Committee?

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:—

7. (i) Will the Minister state what is the delay in bringing into operation the Severance Pay Act?

(ii) Will the Minister state when will the Legislation be brought into force?

2.55 p.m.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Post Office Act, 1911 be now read a first time.

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

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Marriage Act, 1904 be now read a first time.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

ORAL REPLY TO QUESTION

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that reply to Question No. 24 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph is now ready. The question reads as follows:

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister:-

(a) Is the Minister aware that the Barbados Light and Power Company has installed utility poles in the Joes River area, but has been unable to instal the necessary power lines due to difficult terrain of the area?

(b) Would the Government make all necessary arrangements to assist the Barbados Light & Power Company in installing the necessary lines so that the residents of the area can avail themselves of the electricity service?

The reply is as follows:-

(a) The Ministry is aware that the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited has installed utility poles in the Joes River area but that all the residents in the area have not been able to avail themselves of electricity services.

(b) The company has intimated that the difficulty has been overcome and that the installation of power lines to serve the remainder of the area in which the poles have been erected will be completed during the month of June.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister say whether it is June, 1972, and if so if the work has been completed?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The Minister can say that his information is June, 1972, but the member for St. Joseph should be in a better position to tell the Minister whether it has been completed in June, 1972.

Mr. BOLDEN: I wonder if the Minister would tell this Hon. House whether any aspect of the work comes under the Ministry of Communications and Works and therfore under his portfolio.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that it comes under my portfolio because I answered the question in the first place.

Mr. BOLDEN: I wonder if the Minister is aware that all the work has not been completed.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am not aware and I will make the necessary investigations. I do not instal the lights, I give instructions.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister will say how soon it will take him to investigate.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: When I return from Washington in August.

Mr. BOLDEN: I wonder if he will say August of this year, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: August, 1972.

Mr. ADAMS: Has the Minister of Communications and Works any machinery, physical or otherwise, for the installation of electricity?

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 5, 14, 16, 18, 19, 40 and 45 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting, subject to any item of Private Members' Business the Leader of the Opposition wishes to proceed with.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, we have no objections to the time table being revised subject to the rights of certain hon. members who have some Private Members' Business to do. We certainly will not object, having been treated with

the great courtesy with which I have been afforded from the Deputy Prime Minister with respect to the Post Office Act, and we have no objection that it be done today, but we will ask that Private Members' time go on until 4.30 p.m. Subject to that, we have no objection to the Standing Orders being suspended.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be now taken.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The question of the suspension of Standing Orders has not yet been resolved.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I merely asked that the Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting subject to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition reserving the right to deal with any urgent matter of Private Members' Business that he may care to deal with. Am I to understand that there has been an objection? I understand that the hon. member had agreed to this.
3.05 p.m.

Mr. ADAMS: This is Private Members' time, and we are only asking that we have our time until 4.30 p.m.. We can than deal with the Post Office Resolution. I cannot conceive that there is any other item under Government Business that could arise today, since the only other item on the Order relates to a matter upon which the Select Committee has not yet reported. We will deal with the Post Office Resolution, and we are suggesting 4.30 p.m. I think, Mr. Speaker understood the point. I wonder why it is necessary to suspend the the Standing Orders? Anyway the Leader of the House must know.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: There are probably one or two reasons, Sir, in this particular instance, why the Government's Business should be proceeded with first, in accordance with custom, and in accordance with the arrangement, which we have entered into over the last few months. There are only two items under Private Members' Business: one is in the name of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, and the other in the name of the hon. member for the City.

I take it that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition wants to proceed with his reply to the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. We have listened to a very lengthy speech by the Hon. Leader of the Oppostion. Unfortunately, he did not actually move the motion, but the matter is really before us. The hon. member should try to regularise his position. In truth and in fact he is the Leader of the Official Opposition and is also the Shadow Minister of Finance; so having only one official Opposition, Sir, I would have expected that the Shadow Minister of Finance has more or less made his speech on behalf of the official Opposition, and that his speech would not be interrupted or eroded by other speeches of his colleagues who occupy other so-called Shadow Portfolios for the time being.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question, as I see it, is whether the relevant Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of the day's Sitting.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, there seems to be a lot of talk about this. Ten minutes have now gone. It is not unreasonable to ask the House of Assembly to sit until five o'clock. We are being paid quite a lot of money to come in here. We have not met for three weeks, and it is not unreasonable to ask that we sit for 2½ hours. I estimate that the Post Office Act cannot take half an hour, unless the Government wants to take a long time.

At this moment this is Private Members' time, and Private Members' Business normally goes on to 4.30 p.m. All that we are suggesting is that we take out time until 4.30 p.m., and let the Government do its business. This is the ordinary time table, Sir. We are only asking to work until five o'clock. I cannot see that that is unreasonable. I am sure, if the hon. member looks at it in that sense, he will see what I mean.

As far as I know, I had hoped, Sir, that if we had a little more time we might have had one speech on the Budgetary Proposals and then, perhaps, the hon. member for Bridgetown might have been able to start on his Resolution.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I will accept the hon. member's suggestion. We will proceed with Private Member's Business first; we will go up to 4.30 p.m., and then we will do Government Business afterwards.

Mr. SPEAKER: Private Members' Business is the instant Order of the Day.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 1 be the first Order of the Day under Private Members' Business.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is, "That those Standing Orders be suspended." *(Asides)* Will the Hon. Leader of the House withdraw his motion.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, as we are sticking to the scheduled time, I beg to move that the motion be withdrawn.

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

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

RESOLUTION re REPLY TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGETARY PROPOSALS

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I should like to request leave of the House, to move the Resolution standing in my name, as I have already concluded my speech and sat down.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no objection, and leave is granted.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I now formally move that the Resolution standing in my name do now pass.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, in rising to second the passing of this Resolution, I should like to make one or two, perhaps, brief comments. I might say, Sir, from what we have seen and heard at the economic level, we must conclude that this country has to face up to one of the gravest of economic disasters that could ever befall it. This could only have come about, no doubt, through the mismanagement of the country's affairs.

We believe, Mr. Speaker, that the occasion must arise and the need must arise for money, if any Government must function efficiently, and even when a Government is functioning efficiently that measure of efficiency will not be 100 per cent, because it cannot serve everybody adequately at one and the same time. In other words, it cannot be expected to please everybody at every level at one and the same time.

If we were to look around us at the present moment, there can be no doubt that our people are grieved and dissatisfied; they feel that they are oppressed; they have been lured into doing something during the month of September last year, and the price that they have now been asked to pay is a price which they see and know they are unable to bear.

Now, there are a few areas, Mr. Speaker, which it would be very necessary to look at if we are to see where the Government has fallen down in a very considerable measure.

3.15 p.m.

One such area is in respect of its manipulation of the shrimp industry which the Government found thriving in this Island. Each and every one of us knows that the shrimp industry employed between 300 and 500 persons continuously from year to year. We know that it meant between $5½ million and $8½ million in revenue in this country, but we find that this present Government has been careful enough to see to it that these 300 to 500 workers were displaced and put on the unemployment roll, or the greater part were left without a job, and the money which the industry threw into circulation in this country is no more. We had a thriving industry here and bluffing by this Government carried it out of business, and bluffing by this Government will never bring back a shrimp industry to Barbados. We have been hearing of all sorts of preparations being made; people have been encouraged to cast their votes in September last year on the basis that they would have been given the first jobs available when a new shrimp industry had been established here in Barbados, and what I am saying is in writing. People were given letters by hon. members who are in this House now, not on this side, telling them to go to the Barbados Marketing Corporation, but there is no such industry and we are saying that there is no hope; but the point we are making is that here is a case where we have a $12 million to $14 million deficit and you find a big unemployment roll and at 9 o'clock on mornings you can go on Tudor Street, on Fairchild Street and along Church Street in Speightstown and see young men most of whom would be glad for a job and there is nothing for them to do. This Government that is shouting for the youth and telling them that this is their duty and all sorts of nonsense have scuttled a thriving shrimp industry.

You find again that we have a problem on our hands with cane harvesting in this Island. We find that over $4 million will be taken out of circulation and sent out to people in St. Vincent through the workers we have to import here. Not one soul in Barbados is going to get one dime out of that $4 million. That is the send home amount. I will remember that in the days...*(Asides)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members not addressing the Chair, please observe the Standing Orders.

Mr. HINDS: I would like to hear what some of them are saying.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please ignore the asides.

Mr. HINDS: The truth is that some of them cannot talk while standing; so I appreciate what they have to say while sitting.

Mr. Speaker, when the Barbados Labour Party ran the Government of this country, the custom was to curtail the road works programme when cane harvesting was about to take place, and it is a fact that the road work gangs used to go out and assist in the harvesting of the cane, but politics is playing such an important role in the Ministry of Communications and Works today that it is now put on political wheels. The tools are political tools in the hands of the workers, and all they have to do is to hold on to the bandwagon. Let the Minister of Communications tell this House how he compares the amount of work done during the period of our cane harvesting with the out of crop period by those workers employed in the road works. I do not want to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that conditions must not be made for workers in the road industry that they feel comfortable, secure or whatever one may care to call it, but we have got to have one thing related to the other because it all goes to make up or to destroy the economic structure of this country. If you find that by resorting to a particular course of action in any one year or any series of years you are destroying what revenue would normally have been retained from another source, why go on fooling oneself. We have got to apply stopgaps at some point or another and the $4 million plus that will be following these workers back to St. Vincent, in addition to what they despatch weekly must give hon. members and particularly the Minister of Finance some cause for concern as to the future.
3.25 p.m.

We have been given to feel that our tourist industry could mean so much to the lives of each and every one of us. At one stage we were led to believe it was taking over from sugar, placing sugar in second place, but now comes the situation where sugar is trying to stage a come-back but the situation is such a ridiculous one that even on the estates, some of the plantations in the Scotland District owned by Government, there are today still standing several acres of unreaped canes, canes that ought to have been harvested and sent to the factories and ground for making sugar. Are we to continue in this vein where there is nobody to reap these canes? Are we really and truly doing all we can, for the youth of this country, when all we do, is get on the political platforms and tell them this is their day and invite them to rebel? Is that all we must do?

Mr. Speaker, we find that whatever is taking place in this country, its one effect is an increase in the cost of living. As a matter of fact, people have of late been wondering if it is not now wiser to regard it as necessary to carry out a study as to the cost of diet, because it would appear as if they can do little about the cost of living. The old age pensioners receive $5.00 per week, and I could do today what our present High Commissioner to the United Kingdom did in this Hon. House some years ago, bring in a teacup without a handle, and old lard oil jug, a gill of rice and a half pound of flour to show what the pension can do, but whatever it was in those days he said it had no purchasing power and we are saying today that $5.00 per week has no purchasing power whatsoever. (Hon. F. G. SMITH: If you give me a $5.00 bill now, I would be able to buy cigarettes with it). An hon. member on the other side is asking me to give him a $5.00 bill, since it has no purchasing power, and he would buy cigarettes with it, but I would say to that hon. member if he cannot maintain himself without begging, he should get out of the business. What we are saying is this, Mr. Speaker, if these people who have got to depend on this pittance of $5.00 and who have nowhere else to turn – and today is not a day where you will find children being as dutiful to their parents as in years past, children of today are too busy with themselves, many of them are just too busy to mind their parents and grandparents. That is the truth. What we see is that even the situation arises where we find that some of these old people who, I understand, have been told they can get free transportation on Government buses, if they present their old age pension cards, I understand that when they present their cards to the conductors the conductors are telling them that they have to stay one side until the other passengers have boarded the buses. What could be a harder blow than this? It might be that the surest answer for all of this is that a means will have to be devised where only tickets will go from passengers to conductors, or at least to some of them, because we believe that the old people are treated in this manner because of the absence of currency exchange between passengers and themselves, that is, that they are told to wait until the other passengers have embarked, but this is not good enough.

These are things, Mr. Speaker, which have got to be looked at, at some stage or other, and the sooner they are looked at the better it will be for all concerned. There is the case of our losing money here and there, but I will not touch on what we are losing, virtually throwing away, on external affairs at this stage, what we are doing in that respect, Mr. Speaker, would provide us with schools to house several of our children who have been denied and who are being denied places in our secondary educational system.
3.35 p.m.

If we were to look, let us say, at CBC – if we looked at the $1½ million or the $2.5 million in losses in respect of CBC, what we are saying is that it is $2.5 million of the taxpayers' money that could very well have been saved. Too much friendship is allowed to become entangled in a bit too much of the Government's Business in this country. We have to be realistic. Government's business is the people's business of this country, and it is not the business of eight or nine Ministers. It is the people's business because the people's pockets have to pay for everything in the final analysis.

We maintain that if one were to look at the figures that CBC itself and Radio Barbados flash on the screen, one would see that those figures mean money. Listening power and viewing power is selling power when it comes to Radio and Television. If the salesmen can get you to believe and accept that they have so many million viewers and so many thousand listeners, then the higher their charges must be per minute per advertisement, or per second, a flash on the screen, as the case may be.

There are no two ways about it, Mr. Speaker, CBC has been collecting a very considerable sum of money. What is being done with that money? We see, we know, and we learn that there are a lot of unnecessary overheads and many of them could have been avoided. But how long is too long, Mr. Speaker, if the suffering is grave? *(Asides.)* The taxpayers of this country are suffering, and the suffering is grave. I heard an hon. member say: "If it is good." Every picture shown by CBC is something to do with gangsterism and it is cheap stuff.

Mr. SPEAKER: I warn the hon. member not to dilate too much on CBC. I think he is stressing a point of relevance between CBC and this Resolution before us.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, I think you will, eventually, agree with me that I have every right to go into every detail on every penny spent by the Government whether it comes from a pair of boot-laces or the shipping of Black Belly sheep to Canada. I am showing where the Government could have saved that penny by buying the boot-laces elsewhere or where the Government could have made more money by shipping the Black Belly sheep elsewhere. I do not want to go into any details about CBC, but I merely mentioned the fact that there are several things that could be cut out. Their viewing and rating could be much higher in advertising circles, and that would mean additional revenue. If CBC is earning additional revenue, it certainly should be a greater ease or it should bring about some measure of ease, at least, by way of the taxpayers' responsibility either to the banks or otherwise. When this Honourable House has to give its approval to a bank to lend CBC money, it amounts to the taxpayers giving that approval to the bank.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to this question of the public debt, I wonder if the Minister of Finance really believes what he says, is the public debt of this country! I have confidence that the Minister of Finance very well knows that no hon. member on this side of the House believes that the public debt of this country at the 31st March, 1972, stood at $69.4 million. I am very serious when I say this, because the Minister of Finance at one time thought of an economic survey as the nearest thing to a Bible. I speak in relation to the compilation of his statistical data for economic purposes. We see here when he presented his last budgetary proposals that he no longer thinks the same way. In other words, the Minister of Finance has given hon. members on this side to believe and to feel that he has begun to lose confidence in his own system of economics. If that is the case, Sir, are we not then approaching a near-danger situation? Is it not a case where we have to cry "foul" and try to stop the game?
3.45 p.m.

Somebody is dealing us foul blows, hitting below the belt in this game. It is all right, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Finance to appear on television and be garbling over a lot of figures in an attempt to confuse and confound the man in the street. The public today is satisfied that he cannot so confound any member of the Opposition and they have their confidence in us now. We cannot, Mr. Speaker, and we do not accept that the Public Debt in this country is any $69.4 million at 31st March, 1972, and the Minister of Finance knows when he was saying so that there were very grave reasons for people who have been following his figures closely year after year and watching their performances that this could hardly be so, and I venture to assure that upon a closer examination, the Minister of Finance will one day seize upon an opportunity to correct the situation and to so inform this House. I have the feeling that he will come around to doing that.

Now the Minister of Finance was at pains, Mr. Speaker, when he turned to revenue and expenditure to give us figures for current and capital services as $140.4 million; that current expenditure was $107.5 million while capital was

estimated at $32.9 million. Over all he says that this represents an increase of 22.6 per cent over the expenditure for the previous year.

Mr. Speaker, what expenditure? If one were to look back at the estimates of expenditure one would see the considerable amounts that were revotes. There were huge sums of money voted time and again and not one penny spent on several projects; some were not embarked upon at all and we are left to wonder like some members of the public if when we got in this House and said we were voting this money for this project or that project we were in truth and in fact really voting out of the Treasury what was really inside the Treasury. These are things, Mr. Speaker, that are presently engaging the attention of the people that you and I and many other people would have thought a few years ago were paying no attention to such matters, but I am saying that what the man at the street corner is today discussing and the matters that are engaging his attention would shock some members particularly on that side of the House. There are people that we might say are just humble folk who can relate to us incidents which are astounding but these same incidents bear a very considerable relation to our activities in this House, and particularly with votes that have been passed with respect to the purchase of this, and money being spent on that. People are today watching and one of the greatest accomplishments of this House would be the day we find it possible to make the debates of this House available to the man in the street and to have them on the book shelves and news stands at least seven days after they have taken place in this House.

Now it is not necessary for us to go back to all that was said about our fiscal policy because as a result of the world situation where the monetary system is concerned, I can say that the small trader in this Island is at the mercy of the present Government more so than the consuming public because the small supermarket proprietor finds that he has got to be ultra cautious; he has got to put up more capital today than he did five, six or seven years ago, but his returns on that capital are the same that he got six years ago. He has got to borrow from the banks at higher rates and that is what this Legislature made possible. Our Minister of Finance saw to it that money could be made dearer to certain people. The markup to the small business man is so negligible. What I am talking about is the high cost of living that we have got to deal with. Commodities come to this Island and numerous offers are made of commodities to come to this Island that can be sold at prices two-thirds or even half, but I prefer to say two-thirds for safety, of what some items are costing.

3.55 p.m.

We on this side of the House have no right teaching the Government how to govern people, that is not our function, it is merely our duty that when they do it badly we will tell them they have done it badly and when we get in we will then show them how they should have done it in their day, but what you will find is that all our provision merchants have a system of buying from brokers abroad, they never buy from manufacturers. When an order is placed for commodities, they have confirming houses abroad that when the order reaches the broker the broker has got to contact the confirming house, and if the confirming house does not confirm the order it is not an order until confirmed by the confirming house. A confirming house or a broker does not work for fun, but all the agencies here have to pay the broker his commission, the confirming house its commission, and everybody else a portion, so the commission merchants then pass on all these charges. The small merchant cannot buy from the commission merchant, he gets all his bills from the wholesale department of the commission merchant, so the commission merchant is going to get about three profits on one commodity.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I have said too much on a matter of this sort, because it is not for us on this side of the House to teach the Government. They have a Prices Commission, but what is it doing? Some of the members walk into people's stores trying to find out who the Directors are and to see if anybody has large hams to put into the trunks of their cars. I am sorry about this, but this is what is happening. We have Price Control Inspectors, nobody wants to put anybody out of a job but something has got to be done, the poor people who go to the shops are being fleeced, and the small business man who tries to be honest is squeezed out of business because he cannot get a sufficient mark-up to keep him in business. He has got to borrow his money at high interest rates, his returns are too small and he has got to carry too much stock.

Let us for instance think in terms of sugar, corn meal and flour. You will be surprised to know that some business places have to sell 12 bags of sugar and 12 bags of corn meal so as to be able to get back a dollar bill. They have to spend thousands of dollars to get back $25.00. These things need investigating, and the small business man who has done so much to have borne the brunt of the heat, all the years to help

feed the people, now that things are becoming sticky, we are asking the Government to investigate quickly to save these people and keep them in business.

We are talking now about the hotel industry. One thing brings me back to another. I am warning the Government, hon. members on that side of the House, the owners of the Marine Hotel are offering the Marine Hotel for sale, it is an eye opener. We are warning the Government that if the present owners of the Marine Hotel are offering the Marine Hotel for sale, it is an eye opener to anybody who is sticking their heads into the hotel industry,for if they are selling out, bear in mind that all that could have been got in the hotel business has been got already and there is nothing more to get, so we are warning the Government not to waste the taxpayers' money and to be very careful, to go cautiously in this hotel business. We allow ourselves to be led away from time to time by all these things that take place. The Goddards are successful business people, and if you see that the Goddards have worked the horse and are now offering that horse for sale, I say no shoes in the world can keep that horse on its feet. These people are keen business people with an eye to business, they know what they are doing, they do not go into it for fun, but I want you to know that the small shopkeepers everywhere are being pushed out of business, they cannot compete, they cannot cope with it.
4.05 p.m.

The people everywhere are suffering; the prices in the stores and shops are too high. What is wrong? All we are hearing is that we are importing inflation. We hear a lot of soap-box economists and people calling themselves economists at Cave Hill going on the television and saying that they work in banks and trying to explain that we have imported inflation and all sorts of nonsense!

Mr. Speaker, I am saying here and now that there are certain conditions overseas over which you and I have no control. We agree that world conditions are such that labour at the other end must make its demands in the same way that labour at this end will make its demands. We find in the United Kingdom that there is a wage freeze. In the United States there is also a wage freeze. Mr. Speaker, I am bringing this as an instance that where countries find that it is necessary – even in Barbados we have an official wage freeze, because the Minister of Finance told the teachers and civil servants: "You can talk until you freeze" or words to that effect. "We are prepared to listen to you, if you do not come with your oriental magniloquence" or words to that effect. "We will listen to you, and we are prepared to mark time to give the fellow who is so many miles behind time to catch up." That in itself, Mr. Speaker, is the biggest joke that anybody who calls himself an economist could mention on the Floor of this House.

In the meantime. all of the big Commission Merchants and Provision Merchants are feathering their nests. I am telling you, Sir that the Government of this country is still run from upstairs Plantations Limited building. The big-head people get together down there and put big-brains together at night. When they find that something is too hard for them, some of them will get aboard a yacht with the same Minister of Finance and sail to the Grenadines and all about and on their return everything is solved.

Mr. Speaker, we may try to do the best we can; we may do all we can, but it is wickedness on the part of any section of this Honourable House to accuse the teaching body, the trade union, of attempting to overthrow the Government. What we find to be very disturbing about this matter is that the Minister of Finance who is also the Prime Minister of this country is, evidently, in possession of evidence of this and has taken no action whatsoever in a matter of this sort. He comes before this Honourable House in a more generalised rather than a specialised way, because what the Hon. Minister has said in his Budget Speech is not more than a casual statement.

There again, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House believe that the Hon. Prime Minister does not genuinely believe that the school teachers have been trying to overthrow the Government. I would say this, Sir. I was going to say something about the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works, but I will not say it. (Hon. F. G. SMITH: You can say anything")

Mr. SPEAKER: The debate must not be personal.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, we have to look at those areas where we are spending our money, and try to find out if we are reaping the benefits that we really want to achieve. Let us look at education. Nobody wants to suggest that every dollar spent on every child in every school must produce an "O" level or a certificate, but there are areas in our educational set-up which throw the Government open to very much criticism. With regard to the money spent on education, a careful examination will show the Government whether or not much more benefit could have

accrued to those to whom the education is offered than at the present moment. It is not good enough.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of the Comprehensive School or the Secondary Modern Schools, what we get is not good enough for the millions of dollars that we spend on our Comprehensive School education system. We cannot say in truth and in fact that we are moulding the characters of these children in any appreciable manner or to any satisfactory degree so as to fit them to take their place in any part of our society. We cannot say that the number who come out with certificates justify the expenditure, but we still do not want to look at those who obtain certificates, take them in isolation and judge the whole system by that. We do not want to do that because we are broadminded enough to say that acquiring a certificate is not the stamp and it does not mean all. When you consider the matter and see than at the end of last month there were no less than 3,000 children – I say no less than 3,000 because there were definitely over 3,000 children who left the several Comprehensive Schools in this Island.
4,15 p.m.

They have reached the age of 14 years. Now let us look back to see that these people have spent a number of years at these schools. it cost us money to have kept them there, teachers, buildings, classroom instruction and everything. What we are saying is that the system that at present obtains lacks much, and I have said it on the floor of this House and am willing to respect that many of the children who are channeled into these comprehensive schools could better be catered to as in the case of St. Peter. We have eight schools in the parish of St. Peter which could very well cater to many of the children who have spent the past two, three or four years at Ellerslie, St. Leonard's Comprehensive and the like. They could have got better education at the schools in St. Peter if the Ministry of Education would address its mind and attention to the advice that is so often given so freely. What is needed Mr. Speaker, is not for us to fool ourselves continuously by saying that as soon as they reach 11+ they should be shuttled off to a comprehensive school. We are inviting the Minister now to set about to let us have not less than 50 career masters and mistresses in our educational school system to meet these children, discuss matters with them, study their backgrounds and everything that is related to them, and then you will find that many of the children who have gone there could go straight to the Samuel Jackman Prescod or some other institution or trade school, and after three or four years you would turn out these children.

Here in these Budgetary Proposals the Prime Minister has told us that the building industry contributes something like $27.9 million to the gross domestic product, but at the same time an industry that is providing this amount to the gross domestic product the Minister of Finance in his Budget Speech tells us there is little information available on it, but hoteliers, architects and engineers in the building industry told us a few days ago of the shortage of skilled labour. What you will find, Mr. Speaker, is that there is hardly to be found anywhere today a boy who is learning to be a carpenter, a tile layer, a brick layer or a mason; so what houses are we going to build? With what labour? Do you mean that the foundries are going to machine the pieces of steel and they are going to fit themselves together? What preparation are we making to fit young people to take the place of those dedicated workers? There are some senior workmen now whom we know are dedicated workers; they will soon pass away to the Great Beyond, and what is going to become of us if no young people are being trained to take their places in these skills? I have told people here that in tile laying a man can work from 8.00 a.m. to 3 o'clock in Barbados and earn $80 or more, and go home. There are not enough competent tile layers to be found. Some have got to work on Sundays, or they work at a firm during the day and go home and lay their tiles for people at night. People have to light up their homes at night to have tiles laid, and that same man goes home and sleeps for two hours and gets back up for his job with a firm the next morning, because there are no young men who are allowing their hands to be soiled. They do not want any white cement or mortar to go on their hands. How many tile layers has the Polytechnic turned out since it has been training people? Have they turned out six tile layers? Here is an industry that is crying out for people to take their place and earn a decent living. What is wrong with people laying tiles? You tell them not to cut canes, that you do not want to see a cane blade grow and when you stay at Christ Church you want to look down to St. Lucy and not see a cane blade. What is wrong with the people learning to lay tiles now? Much of what we are suffering in Barbados I am saying is because of politicians getting on platforms and in the House of Assembly and elsewhere and saying things to get power. They teach the people all sorts of things and tell them all sorts of nonsense.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, masonry and tiling are done at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.
4.25 p.m.

Mr. HINDS: I am glad to hear this, Sir, and I look forward to a number of tile layers being turned out in process of time, and I feel I can rest assured that they will be able to take their rightful places in the industry because there is a growing demand for tile layers in this country of ours, so there is nothing more to worry about where that is concerned. What I would suggest is that the Minister should do his best to find out from the industry how great the demand is for these tile layers and see how quickly he can meet this demand by supplying these artisans.

Mr. Speaker, there is much complaint about mention by the Minister of Finance of his intention to implement a policy on incomes of persons who draw salaries and wages out of the Public Treasury. One will remember that the Minister went on to make mention of members of Parliament and others, and he said quite rightly that as in the case of a member of Parliament ...

Mr. SPEAKER: The time for Private Members' Business has now expired and Government Business will now be resumed.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, Your Honour will recall that I sought permission to deal with these two Resolutions and a Bill notice of which was given earlier today by the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works. I take it that I am now quite in order to proceed with these two Resolutions and the Bill. There is another Item for which I am seeking permission but that matter is under consideration at the present time.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, leave will be granted for these two Resolutions and a Bill dealing with the Post Office. Hearing no objection, leave is granted.

RESOLUTION *re* INCREASE IN AIRMAIL POSTAGE

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I shall not be long on this Resolution which is before this Honourable Chamber. The increase in postal rates, as you will observe, is not introduced as part of the fiscal measures of the Minister of Finance, but it springs from the agreements reached at the Universal Postal Union Convention which was held in Tokyo in 1969, and as a result of those agreements it became necessary for Barbados as a member of the Universal Postal Union to revise the rates of postage of several categories of mail and to bring our postal legislation up to date in order for the Government to meet its obligations under those agreements. Even although in certain areas there is an increase in the postal rates, it is not as a result of the Barbados Government consciously imposing any fiscal legislation on the people, it is a matter which arises out of Barbados' international obligations.

I do not want to bore this Honourable House with the details of these rates which were agreed on after exhaustive consideration, it does not affect, as you will appreciate, ordinary inland mail, as a matter of fact these agreements should have come into effect on 1st July 1971, but for some reason they were delayed and the Government has decided that they should be brought in on 1st July, 1972. Notices have appeared in the newspaper to that effect and I think the public will not be considerably burdened as a result of the increase. I beg to move that the Resolution that with effect from the first day of July, 1972, the air mail postage on postal packets to the destinations set out in column 1 of the Schedule hereto shall be at the rates set out immediately opposite in columns 2, 3, 4 and 5 thereof do now pass.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

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

RESOLUTION *re* INCREASE OF POSTAGE ON POSTAL PACKETS

Hon. F. G. SMITH: This is a similar Resolution, Mr. Speaker, and what I said on the first Resolution applies to this, that is, that with effect from the first day of July, 1972, the postage on any postal packet set out in column 1 of the Schedule hereto when transmitted from Barbados to a place abroad otherwise than by air mail shall be at the rate set out immediately opposite such packet in column 2 thereof. I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

THE POST OFFICE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1972

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, in moving the second reading of this Bill to amend the Post Office Act, what I have said on the Resolutions applies to this particular Bill except that in this Bill it is necessary to amend the original Act since matters of increase were part of the original Act and so the amendments become necessary.
4.35 p.m.

Whilst speaking on this Bill, I should just like, briefly, to say that I have been disturbed quite recently not only mainly by the suggestion that the Post Office service is in danger of breaking down, As a matter of fact, the situation has been the subject of editorial comment on more than one occasion recently, and I have certainly taken steps to investigate this matter.

I hope that some time this year a new Post Office building will be commenced down Cheapside. I hope to start, if possible, the clearing of the site some time in October. There is money in the Estimates, and I hope that the people in Barbados, who for so long have been deprived of a modern and up-to-date General Post Office, will have one very soon. We are trying wherever possible to update the Post Office. As you know, we are building a new Post Office and we are removing that dangerous Post Office from St. Lawrence Corner to Worthing.

There are several reasons for the complaints which have been levelled at the Post Office. I should first like to say that I would prefer any person, who finds his letter tampered with, to report the matter to the Postmaster General or to the Ministry rather than to write anonymous letters in the newspaper, for the simple reason that unless people complain to us and unless we know who they are even if we find a reason or if we can give an explanation, we cannot reply to an anonymous letter in a newspaper.

I, certainly, as the Minister, can pledge that any letter written to this Ministry will be carefully investigated. There are several difficulties involved. One is that the layout of the Post Office downstairs is definitely not well situated. If you should pay a visit to the Post Office accomodation downstairs, I think you would be perturbed at the cramped nature of the accommodation and the obvious inconvenience which all workers have to suffer in performing this very vital service to the community.

Furthermore, we suffer in the Post Office a rapid turnover of staff. People come in one day and leave the next day, and this is a matter over which neither the Postmaster nor the Ministry has any control. A person who is beginning to learn the routine or general pattern of Post Office administration is removed rather quickly or resigns, and so we cannot avail ourselves of the expertise which is being gradually built up. The Post Office administration is a highly specialised administration, and a transfer of personnel obviously means a tranfer of expertise just as in the case of the Customs or in the Income Tax Department. We have no control over the constant transfer of persons from the Post Office.

Another matter that has caused us some concern is the inadequate supervision of the Post Office Department. There, again, when we put up recommendations to the Public Service Commission we often get fewer persons than we ask for, consequently, the person who asks for the staff, being the appointing body, it is obvious that the supervision suffers in that regard.

Furthermore, I think this is basic and final. No system in the world can be better than the people who operate it. Whether it is the Port or the Customs, if you have dishonest people, then the system cannot be honest. Therefore, Sir, it is obvious that in any large organisation you will get a bad egg or two. As the Minister responsible for the Post Office, I can say by and large that we have a very honest, hard-working staff, but you will get, as I have said, because of the rapid turnover and the change in personnel, a bad egg occasionally. When that happens, the Post Office being a Department of trust, one bad egg can spoil the entire organisation. This is the price we have to pay. We have to take what we get, and make allowances for that.

What I should like to explain first, Sir, is that it is an occurence as old as the hills to receive letters from overseas in a damaged or opened condition. Very often a letter that is claimed to be opened in Barbados may have arrived from some postal area abroad opened or damaged, because an officer in the Post Office in Canada or in the United States can equally be tempted to see whether a bulky letter contains money. I do not think you can lay all the blame on anybody in Barbados, because letters do arrive in Barbados in a damaged or opened condition.

As a matter of fact, the Manual of 1935 not only accepts this as a possibility, but makes provision for dealing with it when it occurs. It clearly sets out:-

> "If a registered or unregistered letter or packet is received at a Post Office bearing

signs of having been tampered with, it must not be taken out for delivery by a Post but remain in the custody of the Postmaster or Supervising Officer concerned and the addressee asked to collect the letter from the Post Office."

I have only read that to show that it is accepted that letters come from abroad in an opened or damaged condition and, naturally, the addressee may very well suspect, or wrongfully suspect, that it was done in Barbados when in truth and in fact it was not done here.

Mr. Speaker, a letter may come opened for several reasons. It may be due to the poor quality of the envelope the poor quality of the gum, the sealing of the envelope in a hurry to catch the post, or it may be a tendency to place in the envelope much more material than can be safely accommodated, having regard to the normal contingencies of an overseas dispatch. You will see that there are a multiplicity of reasons why people can suspect that their mail is being tampered with. I should like, as the Minister concerned, to give a pledge to the general public that any complaint will be carefully investigated. Any obvious tampering with people's letters will be vigorously and rigorously prosecuted, I hope, by the Director of Public Prosecutions. At least my Ministry will refer them to the Director of Public Prosecutions. In all suspicious matters such as stealing from or interfering with postal packets, the Police will be called in to investigate. Any letters found by the roadside, in toilet bowls or anywhere, the Police will be immediately asked to assist us in detecting the persons involved.

When you have done your best, Sir, you cannot do more. You have to watch the system as it develops and try to stop the loopholes as best you can. I think that the delivery rate of letters in Barbados is commendable. I think we can say in a broad sense that we have one of the best postal services in the Caribbean if not in the world. As the Minister responsible, I pledge to see that the good can become better and the better can even become best.

I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on the Bill.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. LOWE took the Chair.
4.45 p.m.

Clauses 1 to 7 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. F. G. SMITH, seconded by Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. F. G. SMITH seconded by Hon. L. E. Sandiford, the Bill was read a third time and passed. Its title was read and agreed to.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I am asking for leave of the House to be away from this Honourable Chamber for five weeks.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, leave will be granted.

There being no objection leave is granted.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government Business for today's sitting.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 18th July, 1972, at 2.30 p.m.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I beg to second that.

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

4.50 p.m.