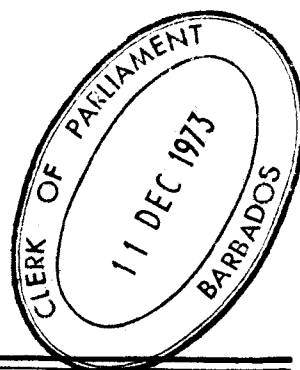


THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)



FIRST SESSION OF 1971 - 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 3rd October, 1972

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

PRESENT

His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, J.P., (Deputy Speaker); Hon. C. E. TALMA, C.B.E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Mr. R. St. C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; Mr. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. ELLIOTT D. MOTTLEY; Mr. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B.; Hon. F. G. SMITH, Q.C., S.C., B.A., (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. P. G. MORGAN, C.B.E., (Minister of Tourism, Information and Public Relations); Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND, (Temporary Minister of Health and Welfare); Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Home Affairs); Mr. A. MORRISON; Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A. (Econ.), (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport).

Prayers were read.

Mr. Forde entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, 15th August, 1972, are before you for confirmation, and unless there is any objection, they will be confirmed.

There being no objection, those Minutes are duly confirmed.

I have the honour to inform the House that I have received the Accounts and Statements prepared by the Auditor General for the months of October, November and December, 1970, and also for January and February, 1971.

I also have the honour to inform the House that I have received the Report and Accounts of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank at 30th June, 1972 prepared by Messrs Pannell, Fitzpatrick & Co. Chartered Accountants.

DOCUMENTS LAID

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

- (1) The Statement showing Net Customs and Excise Receipts for four months ended 31st July, 1972.
- (2) The Statement showing Net Customs and Excise Receipts for five months ended 31st August, 1972.
- (3) The Administration Report of the Comptroller of Customs and Excise for the year 1971.
- (4) The Civil Establishments (General) (Amendment) (No. 4) Order, 1972

On my own behalf, I am commanded to lay the Annual Report of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation for the year 1970-71.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Ministry of Education for the period 1st September, 1969 to 31st August, 1970.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Registrar of Trade Unions for the year 1971-72.

Also on behalf of the same Minister, I am commanded to lay the Annual Report of the Department of Labour for the year 1970.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) (No. 4) Order, 1972.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following —

- A Resolution to grant the sum of \$1,800,000 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. 12, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Mr. EVELYN E. GREAVES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance, I beg to give notice of the following:

- A Resolution to grant the sum of \$163,482 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. 13, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

On behalf of the Prime Minister, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Airport Service Charge Act, 1967.

Also, a Bill to make provision for the reciprocal enforcement of foreign maintenance orders and maintenance orders made in Barbados and for connected purposes.

Also, a Bill to make new provision for the improvement and efficiency of the public service of Barbados by means of training and for connected purposes.

Hon P. M. GREAVES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

On behalf of the Minister of Finance, I beg to give notice of the following:—

- (1) A Bill to amend the Rum Duty Act, 1906.

- (2) A Bill to amend the District Auctioneers Act, 1904.

- (3) A Bill to amend the Final Appropriation (1968–69) Act, 1969.

On behalf of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Severance Payments Act, 1971.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, just to get the records straight, I did give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$1.8 million as coming from the Minister of Communications and Works. There were two Resolutions, one for \$163,000 and one for \$1.8 million. The Resolution for \$163,000 should be in my name and the one for \$1.8 million should be in the name of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance. I just wanted to get the records straight.
2.45 p.m.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Health Services Act, 1969.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following resolution:

WHEREAS it is written in the Preamble to the Constitution of Barbados that the people of Barbados declare their intention to establish and maintain a society in which all persons may, to the full extent of their capacity, play a due part in the institutions of the national life;

AND WHEREAS by the said Constitution it is further declared that every person in Barbados is entitled to certain fundamental freedoms irrespective of sex etc.;

AND WHEREAS the better to effect these lofty ideals it is necessary, from time to time, to take stock so as to ensure that the women of Barbados at all times receive, in all aspects of life of the Island, no less favourable treatment than is meted out to the men of Barbados;

BE IT RESOLVED that this House requests the Government to appoint without delay a National Commission to enquire into and report upon the status of women in Barbados and to recommend what steps ought to be taken by this House and the Government to ensure and maintain for women equal opportunities with men in all aspects of Barbadian society; and in particular, and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, to enquire into and report on:

- (a) The citizenship and Immigration laws, policies and practices so far as they affect women;
- (b) The position of women in the civil and criminal laws, and specifically the laws governing matrimonial property, marriage and divorce;
- (c) Income Tax and Estate and Succession duty legislation in so far as the same affects women;
- (d) Labour laws and the role of women in the labour force of the Island;
- (e) The employment, placing and promotion of women in the public service and in the private sector.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the said commission be mandated to report to the Government within a year of its said appointment and in any event not later than March 1974; and that the said Report be laid on the Table of this House immediately thereafter.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Affiliation Proceedings Act, 1963 (1963-29). Also, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Married Woman's (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1950, (1950-51).

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, to enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Will the Minister state what is Government policy in relation to the banning of books, magazines, periodicals and other literature from coming into Barbados?
2. Will the Minister state:
 - (a) whether there is a list of banned books etc.?
 - (b) if the answer to (a) is in the affirmative, will the Minister state the titles of books etc.?
3. Will the Minister state what books etc., if any, were seized since January 1, 1972?
4. If the answer to the above is in the affirmative will the Minister state reasons?

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

- (1) Has the Government yet appointed a representative or any Committee to advise the Government on what form a suitable national memorial to Sir Grantley Adams should take?
- (2) If such a committee has been appointed will the Minister state the date of its appointment, the names of the persons appointed to serve on the Committee and the Committee's terms of reference?
- (3) If such a Committee has not yet been appointed, will the Prime Minister state whether it is still Government's intention to appoint such a representative Committee?
- (4) If such is still Government's intention, will the Prime Minister state how soon will such a Committee be appointed?
- (5) Will the Government ensure that such a Committee is appointed and its advice received and acted upon, if appropriate, before the second Anniversary of the death of Sir Grantley?

To ask of the Minister of Education:

2. (1) Will the Minister state on what date it is proposed to make school meals available at the St. Matthias Boys' School, the St. Matthias Girls' School and the St. Paul's Girls School?

(2) Will the Minister ensure that School Meals are served at these schools not later than January, 1973?

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

Hon C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Airport Service Charge Act, 1967 be now read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to make provision for the

reciprocal enforcement of foreign maintenance orders and maintenance orders made in Barbados and for connected purposes be now read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to make new provision for the improvement and efficiency of the public service of Barbados by means of training and for connected purposes be now read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Rum Duty Act, 1906 be now read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the District Auctioneers Act, 1904, be read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Final Appropriation (1968-69) Act, 1969, be now read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Severance Payment Act, 1971, be now read a first time.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Health Services Act, 1969, be now read a first time.

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

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Affiliation Proceedings Act, 1963, (1963-29) be now read a first time.

Mr. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Married Women's (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1950, (1950-51) be read a first time.

Mr. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

STATEMENT BY MINISTERS
STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH
AND WELFARE RE DEATH OF MISS
OUGHTNA NEBLETT AND MRS.
SYBIL WORRELL

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Health and Welfare, I should like to make a Statement with regard to the death of Miss Oughtna Neblett and Mrs. Sybil Worrell.

The attention of the Minister of Health has been drawn to reports of the unfortunate death

of a Miss Oughtna Neblett of Observatory Road, Clapham, St. Michael on 20th September, 1972, and to the circumstances surrounding the non arrival of an ambulance to her aid when it was requested.

2. The Minister views this matter with very grave concern and in order to ascertain the true facts, instituted an immediate enquiry into all the circumstances. The investigation is still continuing and the Government insists that it must be thorough, impartial and fair.

3. The results of the investigation are not yet to hand but the Ministry is pursuing this matter with expedition and will report to the House when the results of the inquiry are available.

4. Subsequent to the above unfortunate incident, the Ministry's attention was drawn to reports of another case involving the death of a Mrs. Sybil Worrell of Lennox Avenue, Goodland, St. Michael.

5. An immediate investigation has been instituted into all the circumstances surrounding this death, and the Minister will make a further report to the House as soon as all the facts are available.

6. The Minister assures this House that should the facts reveal negligence and or default on the part of any Government Officer in either and or both of these two incidents, the matter will be reported to the proper authorities for necessary disciplinary action.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, since Your Honour has already received notice that we on this side, intend to raise matters on the adjournment, could we ask that copies of the Statement be circulated so that we could look it over beforehand?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have in my hand a letter from the hon. member for the City who requested to speak on the adjournment on a matter of urgent public importance on another matter and not on the matter that has just been dealt with. I can only speak on what I have received. I intend to grant permission to speak on this matter, but, with regard to what the Honourable Acting Minister has just mentioned, I do not have any letter from any member of the Opposition asking permission to speak on it.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, there was a letter sent on the 28th September to the Speaker in accordance

with the provisions of Standing Order 15, Rule 2. It said: "I hereby give you notice of my intention —" and in a latter part of the letter the member for the City sets out the names of other members who intend to speak — "to raise on the motion "That the House do now adjourn," a matter for which a Minister is responsible.

With regard to the letter dated 28th September, the matter I propose to raise is the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with special reference to the operation of the Ambulance Services and the failure to send an ambulance promptly to Observatory Road, Clapham, St. Michael, in response to a call that a lady, Oughtna Neblett now dead, was seriously ill. He then sets out the names of other members who intend to speak on the matter. That is, fortunately, a matter which can be raised generally under Standing Order No. 15.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Maybe the Clerks are in possession of that letter, but I am not in possession of it. I am making myself clear. The Clerk has just shaken his head in disgust which, in my opinion, means that he has not seen, heard of, or known of the letter.

Mr. ADAMS: He may be saying that Your Honour should have got it, and that is all he is complaining of. I am sure he is not saying that he did not get it.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am surprised to hear that. The letter was addressed to the Speaker and sent to the House of Assembly. If necessary, I will send to my office for the book in which I asked my Clerk to have the time the letter was received at the House of Assembly recorded, because I do not understand what is happening in here.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have no doubt that you have sent a letter.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I am going to send to the office to get the book, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I think this is a very serious matter. I do not like the idea of a member of the House writing to the Speaker and then being told that no letter was received.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I can only speak of the letter I have received.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another Statement which has to be laid.

**Statement by the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National
Insurance on the current industrial situation**

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I should like to make the following Statement on the present state of industrial relations in this country with particular reference to the differences which exist between the Barbados Employers' Confederation and the Barbados Workers' Union over the question of recognition of the Union as the bargaining agent for the workers employed by the firm of Clarke and Tucker Ltd.

On 17th July, 1972, the Barbados Workers' Union addressed a letter to Messrs. Clarke & Tucker Ltd. claiming that 293 of the Company's employees were members of the Union and requesting recognition as bargaining agent for such workers.

On 3rd August, 1972, the entire work force at a work site at Cave Hill walked off their jobs. Information received is to the effect that about two weeks prior to the work stoppage the workers requested changes in their working hours. It was customary for them to work 44 hours a week — Mondays to Fridays with 30 minutes for lunch and with remuneration for work done on Saturdays at overtime rates. The hours of work were as follows:-

Monday to Thursday	—	7.30 a.m.	--	5.00 p.m.
Friday	—	7.30 a.m.	--	4.00 p.m.
Saturday	—	7.30 a.m.	--	11.30 a.m.

The workers apparently requested a 40 hour work week with a full hour for lunch and termination of work at 4.00 p.m. From investigations carried out by the Labour Department, it appears that the Company's response to the request of the workers was not favourable to them and as a result the workers walked off their jobs.
3.05 p.m.

I use the words "apparently", "it appears", "information received" and "investigations carried out" because at no time, not even up to this time, has a dispute been reported to the Labour Department or indeed to myself. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about three weeks ago, I directed the Chief Labour Officer to enter the matter to see if he could promote a settlement between the two parties. I understood from the Chief Labour Officer that the General Secretary of the Workers' Union was willing to meet with him, but when he approached the Director of the Employers' Confederation, the Director of the Employers' Confederation asked "how did you get into this matter? No matter has been reported to you, how did you get into this? I have no intention of attending any meeting summoned by yourself."

On 4th August, 1972, the company asked the Union to state the number of employees by categories who were members of the Union but the Union replied by letter of 9th August, 1972, to the effect that it had already submitted information on the number of workers which it had organised and did not consider it necessary to categorise the workers. The Union further stated that it had been drawn to its attention that the Company had altered the conditions of employment of workers at the Cave Hill site which was a matter of grave concern to the workers because their incomes had been adversely affected. The Union then enquired whether it would be convenient for representatives of the Company to meet representatives of the Union on 11th August, 1972, at the Union Headquarters, Fairchild Street to discuss the matter.

On 10th August the Company replied disagreeing with the Union that it was unnecessary to submit information regarding the number of workers of the firm in categories who were members of the Union and stated that they had been advised that they should have information before considering the question of granting recognition. The Company also intimated to the Union that they could not undertake discussions with the Union until the Union was officially recognised as the representative of the workers.

On 11th August, 1972, the workers were paid their holiday pay in accordance with the Holidays with Pay Act, 1951, and wages due.

The work stoppage at the Cave Hill site has continued to date. Meanwhile following public meetings and demonstrations organised by the Barbados Workers' Union the workers on the Company's other building sites also went on strike as from Monday 25th September.

On 19th September, the Union wrote the Barbados Employers' Confederation about the case of two Port workers who had been under suspension since 1970 in connexion with alleged theft but who had been acquitted by the Courts and had subsequently resumed work. The Union submitted that these workers should be compensated in full for the time during which they were suspended and threatened that if settlement was not reached by 23rd September, steps would be taken in all areas in the port to protect the workers' interests. On 20th September the Union wrote another letter making a similar claim in respect of a third port worker and any other worker with like cases.

On 23rd September, 1972, the Director, Barbados Employers' Confederation replied to the Union offering to compensate two of the workers in full and a third worker compensation from 1st November, 1970 to the date of resumption of work. This last mentioned worker had been suspended from 2nd July, 1970 and the Port Registration and Disciplinary Committee had decided that he was guilty of the offence and agreed that his suspension should be continued until the 31st October, 1970 when a final decision would be taken in the matter. No final decision had been taken and the worker had remained on suspension until August, 1971 when he was reinstated.

On 27th September, the Union acknowledged the Confederation's letter of the 23rd and informed the Director that the Union had considered his reply and had decided to meet the Confederation to discuss the settlement of the matter. The letter went on to state however that it had been drawn to the Union's attention that the Company had suspended the President of the Division and that a dispute existed at the Barbados Telephone Co. Ltd. on 26th September and that the General Secretary's personal efforts at conciliation were spurned by the Confederation. The Union further stated that if this worker was not reinstated before 4.00 p.m. on that same day – the 27th – the Union would take steps to withdraw all of its members from the Company as from Thursday 28th September.

The Union's letter also referred to the fact that the stage had been reached where the relationship between the Confederation and the Union had deteriorated to the point that served little purpose to continue dialogue and went on to inform the Confederation that in view of the failure to reach

a settlement on the docks by the time indicated in the Union's letter of the 19th September, the Union had decided to withdraw the labour force from the docks as from 11.00 p.m. on Thursday 28th September and would furthermore refuse to handle any cargo consigned to the Barbados Telephone Co. Ltd. until a settlement was reached in the dispute with that Company.

At the request of the Confederation the Chief Labour Officer convened a meeting between representatives of the Barbados Telephone Co. Ltd., the Confederation and the Barbados Workers' Union on the 27th September. At that meeting, the Union referred to a letter dated 26th September addressed to the worker concerned by the Personnel Officer of the Barbados Telephone Company advising him that as from 7.30 a.m. on 27th September he was suspended from work for a period of two weeks and gave as the reason for suspension that on the morning of Tuesday 26th September he had caused a work stoppage at the Barbados Telephone Co. Ltd. between the hours of 7.30 a.m. and 8.45 a.m.

The Company eventually agreed to reinstate the worker provided that the Company and the Union would meet at a later date to enquire into the causes of unofficial work stoppages at the Company. The Union accepted this settlement and the dispute was therefore resolved.

The matter of compensation for the suspended port workers was referred to the Chief Labour Officer by the Employers' Confederation on 27th September, 1972 and at a meeting held under his Chairmanship on 28th September, the Employers' Confederation and Port Contractors agreed to settle in full and this matter was thereby resolved.

Following the settlement of the Port issue on 28th September the Union stated that unless the Clarke and Tucker issue was also settled that day the strike in the Port would be called from 11.00 p.m. that day. The Confederation's representatives stated that they were not properly constituted to consider the Clarke and Tucker matter. The Chief Labour Officer drew attention to the fact that the Union's letter of 27th September did not specify the Clarke and Tucker issue. He further stated that he had had consultations with the Minister and it had been decided that the Chief Labour Officer would arrange a meeting the following morning to discuss the Clarke and Tucker issue. The Union's representatives then extended the deadline for strike action in the Port by 24 hours to 11.00 p.m. on Friday 29th September. A meeting held under the Chairmanship of the Chief Labour Officer on that Friday failed to produce an agreement and work in the Port stopped that night, and has not yet been resumed. Meanwhile several ships lay idle in the Port.

During the course of the discussions under the Chief Labour Officer, the Barbados Employers' Confederation's representative established that the request made by the Company for numbers by categories was nothing new and cited cases in which the employers had requested similar information before and had obtained it and in some cases the Union itself had volunteered the information. The employers' representative claimed that the wording of the Union's letter of the 17th July, 1972, seeking recognition left some doubt as to the type of workers whom the union sought to represent i.e. office workers, technicians, construction workers (artisans, labourers etc.) and the Company was merely trying to establish this. In the ensuing discussion it was established that the Union's request for recognition was in respect of construction workers.

At one point of the discussion when it appeared that the meeting might end in deadlock, the Chief Labour Officer in an effort to effect a

compromise suggested that, subject to agreement by both sides, he would be willing to conduct a survey of the Union's membership as would have been done in normal circumstances where the employer had reason to require verification of members claimed by the Union before granting recognition. This suggestion was considered by both parties and the Employers' side gave an undertaking that they would accord the Union recognition provided that the survey revealed that the Union held a majority among the workers of the Company, excluding foremen. The Union said it was not opposed to the survey, but did not agree to the exclusion of foremen on the grounds that foremen were also workers and were entitled to organise and be represented but offered to deal with foremen as a separate bargaining unit from that of the other workers. It was agreed that the survey would be conducted on the basis of workers employed by the Company as at 17th July, 1972 the date on which the Union informed the Company that it had 293 of its workers as members of the Union. The Union's other conditions of settlement were as follows:-

3.15 p.m.

- (1) Return to work by the workers;
- (2) Reinstatement of workers now on strike;
- (3) The Union would rescind its decision to close down the Port;
- (4) The Union would, at a subsequent date, submit proposals to the Company for wages and conditions of employment in respect of workers concerned.

The Employers' side countered by stating that the question of return to work and reinstatement of workers could be discussed at domestic level after the question of recognition had been settled and that they were just as anxious as the Union to see normal work continue in the Port but did not accept this as a condition of settlement in the issue of Clarke and Tucker Limited. The Union felt that there was no need to discuss the return to work or the reinstatement of the workers at domestic level as these appeared to be automatic on the granting of recognition. It was then 3.50 p.m. and the General Secretary of the BWU moved that the meeting be adjourned and reconvened at 6.00 p.m. to continue discussion on these points since there seemed to be no real problem over the question of foremen. It was then agreed to reconvene at 5.30 p.m.

On resumption, the General Secretary of the BWU informed the meeting that during the recess and on sober reflection, he did not see what useful purpose would be served by a survey. The Union had closed down all of Clarke and Tucker's work sites as from last Monday and had proved that it exercised effective control over the majority of the workers concerned. In these circumstances, he could not commit the Union to a survey.

After further discussion, the Union put forward the following conditions of settlement:-

- (1) Unconditional recognition immediately;
- (2) Return to work;
- (3) Reinstatement by the Company of all workers now on strike;
- (4) The Union would rescind its decision to with-draw the labour force from the docks.

The Employers' side did not accept these conditions and reaffirmed their preference for a survey based primarily on the transient nature of the construction industry and the movement of workers from employer to employer.

No agreement was reached and at 8.20 p.m. the meeting was terminated and the Chief Labour Officer immediately reported the matter to the Minister.

On being informed of the break-down in negotiations I immediately arranged to meet the parties on the following day, Saturday 30th September.

At the meeting I expressed my appreciation of the ready response of the two parties to my invitation to the meeting and said that the situation which had been reached in the dispute was a source of personal regret. There had been a long period of trade union activity in Barbados and I hoped that by this time a sufficient degree of goodwill and trust would have developed on both sides. I then urged both parties not to take up positions which would make resolution of the issues more difficult. I said further that it had been my understanding that at the meeting the preceding day under the Chairmanship of the Chief Labour Officer the parties appeared at one stage close to reaching a settlement and I expressed the hope that the matter could be finally disposed of at this meeting without long discussions.

I stressed that the economy of the country could be severely affected by a prolonged dispute involving closure of the Port and said that the good sense of the parties should prevail in the national interest.

The representative of the Confederation in his opening remarks stated that his organisation shared concern for the welfare of the country and hoped for industrial peace. He recalled that in order to avoid a stoppage of work in the Port the Confederation had submitted to the demands of the Union in the issue involving the Barbados Telephone Company and the Port Department but then that the Union had involved the Port in the Clarke and Tucker issue. His organisation had no outstanding matters with the Barbados Workers' Union affecting the workers in the Port and although they were aware that some thirteen ships were due to call at the Port that week-end they were not prepared to submit to the Union's efforts to use the Port as a lever to force a settlement of the Clarke and Tucker issue as seemed to have become a pattern whenever there is a dispute between the Barbados Workers' Union and the Barbados Employers' Confederation. He then stated that the Confederation was not prepared to participate in any further discussions on the Clarke and Tucker issue or on any other issue until work was resumed at the Port.

I expressed disappointment at the attitude of the Confederation and stated that it was clearly making resolution of the issue more difficult. But despite my urging to reconsider its stand, the Confederation would not move from that position. The meeting was finally terminated without even discussing the issues.

Since it has been established that the Company's request for information regarding numbers by categories is in accordance with practice and in the light of their need to know precisely the area of representation claimed by the Union it would appear to have been a reasonable request on the Company's part. However, the Union decided that it has clearly demonstrated that it commands effective control of workers employed by the Company by completely closing all the work sites of the Company and that any survey at this stage could be purely an academic exercise and therefore unnecessary.

It was my understanding that at one point of the meeting presided over by the Chief Labour Officer a settlement was near, but that talks finally broke down on the issue of the survey. It is within this context that I decided to lend my office to promote a settlement of the outstanding issues. I regret very much the intransigence displayed at that meeting. My Ministry is still prepared to take all reasonable action to enable the parties to reach accord on their differences in order to maintain a harmonious industrial atmosphere and to continue the improvement of existing conditions of work and expansion of future employment opportunities.

This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, represents the facts in the industrial situation as now before the country. As I have indicated, my efforts at securing a settlement were not successful.

3.25 p.m.

I understand that my efforts to promote this settlement were severely criticised at a public meeting at which it was claimed that I allowed myself to be subjected to insults by the Barbados Employers' Confederation. I want to state, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I do not consider my office to be that of a rum shop whereby I should trade insult for insult. It is not the case that I have been insulted by the Barbados Employers' Confederation.

I also understand that it has been further stated that — and this is what I deplore — one reason I did not deal with the Director of the Barbados Employers' Confederation in the manner in which the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union would have dealt with him, is that I play dominoes with the Director of the Barbados Employers' Confederation. I do not intend to get into that kind of gutter politics. Even if I were to live as long as Methuselah, I could not have built up the sort of friendship that exists or existed, I do not know, between the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union and the Director of the Barbados Employers' Confederation. I do not intend to accept any insults from anybody whether it is the Barbados Employers' Confederation, the Barbados Workers' Union, or any other source. Perhaps the way in which I handled the matter is not the way in which somebody else would have handled the matter.

I understand it was said that if "Prophet" had handled the matter —

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there "a prophet" around?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am making the statement that was made, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I

understand it was stated that if "Prophet" had handled the matter the Barbados Employers' Confederation would have asked him to leave. How "Prophet" handles a matter is "Prophet's" business. His style is not my style, and I would hope that "Prophet's" style would not be urged upon me. Where is "Prophet" today? *(Laughter)* Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have one interest in this matter, and it is to settle this dispute in the interest of this country.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I want to know whether the Minister is making a statement on a Statement, or whether it is a prepared Statement. He has made comments on his own Statement. I just want to get things clear. I have some involvement in this Statement, and I want to know whether the Statement is written. I want to be able to quote the Minister when we are discussing the matter, and I do not want him to say something that I cannot quote.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Labour has read his Statement, and I think he is entitled to make comments on it.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not indicated that my Statement is concluded, but it will be concluded in a matter of seconds. I was merely stating that my interest in this matter is to settle the dispute in the national interest, and that happens to be a part of my concern. The national interest must be served in this matter, and I will settle it my way.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, under Standing Orders, I am going to ask leave and make a motion that the Statement made by the Minister today be placed on the Order Paper. I am giving notice of the Resolution, and I will bring it at the appropriate time. I am asking that the Statement be printed and laid.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister has made a Statement which will be printed and laid, and anybody in the House can move a motion to the effect that notice be taken

of the Statement laid. If any member on this side had got up and attacked the Minister as the hon. member has just done, he would have been told that he was preventing the people's business from being done.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not attacked yet. When I am about to attack, I am not afraid to attack anybody.

PERSONAL EXPLANATIONS

LETTERS FROM MR. MOTTLEY ADDRESSED TO MR. SPEAKER AND THE CLERK

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, a few minutes ago I stated that on the 28th September I wrote to His Honour the Speaker requesting permission to raise a matter under Standing Order 15(2) on the adjournment of the House. I stated then that the letter was sent to the Speaker of the House, and I have recorded in my post Book the date, 28/9/72, when the letter was sent to the House of Assembly. There were two letters: One to the Speaker and one to the Clerk, and they were received by one D. Ellis. They have been signed for as being received at the House of Assembly. One letter was sent along with the Bills of which I gave notice today; they were received by Mrs. D. Ellis, and the documents must be here in the House of Assembly. I would like to know why these letters are not before the House. I do not think it is right for a member to write to the Speaker giving notice of his intention under a particular Standing Order, and then be told in this House that there is nothing here. This is a very serious matter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it were a Resolution that was sent here, and the Clerk got up and said he could not find it, then I have no doubt that business would not be carried on in the House. As a member of this House, I am entitled to the same treatment as any other member or Minister of this House. If I send a communication to this House, I expect it to be placed before the House, I am not going to make any allegations against anybody at this stage, but I should like to know why the matter is not before the House. I am entitled to have my business placed before the House like any other member.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the letters were not addressed to Mr. N. G. A. Maxwell. I should like to hand to you, through the Clerk, a photostat copy of the letter which I sent here, and you will see that it was addressed to the Speaker. I think that is the correct practice.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As Deputy Speaker, I always make it, my duty, when I am informed that I have to take the Chair, to come to familiarise myself with all the duties here. 3.35 p.m.

I came here approximately one hour and a half before the scheduled time and I saw on the Speaker's desk a letter which I have in my hand addressed to His Honour the Deputy Speaker. After opening it, I consulted with the Clerk of Parliament and he told me what were the proceedings for the day. So far there has been no other letter stating that there would be discussion by the hon. member for the City or any other member on any other matter. The Clerk showed me what were the Orders of the Day and as I have said this is the only letter that I have received which was addressed to me personally as Deputy Speaker. If there was any other letter that I should have seen, I am sure that the Clerk of Parliament would have passed it to me, and as I said I came in early enough to acquaint myself with all the matters of the day.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is not really satisfactory. I do not think it is right for a member of the House to write a letter and then nobody knows where it is. What is the Government trying to do? This is collusion on the part of somebody just because.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order, why was the Government brought into this? You wrote the Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER rose.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am willing to hear the hon. member if he has a claim, but I would like it to be done correctly.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: What I was saying on a point of order is that the hon. member in his speech said that he wrote to the Speaker, so how does the Government get into this? The Speaker is not part of this Government.

Mr. MOTTLEY: As I was saying, I wrote to His Honour the Speaker stating that I intended to raise the matter of the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital along with the operation of the ambulance service and the failure to send an ambulance to Observatory Road in response to a call by a lady, Miss Neblett, now dead, who was seriously ill. I wrote that letter to the Speaker. I gave a press conference at which I said it was my intention to raise it at this sitting of the House along with the other matter arising from the death of a lady by the name of Sybil Worrell.

Now, Sir, I came here today and you have said that you did not receive those two letters, and you do not think it is collusion?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, I will not sit down as a member of this Government and allow the member for the City to accuse me of being an accomplice in something that is fraudulent. The Government knows absolutely nothing about the letter that the hon. member wrote, when he wrote it, how he wrote it and to whom. The Government could not care less to whom you wrote it. The Government does not fear any debate on this now, next week or ten years from now.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The Minister of Communications and Works likes to get up quickly, but I would expect the Leader of the House to get up and talk about this matter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let there be some order.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support my colleague who has resented such a statement as to suggest that the Government has done anything or has been in collusion whatever. As far as I am concerned, as Leader of the House I only became aware of this matter by reading it in the newspaper on Saturday, but the fact that it appeared in the newspaper is not in itself conclusive proof that the Clerk did receive a copy.

Mr. MOTTLEY: No, Sir. I want to produce a book which is signed by Mrs. D. Ellis that it was received; so do not tell me that it was not received, because the letter was received by Mrs. D. Ellis who is an employee of the House of Assembly. Why isn't that letter before the House? I want an explanation of this. The Clerk should know. I sent a letter to the Clerk with copies of the Bill to amend the Married Woman's (Separation and Maintenance) Act and these have been received. Where are the letters dealing with this question? Why are they not before the House? You want to stifle debates on this, and Your Honour has said that you did not receive notice of them. This is an attempt to stifle debate on this matter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have no intention of stifling any debate.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Not you, Sir, but there is one way that debate can be stifled on this matter. I defy any person to rule that this matter is not a matter of urgency and therefore one effective way in which to delay this matter is to say the letter was not received, which is a dishonest statement no matter who makes it. It is a sheer dishonest

statement for anybody to say that the letter was not received when I have positive proof that the letter was received by Mrs. D. Ellis. Are you telling me that the Government is not trying to stifle debate on this issue?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Again on a point of order,.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER rose and both hon. members took their seats.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I join with members of the Government. I do not see that the Government has anything to do with this. If you sent a letter here, there must be a Clerk or someone to receive it. I have no doubt that you sent it, but I have not seen it nor have I been informed of it, and I do not intend to stifle any debate on anything. I intend to act and I am willing if this letter can be found to let you debate the matter; but there can be no debate on anything I do not know about or have been informed of before.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it seems to me that we are making a mountain out of a mole hill. I have never for one moment doubted that the hon. member for the City sent the letter. As a matter of fact, I would grant premission if it were left to me for the hon. member to debate it on the motion for adjournment. He sent a letter which he said was received by an employee of the House and which was addressed to the Speaker of the House and not to the Clerk of the House, nor was it copied to the Clerk of the House from what he said. Had he copied this letter to the Clerk or sent it to the Clerk and copied it to the Speaker, there would have been two records of it. All that may have happened is that the Speaker who is now on his way to or is in Taiwan did not inform the Deputy Speaker of the receipt of the member's letter, for which he should be castigated. The Speaker, had he received it, should have called the Clerk and told him that he had received this letter from the hon. member for the City, told him that he would not be here when the House reconvened and to inform the Deputy Speaker for him. I sympathise with the hon. member for the City, but the Government knew absolutely nothing about this thing, and furthermore the Government would be expected to make a statement on the two matters reported in the press. If you are running a Government of any quality you would not bring down a statement to stop it. We brought a statement because we are the Government, we run the Hospital, we read of the deaths, and we have got to make a statement which you say is not satisfactory, and we have promised two additional statements. I sympathise with the hon. member,

but he must know that I will not sit down and allow him or any other member of the Opposition to accuse me or any member of this Government of something of which we are totally, absolutely and completely innocent.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to rise to speak as briefly as I can on this matter, because it is not the first time that members of the Opposition have had to complain that documents sent to the House are not before the House when the House meets. Now I would also just suggest as politely as I can since the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works and the Leader of the House have said that they are absolutely certain that the Government knows nothing of this, that it may well be, but I myself am unwilling ever to speak of any other man's knowledge. The Minister of Health is not here. The Minister of Health is a man of the utmost integrity where matters like this are concerned so far as my belief goes, and I am not suggesting that he or the acting Minister of Health would tell the Clerk or the Speaker to suppress a letter in favour of a statement. I do not believe the Permanent Secretary would do it either. I just do not believe it, but I might be proved wrong, but certainly I am not willing to say that it has not been done. I just mention in passing that no matter with how much vehemence the Minister of Communications and Works speaks and the Leader of the House speaks, even if on this occasion I am prepared to give them the benefit of the doubt, let it not be believed that I will ever accept from one member of the Government a blanket statement that none of the other eleven members have done something. That goes far beyond what I think one man can say on behalf of another, but having dealt with that, I would invite hon. members to look at it this way.

3.45 p.m.

On an earlier occasion the member for the City raised a matter concerning the administration of the hospital. This matter was debated in the House, and subsequent to that a Government statement came down and was published. You must forgive us if we come today prepared to debate another matter here, a Government statement in anticipation of the matter is read out, and then we hear that our letter saying that we are going to debate this is not before the House. Suspensions must arise. How can a man be a politician if he is not suspicious of something like that? We are suspicious, and however great the integrity of the Ministers we must be suspicious that something is amiss. What I do not like about this whole business is how the Clerk of the House of Assembly sits down without even attempting to volunteer an explanation to Your Honour for which he is ultimately responsible. The Clerk sat

down, he has heard that a book is present showing a delivery of three letters to the House, he is clearly responsible to the House for them, and yet he cannot tell Your Honour what is the present position with regard to these letters. The Hon. Minister of Communications and Works is trying to blame the Speaker, he is trying to divert our attention from the Government to the Speaker. I do not know if it is the Speaker, I do not know if it is the Clerk, but I know it is the Clerk's duty to find out exactly what took place on this occasion. He should send a message to Mrs. Ellis to find out if she gave him all three letters.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, if the hon. member would give way, on this occasion the Hon. Minister of Communications seems to be absolutely correct in that the two letters which were addressed by the hon. member for the City were addressed to His Honour the Speaker who is overseas and are still unopened on the Speaker's desk.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I said that he may either have received them or.....

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, the Minister is misleading the House because at the time when the letters were delivered to the House of Assembly the Speaker had already left.

Mr. LOWE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is true. All we are doing now is making a mountain out of a mole hill. Since the letters were addressed to His Honour the Speaker and His Honour the Speaker was not present, no Deputy Speaker nor any other individual could open those letters since the Speaker was out of the island. They were not addressed in such a manner as to be forwarded by the Clerk of the House, I can only say that the Clerk has been completely exonerated and the matter rests directly with the Speaker and not with any other person. You cannot accuse him of conniving or stopping this particular resolution from being debated in the House, it is as simple as this. It was not addressed to the Clerk to forward to the Speaker, it was addressed to His Honour the Speaker. I would like to see in this Chamber a letter addressed to His Honour the Speaker and you as Deputy Speaker open it. This is the whole crux of the matter, it was addressed to His Honour the Speaker and the Speaker was not present, the letters were placed on the Speaker's desk and whenever the Speaker returns he will open them and deal with them.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, while that may very well be true with letters addressed to the hon. member who has just sat down at his home, the same thing does not hold true for

correspondence addressed to any Government Office. I think if the hon. member gives it reflection he will not pursue the point. I will attack the Clerk more because it is more the Clerk's duty to open the letters addressed to the Speaker at his Office in the House of Assembly. If a letter is sent to the Leader of the Opposition I would expect that if I am not there or the hon. member for St. James is not there that the letter would be opened by my personal assistant, and I would make a noise if I found it was not opened in my absence. The Clerk should be instructed to see about these matters.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Clerk has just informed me that Mrs. Ellis stated that she signed for two Bills and one Parliamentary Question from the hon. member for the City and which she duly recorded in Parliament's Post Book the same time.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to get the record straight. I have the book here with the signature and I will pass it on to Your Honour.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As can be seen from this book, on 28/9/72 three letters which were addressed to the Speaker at the House of Assembly were received by Mrs. D. Ellis. I see the time of 1.40 noted here but I do not know whether it was a.m. or p.m.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, it seems to me that the letter to the Speaker could have been opened by anybody, but in so far as the motion is concerned I think it would be proper to say it should have been addressed to the Clerk of Parliament who is responsible for submitting things to the Speaker and not the reverse. It is not for the Speaker to receive notices of motions from members, it is for the Clerk of Parliament.
3.55 p.m.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this matter is not as small as some hon. members would like to make it appear.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I said procedure. (*Asides*)

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for the City has tendered his Delivery Book, which Your Honour had the privilege of seeing, indicating that correspondence had gone out from the hon. member's office addressed to the Clerk and to the Speaker, and you are satisfied beyond a shadow of doubt that the letters were received by Mrs. D. Ellis at this office. We should go a step further. I am satisfied

that there is operating in Parliament today a proper system whereby we can check and see whether or not Mrs. D. Ellis had received these documents. I know that there is a Record Book at Parliament where all incoming correspondence is noted showing the time it is received, the date it is received, to whom it is addressed, the subject matter and so on. We should go one step further. I think we should go on to see exactly what Mrs. D. Ellis did when she received the correspondence. One never knows when something far greater than this may escape the attention of an hon. member or the Speaker, and we would like to have this matter put straight now and for all time.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not intend to prolong the debate. If we are going to be formal, we should be formal. Under the Standing Orders I should like to draw Your Honour's attention to Standing Order 15(3). Such notices, as I understand it, are addressed formally to His Honour the Speaker.

Under Standing Order 20, such notices shall be given when the House is sitting, by being handed in at the Table; or when the House is not sitting, by being handed in at the office of the Clerk.

Under Standing Order 20(4), the Clerk indicates the day upon which a notice was handed in, unless it is a notice for the next sitting of the House or an amendment to a Bill.

He draws, under Standing Order 20(5) "Any such notice to the Speaker who shall direct -

- (a) that it be printed in the terms in which it was handed in; or
- (b) that it be printed with such alterations as he may direct; or
- (c) that it should be returned to the member..."

I think we should get the position quite clear in future, so that there can be no misunderstanding. Although this appears to be a small matter, it is a matter of tremendous importance to the people who may be affected by this debate. It is from small matters that matters of tremendous substance to the livelihood of the common man that we hear so much about are involved. I think these procedures should be quite clear. Now that certain things have been drawn to your attention, there should be some direction from Your Honour as to what procedure should be adopted in the future both

by the administrative section of the House and by members of the House who are dealing with matters of this nature.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not hope to get involved in this matter but, listening to what has been said, there appears to be something wrong in relation to correspondence coming to and going from the House of Assembly, whether addressed to the Speaker, to the Clerk, or other officers of the House. I have heard that mails have been received here and probably left on the Speaker's desk. Some members say that the correspondence should have been given to the Clerk; some members complain that matters have been handed in and then at the relevant time they are not available. I think this House should take a serious look at its operations in respect of correspondence coming to or leaving the House of Assembly. I believe it should be appropriate that the Government or the House as a whole should set up a small committee which would determine the method of handling correspondence which comes in or goes out of this Department.

Now, if members say that you must follow the Standing Orders and write to the Speaker, and when he is out of the country, the mail will be left on the Speaker's desk, then it is tantamount to saying that if the Speaker is dead nobody should open the mail addressed to him until we have elected another Speaker. In that case you may go on for several sessions with important matters lying on the Speaker's desk, if we follow the reasoning of certain members in this Chamber. I believe this is the time when the House should look at its internal administration and set matters right. This would help the Clerks as well as those who have to write to the House. If we know to whom we should write, it would save a lot of trouble. If I follow Standing Orders and write to the Speaker, then I feel that the Speaker would be insulted if I copied his letter to the Clerk. I think that something should be done in this matter.

APPLICATION FOR LEAVE FOR MR. SPEAKER

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that His Honour the Speaker be granted three weeks' leave of absence from his duties as from the 29th September, 1972.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division

REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 32, asked by the hon. member for the City, is ready.

I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 43, asked by the hon. member for St. Lucy, is ready.

I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 46, asked by the hon. member for the City, is ready.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 35, asked by the hon. member for the City, is ready.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 42, asked by the hon. member for St. Peter, is ready, as well as Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 45, asked by the same hon member for the City.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Prime Minister, I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 40, asked by the Hon. member for St. George North, is ready.
4.05 p.m.

NOTICE OF MOTIONS FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE ON MATTERS OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are actually two letters under this matter, but I only intend to proceed with one of them, that is, the last letter which you received, that in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 16, it was my intention to ask for leave to move the adjournment of the House to raise a matter of urgent public importance. That matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is purely surrounding the Prime Minister and the alleged attempt to kidnap the Prime Minister and the asking for a ransom of \$2 million.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we propose at this sitting if the Opposition agrees, to give Oral Replies to the Questions which we have given notice of, and then I suppose the hon. member for the City will proceed with his motion before we adjourn.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. Question No. 32 stands in the name of the hon. member for Bridgetown.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question reads as follows:-

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, St. Michael?
- (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?

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply is as follows:-

"1. Yes, Sir.

2. Yes, Sir.

3. No, Sir. A daily service of collecting refuse in the area has now been organised.

4&5. Metal refuse bins were placed in this area and were removed by the residents within three days. To improve the conditions, leaflets were distributed by Supervisors of the Sanitation Department and the District Public Health Officer asking residents to put their refuse in containers and place the containers next to their premises between 6.00 and 8.30 a.m. The residents are cooperating and the refuse collector is operating at the scheduled time."

Mr. MOTTLEY: As a supplementary arising out of (3) to which the Minister replied "no", can the Minister assist us by stating on what date the service started?

If the Minister will give the undertaking that she will give the answer at another time, I will accept that. Also, will she say whether the service is a daily service?

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: At the moment the service is a daily service. I do not know if you

would like more information from the file, but as I have stated before, steps were taken by the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board to improve the conditions by arranging for a daily service of this refuse collection. Any other answers I promise to give later.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 43 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Question reads as follows:

To enquire of the Minister of Health and Welfare:-

Is the Minister aware that there is no Parochial Medical Officer in St. Lucy?

Can the Minister state what attempts have been made to recruit one?

And can the Minister state what difficulties have been experienced and how the Ministry proposes to overcome such difficulties?

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply is as follows:-

"No, Sir. Attempts to recruit a District Medical Officer for St. Lucy alone proved futile. Dr. T. J. Gilmore is the District Medical Officer for St. Lucy and was appointed on 1st February, 1971."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I should like hon. members not addressing the Chair to speak in undertones especially when someone is answering a question.

Question No. 46 stands in the name of the hon. member for Bridgetown.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question reads as follows:-

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:-

1. (i) Is the Minister aware that an inmate of the Mental Asylum slept in a pig sty on the night of Saturday, the 8th July, 1972?
- (ii) Will the Minister investigate this matter and state the reason for this situation?
- (iii) Will the Minister take steps to ensure that this situation does not arise again?

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply is as follows:

"1. Yes, Sir.

2. Recently pig rearing has been reintroduced at the Mental Hospital as an extension of the sheltered workshop project. An inpatient of the Hospital who has a special interest in pig rearing was assigned to looking after these pigs. On 6th July one of the sows littered and no one was in attendance. The sow savaged all eleven of the piglets. The next day this patient was extremely emotionally disturbed as a result of the loss of the piglets and requested permission to visit the pigs at night if there was a likelihood of a sow littering during the night. On the night of Saturday, 8th July, the patient who had been granted permission to visit the pigs at night was overzealous in his concern for the animals and instead of visiting remained in the pig sty and fell asleep. When he was found there by the nurse in charge of the ward he insisted that it was his duty to sleep with the pigs.

3. Yes, Sir."

4.15 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 35 which stands in the name of the hon. member for the City.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker,

To enquire of the appropriate Minister.

- (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 Beck-with, Wellington, Queen, Vine and Chepstow Streets area?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply is as follows:

"Government's policy in respect of Weymouth 'C' playing field is to maintain it in as good a condition as possible within the context of the resources provided and to make it wherever feasible available to organised groups requesting its use, particularly those located within easy reach.

No request for the use of the Weymouth 'C' playing field from any organised group in the areas mentioned in the Parliamentary Question can be traced on the Ministry's files. However, if such a request is made, every effort will be exerted as far as practicable to meet it or to make alternative arrangements."

Mr. MOTTLEY: Does that mean that the young players in that area will be given an opportunity to use it?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may give that part of the reply again for the information of the hon. member, "no request for the use of the Weymouth 'C' playing field from any organised group in the areas mentioned in the Parliamentary Question can be traced on the Ministry's files. However, if such a request is made, every effort will be exerted as far as practicable to meet it or to make alternative arrangements. Requests are received and processed through the Sports Department of my Ministry."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 42 which stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker,

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, St. Michael.
- (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?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the answer to that question is that the Minister is aware that the road will be taken into consideration when the road programme for the financial year 1973-74 is being drawn up.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 45 which stands in the name of the hon. member for the City.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker,

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:-

1. Is the Minister aware that the well dug for taking waste water in Bannister Land has been choked up for about seven (7) weeks?

2. Is the Minister aware that in spite of repeated requests by the residents of the area, nothing has been done to clear the well?

3. Will the Minister take appropriate steps to have this situation remedied?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the answer to that is that the Minister of Communications and Works is the representative for the particular area in which the well is situated, and the Minister himself was away in the United States during the period the question was asked. The Minister is aware that the well has not been functioning properly, and steps have been taken to pump out the water from time to time with a view to improving the functioning of the well.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 40 which stands in my name. Would the hon. member for St. George South please take charge of it?

Mr. LOWE: Mr. Deputy Speaker,

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:-

Will the Minister state why those people entitled to carters pension, have not yet received the same?

Will the Minister do all in his power to have this money paid out to these people, some of whom are in dire need of it?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in reality this should have been addressed to the Minister of Finance who is also Minister responsible for Establishments. The reply is as follows:-

"The number of such persons entitled to gratuities as authorised by Resolution No. 50/1971 is 16, 14 of them have already received their awards and the gratuities of the other two are being computed."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That brings us to the end of Question Time.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this concludes Government Business for today's sitting. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 17th October at 2.30 in the afternoon.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in accordance with the notice I gave earlier and in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 15(2) which states: "Upon a motion for the adjournment moved under the provisions of this Order, a debate may take place in which any matter for which a Minister is responsible may be raised by any member who has obtained the right to raise a matter on a motion for the adjournment of the House that day." That matter with which I propose to deal is the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, with special reference to the ambulance service and other related matters.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I interrupt the hon. member? I, as Deputy Speaker, am not allowing any discussion on that. I have not received any information about it. There has been ample proof that letters have been sent here but they have not been turned over to me. You have requested that on the adjournment you want to speak on a matter of urgent public importance.

Mr. MOTTLEY: There are two letters which were sent to you.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As I say, I am only hearing you on one of them and you have started on the one which I have not received.
4.25 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I can only hear the hon. member on those letters that have been addressed to me, and I have given you permission to speak on them. There are letters here addressed to His Honour the Speaker and I do not know their contents.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, am I to understand that you are saying at this stage that the letters which are addressed to His Honour the Speaker are not addressed to Mr. N. G. A. Maxwell? Are you saying that those letters are not addressed to you and, therefore, you are not entitled to open them? I should like you to be advised on this matter by the Clerks of the House. Technically speaking, the Rules say something about notice given to the Speaker and they do not mention Deputy Speaker. If one wants to be technical in that sense, Sir, one can say that there is no provision at all for giving you notice. If notice were given to the Speaker — and you are in possession of those letters — then my motion on the matter on the adjournment must be in order.

In accordance with the Rules, Standing Order 15.3. says:

"Any Member who wishes to raise a matter under the provisions of paragraph 2 of this Order

at a particular sitting shall give notice of the matter in writing to the Speaker....."

The letter was addressed to the Speaker who was in the Island at the time when the letter was written. If Your Honour now assumes the role of Speaker, then these letters must of necessity come to you. It is within your province to see them.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two letters were handed to me by the Clerk, but I have not had an opportunity to open either of them to see their contents. I gather when you rose that it was your intention to speak on the letter which I have received.

Mr. MOTTLEY: You must deal with that, Sir, because it is an entirely different matter. That is the one dealing with a matter of definite, urgent, public importance. That is under Standing Order 16, but the one on which I am attempting to address Your Honour is under Standing Order 15, notice of which was given. In fact, you will see that two letters were sent: one under Standing Order 15 and one under Standing Order 16. I do not propose to deal with the Hospital one under Standing Order 16, but under Standing Order 15. The letters were addressed to the Speaker and not to Mr. N. G. A. Maxwell.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in fairness to the hon. member for the City, I would have thought that, in the absence from the Island or due to the indisposition of the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker would also be the Acting Speaker. In that case, surely, he could open the mail addressed to the Speaker of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have been so advised by the Clerk, and I am inspecting the letters. The hon. member spoke of a letter in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 15, Rule 2. Is that the letter on which you propose to address the Chamber?

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not dealing with Standing Order 16 with regard to the Hospital. I am dealing with Standing Order 16 in relation to the matter on which I wrote you directly. (*Asides.*)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I can hear noise in the anteroom. Will hon. members please speak in undertones.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I begin I want to make a statement. At 2.30 this

afternoon I wrote requesting the Debates of July 18, as I wanted to see the speech which I made on that date. Instructions were given to a Reporter; it is now 4.30 and I have not yet received it. I do not like to get in here and attack the staff of the House of Assembly, but this cannot be fair to members of the Opposition. If the Prime Minister or a member of the Government had made such a request at 2.30 he would have had it in 5 minutes' time. Why should a member of the Opposition have to wait for two hours in order to receive a copy of the debates? It is time that the staff realise that they are employed by the House of Assembly and not by the Government or any one side in here. This partiality will not work. Your Honour is fully aware of what I am dealing with, and you gave permission for me to see the debates.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have given that permission, but I should like the hon. member to carry on with the debate in the meantime.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I wanted to make references to certain parts of that speech, Sir. I have been told that it cannot be found. Do you expect me to believe that they cannot find the debates of July 18? How can they publish the *Hansard* then, Sir? We must make the staff of this House understand that they are employed by the House of Assembly and not by the Government or the Democratic Labour Party. This is not fair to members on this side of the House. I am not going to call any name on this occasion, but if it happens again I am going to bring a motion in here in connection with the matter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Have you concluded your speech?

ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with a sad heart that I rise in my place to deal with this question surrounding the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It is sad, Sir, because it involves the death of two young ladies: one who was the mother of 9 children, and the other the mother of three young children at the age of 13, 8 and 5 respectively. The other one, incidentally, is the mother of 7 children who were living with her at the time of her death and their age was 7, 6, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. To a certain extent I think that the Government must accept blame for what has, in fact, occurred – blame in the sense that the Minister of Health is the person responsible for the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

On the 18th July I came to this House and, on the motion for the adjournment, raised the

question relating to the fact that people were left in the Casualty Department of the Queen Elizabeth and there was no doctor to attend to them. At the time I mentioned that, after an intercession on my part together with a few telephone calls, I was able to get a doctor to attend to the people in the Casualty Department. The amusing thing on that occasion — and I say this without any remorse whatsoever — was that the Press and the news media of this country are so biased and so partisan that they came to this Chamber early in the day on that occasion when the Minister of Health made a statement and reported his speech in the Press. But so partisan and so biased were the Press and the news media of this country that when it came to the time for me to speak on the motion for adjournment, they conveniently — I used the word “conveniently” advisedly — absented themselves from the House. In other words, they disappeared. 4.35 p.m.

They were here in full force for the Prime Minister to make his statement earlier in the day, but when it came to the Opposition's time to debate the matter in the afternoon, the members of the press and the entire news media absented themselves, and as a result the debate on that occasion was not published. I am glad to see that it has taken the death of a lady to move a section of the press into editorial comment, but what has happened now was indicated some time ago, because the general administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital leaves much to be desired, and in my speech I shall pinpoint and indicate a number of issues although there is no formal Resolution before the House. I know that the statement says that the Minister views this matter with very grave concern and in order to ascertain the true facts, instituted an immediate enquiry into all the circumstances. The investigation is still continuing and the Government insists that it must be thorough, impartial and fair.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said in my speech, I want the enquiry to go into the entire administration of the hospital and not only the ambulance service because that is not the only thing at fault at the hospital. There is need for a complete, independent enquiry into the entire operation of the hospital. When I attended the funeral of Sybil Worrell on Saturday, you could hear the comments of the people at the funeral about the negligence of the hospital. If people lose faith in the quality of medical attention they are going to receive from the hospital, then we are wasting money all along.

Sir, let us deal with the first case, that of Miss Neblett. This is indeed a shocking state of

affairs. As I understand it, this woman who lived at Observatory Road, Clapham.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the members in the Ante-room speak in undertones; they are distracting attention. Let the hon. member continue.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was saying, at about 6.30 p.m. this woman who lives at Observatory Road suffered some sort of attack and became obviously ill and was unconscious. Her reputed husband telephoned the police. I hope the Minister of Home Affairs will take steps to remedy this because he first of all telephoned not the hospital but the police in an effort to get an ambulance. He was told by the police that there was no ambulance and there was nothing they could do. One would have expected under the circumstances where a man told the police that his wife had taken ill and was unconscious to hear other than that they did not have an ambulance. One would have expected the police to have taken his name, where he lives and at least assist him in getting an ambulance. It may very well be that if the police had done this on this occasion, he would not have had the difficulty in getting an ambulance from the hospital, because there is a great difference between an individual telephoning and asking for an ambulance and the police telephoning the hospital and asking them to send an ambulance because this woman was seriously ill. If the police had done that I have no doubt that the ambulance would have gone at that time. I say that as a criticism against the police, not as anything detrimental to them. I say it because the conduct of the police should be more than merely saying that they cannot help you.

After the police could not offer assistance, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Gittens...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already called for order in the ante-room. We are finding it impossible to hear.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, after the police could offer no assistance, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Gittens, a schoolmaster, no ordinary person, called the hospital and asked to be put on to the ambulance service. This was done and he told the person at the other end what was the lady's condition and asked that they send an ambulance as soon as possible. In fact, his phone call was made about 6.40 p.m. and the person at the other end, an employee of the Government of this country, replied that he had just come on duty, he did not know anything about any ambulance, and as far as he

was concerned he knew nothing about anything, and he went one step further and dropped the phone in the person's ears. That was the conduct of a person working with the Government of this country. The gentleman then phoned the Matron's office and was told to get on to the Obstetric Ward, which he did, and they took the details, and he waited to see whether the ambulance would come. No ambulance came. He again phoned the Obstetric Ward and he had to go over the whole thing because the person to whom he spoke earlier had gone home and no ambulance was sent on the way.

4.45 p.m.

The ambulance arrived some time after 8 o'clock, and the lady died. I do not know whether this lady would have died in any event, to me that is totally irrelevant. To me it is irrelevant whatever disease she was suffering from, terminal or otherwise. The relevant factor is that if a member of this community calls for the ambulance service, why is it that the people at the hospital care so little about the sanctity of human life that this person is only concerned with the fact that he had just gone on duty? He did not know anything about the ambulance, and that is a shocking state of affairs. That is one incident.

The other incident I find even more disgraceful because this did not involve a layman such as an orderly, this second incident involved a doctor whom the taxpayers are paying at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Let me state in detail the second incident. A young woman, aged 32, mother of three children – and I have the photographs of the three children aged 13, 8, and 5, suffering from shortness of breath, from pains in the chest and other symptoms, attended the hospital on Tuesday, 26th September at about 9 o'clock in the morning. As was her fate, she had to go to the Casualty Department. That is not a fate that I would inflict on anybody in this country, it is a most unfortunate thing. She arrived at 9 o'clock in the morning, and as is the normal practice of the Casualty Department, she was seen at about 3 p.m. The doctor gave her some medicine after examining her – I do not know how thoroughly and I am not prepared to express an opinion on that at this stage – and she was told to go home. An orderly, knowing the lady well and knowing her boyfriend, seeing that this lady could hardly stand and that she was lying on one of the benches provided at the out-patients' department of the eye department – not on a cot or a bed or anything like that, the hard benches at the hospital – the orderly called the boyfriend and

told him the position. He came for her and took her home. Between 1.45 and 2.00 on Wednesday morning this gentleman friend who is the father of her children and who does not live with her received a call that this lady was now feeling worse, and he took her back to the hospital, back to the same Casualty Department where she was seen by the nurse. As an indication of the interval of time which had elapsed, he told the nurse that she was there earlier and that if she looked among the cards she would find her card. The nurse found the card. The doctor was called, and he came to her, saw the gentleman who was accompanying her and asked him what was wrong with the lady. This was a different doctor from the one who saw her earlier in the afternoon, but this doctor was informed that she had been to the hospital earlier on Tuesday and had been examined by a doctor. At any rate, the Casualty notes would have shown her presence at the hospital, but this doctor asked the gentleman friend what was wrong with her and he said she had shortness of breath and pains in the chest, and he went on to say that to him she looked like a person suffering from pneumonia.

No sooner had he said this than the doctor proceeded to abuse this man and told him he does not want him to diagnose anything for him. The lady when she arrived at the Casualty Department was so weak and so helpless that she had to be taken from the back seat of the taxi on a stretcher. When the doctor examined her she was on a stretcher and the doctor ordered an injection and some other treatment, and when the doctor was leaving the gentleman asked the doctor if he would admit her to the hospital because she looked very sick, she looked like a person who needed attention at the hospital because she could not sit up straight, and the doctor told him he could not admit her to the hospital, he would have to get in touch with another doctor. The gentleman accepted that, he remained there for a while, he asked the nurse whether she would be admitted to the hospital and the nurse said he had to ask the doctor. While he was there waiting on the doctor to see if the doctor would come back, under the belief that the doctor had gone to speak to the other doctor, after a while the nurse came back and told him the doctor had gone home. As a result of the refusal of the doctor to admit this lady to the hospital she was taken back home about 4 o'clock in the morning and at 2 o'clock the same day she died.

To the best of my knowledge, information and belief she died of virus pneumonia. The Minister of Home Affairs can correct me if I am wrong, but I am told that such requires

immediate treatment, and that the ordinary antibiotics would not be helpful in a case of virus pneumonia. I am told that the lady required immediate attention. It is disgraceful and shameful that in this day and age people are still to be treated in this form and fashion.

4.55 p.m.

Let us be realistic. It would not happen to any member of this House of Assembly because we have money and can go and pay other doctors, but this poor, unfortunate woman did not have any money to go and pay another doctor. She has gone to her grave in the honest belief that she would have received proper medical attention at the Hospital, but little did she know that that was not the case.

Sir, this is not the only case to which reference can be made. Shortly after the occasion on which I spoke in this House about the Casualty Department, I saw a woman quarrelling and leaving the Casualty in disgust. It was about a quarter to eleven, and I offered the lady a lift. She had two children with her. I asked her what was wrong, and she told me she had been at the Casualty from about nine o'clock in the morning until a quarter to eleven in the night and had not yet seen a doctor. I asked her why she had come to the hospital in those circumstances. She told me that her husband was unemployed; she had three children attending High School; she had other children, and did not have any money to go to a doctor.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we are going to sit in this House of Assembly and vote money for the administration of the hospital, only to find that the people in charge of it care so little for human life that a doctor could chase an unfortunate woman out of the hospital at a time when she needed prompt medical care, then we must make sure that patients are properly attended to. Those are not the only cases, Sir. I can refer to many other cases. I am saying that the entire administration of the hospital is bad.

Let me advert, at this stage, to a case where a doctor prescribed medicine for a patient and the dispensary gave out the wrong medicine. While I was carrying out investigations into this matter, a gentleman said to me: "Skipper, they did the same thing to my mother, too. They gave her the wrong medicine, and it turned her hands red or something like that." I also want to advert to another case without calling any names. When the time comes for the Government to hold an inquiry the names will be supplied. I refer to a lawyer's secretary who fell into a coma. She was taken by the lawyer to the hospital. At the

hospital the lawyer asked an orderly to help him lift the lady from the car, and the orderly told him that he would have to try and wait. That lady was in a coma for 11 hours. Do you know why she was in that state? A doctor ordered medicine for her, and the people at the dispensary were so careless that they gave her the wrong medicine.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know of an instance where a Judge who, obviously, had a medical background and was able to realise that the dispensary had given him the wrong medicine. There are several such cases, Sir, and one could go on *ad infinitum* making references to negligence whether it is in the Casualty, the surgery or the dispensary. I will soon be going to the hospital, because I am sick. A lot of people in this country are afraid to talk about the doctors, but I am not one of them. The doctors at the hospital are just as negligent as anybody else in so far as their conduct is concerned.

Last year a doctor sent a man to the hospital with a letter stating that he was suffering from *leptospirosis*. The man spent about twelve hours at the Casualty Department before a doctor looked at him. The doctor read the letter; he told the patient that there was nothing wrong with him and that he could go home. The man went home and died four hours afterwards. The Government can no longer turn a blind eye to all of these instances. It is not a case of having to wait for doctors at the hospital. This is a case of bad treatment and negligence on the part of the doctors. The unfortunate thing is that the negligence is meted out to people who cannot afford to pay other doctors.

As I have said over and over again in this House, the time has come when the Government must realise that the hospital can no longer be run as a Civil Service Department of the Government. It cannot operate efficiently if it is being run as a Civil Service Department of the Government. On the last occasion when we dealt with the staffing of the hospital, the Minister of Health came here and talked about the worldwide shortage of doctors. If there is a worldwide shortage of doctors, then there is all the more reason we should act with some urgency in appointing people to work at the hospital. You should not have documents going from the Director of the Hospital to the Ministry of Health; from the Ministry of Health to the Service Commission; from the Services Commission to the Minister of Home Affairs to find out whether the person to be appointed can get a work permit, and three or four months later someone overseas is informed that he has got a

job. This is not a criticism of the Minister, Sir. If there is a shortage of doctors, you cannot keep a man overseas waiting for three or four months before he is appointed to fill a post. There must be some urgency about the matter. The only way in which you can work quickly is by removing the entire administration of the hospital from the hands of civil servants. Remove all of the hospitals from any Department of the Government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, so long as they continue to run the hospital on an 8 to 4 basis; so long as the dispensary is closed down at four o'clock to enable people to go home, because it is an 8 to 4 job, you cannot have efficiency there. I have often spoken in this House about the Laundry Department at the hospital. When there is a bank holiday week-end patients cannot get clean sheets because the laundry is closed. You cannot operate a hospital on that system. If you have to pay people time-and-a-half for working overtime, then you must do so. You must not continue with this system whereby the hospital is operated on an 8 - 4 basis, because it will never be run efficiently.

I should hope that, instead of merely having an investigation into the death of these two ladies, the entire administration of the hospital be investigated. I know that the Minister of Home Affairs was once a member of the staff at the hospital, and I do not believe that professional etiquette would permit him to speak on it. But anybody who has worked in the hospital will know that there is a lot of inefficiency operating throughout the hospital.

5.05 p.m.

The time has come for a complete investigation because a piecemeal investigation into the ambulance service alone is not going to work. I can see what will come from this statement by the Minister, because what is going to happen is that you will have an enquiry, an Orderly will be disciplined by the Public Service Commission, or a doctor will get fired. You can fire a doctor as much as you like, but I still believe that an action should be brought against the hospital in the case of Sybil Worrell. If you only recommend that the Orderly be dismissed or that some doctor be fired, that is not going to help the situation at the hospital. You have got to have an impartial and independent enquiry not only into the ambulance service and why an ambulance did not go for Miss Neblett, not only as to why the lady was sent back from the Casualty Department, but into the entire administration of the hospital from top to bottom.

Let me say, Sir, that the consultants are not in any favoured position as far as I am concerned. The consultants at the hospital need investigating because a lot of them use the hospital, and although they are supposed to see public patients who go to the hospital, if you check the records of attendance of any of the consultants, you will see what they reveal. You must find out how many public patients they see because their duty is not only to attend the clinic and see two or three patients and then see his private patients and then allow the registrar to see the other 40 or 50 patients waiting. That is not a satisfactory arrangement. There are a lot of people in this country who are afraid to talk about doctors. I am not afraid to talk about them because I think they are making a lot of money and they should serve the people of this country properly. The whole relationship between the consultants at the hospital needs to be reviewed. It is not fair that a consultant should see his private patients outside the hospital and then he is being paid by Government to see public patients and he only see three or four out of over forty.

I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether or not the Government calls for an enquiry, we on this side of the House, whether it is 1976 or otherwise, are committed to establishing in Barbados a free national health service because unless this happens the poor people of this country will continue to suffer at the hands of the hospital. I have heard Government from time to time say that they cannot do it, but that is a matter for them. When we come into power whenever that may be, we will do it.

There is one other point arising out of the Minister's statement. I do not really feel that the Government is giving this matter the serious attention that it should give, because I do not see why it has taken whoever is doing this impartial enquiry over ten days and almost two weeks to make a report. I know for a fact that up to Thursday of last week whoever is doing the enquiry had not seen fit to speak to Miss Neblett's reputed husband or to Mr. Gittens, the schoolmaster who made the phone call. What sort of enquiry is this? Is the Government really taking this seriously? I expected that this should have been given urgent attention, and if the person appointed cannot do it, you should bring somebody from outside who knows how to do it, because I do not believe in any Head of Department doing these things. In fact, I sincerely hope that when the Government comes back here they do not come with a statement made by any Head of Department, because that is not a fair and impartial enquiry. I am not

saying that a Civil Servant cannot be fair or impartial, but I hope that nobody having anything to do with the hospital or the Ministry of Health will have anything to do with the enquiry, and I sincerely hope that the Government allows the public of this country to know who is doing the enquiry. This is nothing to hide. Two women have died through negligence and non-performance of duty. I hope that before we leave here tonight that the Minister of Health, the Leader of the House or the much talking Minister of Communications and Works and Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs will say who is doing the enquiry. This is the first time the hon. member has been Minister of External Affairs in this House, and I hope that he will remember that famous statement made by Bacon when he refers to himself as Attorney General. This reminds me that he is a lawyer, and Lord Bacon said "that too much talking lawyer like an ill tuned cymbal". (Hon. R. G. SMITH: That is what you have been doing all evening.)

I do not think that the statement is satisfactory and is merely Civil Service jargon. All it says is that the Minister views this matter with very grave concern and in order to ascertain the true facts, instituted an immediate enquiry into all the circumstances. Who is doing this enquiry? When will it be completed? I do hope to hear from the Minister more about this.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would be amiss of me if I sat down without adding my voice to the regret and sadness which these incidents surrounding first Miss Neblett of Observatory Road and then the lady from Westbury Road have caused the people of this country. In the first place I should like to state that Miss Neblett's reputed husband, although not being a constituent of mine, lives on the border of my constituency, and I consider it therefore my duty as Parliamentary representative for Christ Church West and the people surrounding this area to express on behalf of certainly myself and of the Opposition and I trust of the Government, the sincere regret which we feel about these incidents. I agree that no matter how much regret we may express will do anything at all to restore Miss Neblett to life, but I think there are certain steps which we should take to ensure that in the future no such incident occurs again.

5.15 p.m.

Before I talk about those steps I should like to voice in general my opinion certainly concerning the functioning of the hospital and some of the reasons why I believe we have been getting a spate of criticisms about the

mal-administration in that department. The tragedy about Barbados today, is that politics have permeated every aspect of people's affairs and that the politician is becoming not merely a welfare state but he is becoming the answer to everybody's ills. People are beginning to think that they cannot function unless the politician sets it right. Perhaps some of the blame is with us, the politicians, for encouraging people to believe that all the bucks stop at our door and that we are the answer to all their problems.

When you get an institution like the hospital which began as a charitable institution coming to the stage that some of your officers today are looking for political favours and friendships for carrying out their functions, you will always find that the rut sets in, and no doubt I believe that we should look at institutions such as this and divorce them as much as we can from the political wheel. One of the things I want to know is what has happened to the Hospital Act and why has it not been proclaimed. What is the problem with having a Hospital Board running day to day the functioning and administration of the hospital? I think that is a matter of principle. I am not satisfied that the existence of the Constitution should prevent the appointment of a proper Board, and when I say a proper Board I mean a Board that will not be dictated to by politics.

One of the great tragedies of Barbados today — and a lot of us should take the blame, including the Press — is that in every aspect of affairs in this country people are looking for political appointments when they are not even competent to do jobs, and you will find that on a lot of the Boards too many party hats are present, and it should not be on a basis of party affiliation. There are too many other competent people in the country who must carry a party card before they can give genuine service to the people of this country, and I think we should try and lift some of our institutions above the day to day rivalry that goes on from time to time.

I have heard criticisms before I came into this House made by the member who is now the Minister for Home Affairs on the hospital, and his words were ignored. Those of us who take time off to go to the Casualty day after day would find a large number of people waiting there for hours on end to be seen by a doctor, and because of a shortage of staff a lot of them fail to recognise that they have a duty to perform. Whatever criticisms may be made of the lawyers in Barbados it could never be that those

of us who have made good have been afraid to come down to the people and participate in the people's business, but the medical profession in Barbados must realise that their own pockets do not always come first and that they should sometimes give up some of God's gifts to them to help people. That is why I should like to see at the hospital the provision of full time medical officers who are without these outside allegiances so that they can devote time to look after the people's business.

One of the other criticisms — and this is a criticism at the door of the Government — is that the District Medical Officers are not functioning as properly as they can, some of them are totally overworked and they are placed in a position at times where they must cut down on the service they can give to the man without money in order to bolster their services to get some sort of proper living for themselves to keep up with their peers who are the consultants. Why is it that we cannot in this country have a proper district medical service where the people are properly remunerated and do not get the clash of loyalties that always occur? I think Miss Neblett's death certainly raises a lot of these problems, today no solution is in sight, and I am amazed — if we may move on to the question of the ambulance service — to find that the ambulance service is badly organised, and that it takes an incident like this to focus attention in the minds of the Government members that they have an ambulance service that is not functioning properly. All I ask of them is for Heaven's sake if anybody else must die in this country let it be the members of the Government, we can carry on without them. I really must ask that, and I ask that seriously, although some of my good friends are on the other side. I really would not like to think that we sit by and allow another ten days to go unless urgent steps are taken and a request made to this House for money, if we must provide the money, to have a proper ambulance service in Barbados. It is all right for those of us who have cars or who have friends that are properly placed and can come out quite easily and pull strings in order not only to get a car to take us to the hospital but to get some of the doctors who stop working at 4 o'clock to have a look at us. I am not concerned about the Hon. Ministers or the hon. members on this side of the House, I am concerned with the man who cannot pull strings in this country, and I think it is about time that we make the country understand that it is necessary to provide these services.

There is one aspect of the statement made by the Hon. Minister with which I must take very

serious issue. I am glad to see that an enquiry has been instituted, I understand that perhaps this enquiry will be conducted by a person of absolute impartiality. I must ask more, I must ask that the enquiry be conducted publicly so that the public can be satisfied, and in the view of the public that the public can be satisfied about the vision and the impartiality of the enquiry, not only of the person conducting the enquiry. I think this is most important, that people be reassured about our institutions, but I go a bit further.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, maybe I am wrong in constitutional terms but I have always understood that in the system of Government which we operate in this country there are two types of responsibility. There is the responsibility of the Cabinet which is a collective responsibility. If the Cabinet errs on a Cabinet decision and it is of such a serious intent that they lose the vote in this House, then the Cabinet resigns. When it comes to the good or bad administration of a department, it is the aspect of ministerial responsibility. The Minister takes the praise for what is done well in his department, and likewise the Minister must take the criticisms and the censure of this House for what is done badly in that department. I would not like any enquiry to whitewash where any junior civil servant may have erred, likewise I would not like any Minister to duck behind the responsibility of his subordinate by saying that it was a porter at the hospital or maybe a nurse on the obstetric ward who was slow in sending the service. If anything goes wrong in that department the Minister must take the blame for it.

5.25 p.m.

I am glad to see that there is a statement which says that the person responsible will be reported to the proper authorities for necessary disciplinary action, but I hope I will be in this House to hear that, if the Inquiry says that the default was by a subordinate in the Ministry, the Minister will be prepared in this House to take that responsibility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of the members on the other side of the House look a little puzzled as to the authority on which I rely for my statement, but I am sure that those of us who are lawyers have read Sir Ivor Jennings' Cabinet Government. Those of us who are familiar with the Constitution would have known that we enshrine the same principle in our Constitution. If they would look at Sir Ivor Jennings' edition on Cabinet Government for 1965, at pages 498 to 499, they would find this statement which I adopt:

"On the other hand, a Minister cannot hide behind the error of a subordinate. Within a Department there must be substantial delegation of power, but the most essential characteristic of the Civil Service is the responsibility of the Minister for every act done in his Department. In practice the Minister can hardly avoid saying that the mistake was that of a subordinate, but Parliament censures the Minister and not the subordinate."

If there is a censure it will be on the Minister. It is for the Minister, in turn, to deal with the subordinate. If the Inquiry is of such that it shows very bad administration, then we will have to move a motion for the resignation of the Minister. I say that very seriously. I am not talking about the Acting Minister. I think the Minister was in his place at the time, and there was no Acting Minister. The position must be so, and I should not like Ministers to believe that they can come to Parliament and shelve the blame on the civil servants. If there are incompetent civil servants, even under the Constitution which we work, you can deal with them. If you want to get the praise for how many roads you are improving; how many houses you are building; if you want to say you are advancing, then when you start to leap back you must also take your blows.

I give a warning. I will be pressing certainly in the interest of my constituents in the first place and those who border on my constituency, in the interest of the public as a whole in the second place, that the Report should be made available to this House. I accept the Acting Minister's word that she will report to the House as soon as possible. If she is no longer there, then the Minister will do so. I hope that the Leader of the House will see fit to set aside a day to debate these matters. We cannot afford to adjourn Parliament for two or three weeks when people are dying because the ambulance service is not properly organised in this country. If it is not, then we have failed. I say we collectively, because in my view Parliamentarians are the people who are responsible. If we are not organising this matter efficiently, then we have failed in our duty and, in my view, we must account to the people for our failure.

I am very sorry to see that no mention is made of compensation to be paid. I hope that the Inquiry will have as one of its terms of reference compensation to people who may have suffered. Certainly in the case of Miss Neblett — she has left 8 children, I believe, the oldest of whom is 9 years and the youngest of whom is

just over a year-and-a-half — I understand that the Social Department has visited them once. I think that her case and the case of these children call for urgent attention.

Yesterday was Universal Children's Day in the whole world, and those of us who are conscious of the young people in this country must ask that this family, in the context of the tragedy which has occurred as well as the other family, should be given some consideration, at least, if we genuinely believe in the sentiments of Universal Children's Day.

The member for St. Michael South East is in his seat. The gentleman who is intimately concerned with this Resolution and this debate lives in his constituency; the man who reported and came to the assistance of that unfortunate person lives in my constituency. May I say here that he acted in accordance with the high standard of devotion to public duty which we in Christ Church West have always set and will always set. He was so concerned that he made it his public duty not only to assist, but to expose what he believes were the facts without embellishing them and without having anything to gain for them. I should like to commend him as a citizen of this country who, despite his civil service job, has guts to draw this matter to the attention of the public and to us politicians. I should also like to commend strongly to the weakling Press of Barbados that they should show likewise guts instead of looking for political favours.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to join hands with those who have spoken so far about the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Unfortunately, despite the size of this country, it is the only hospital centrally located, and for that reason it occupies a position of importance in that people from, probably, seven-eighths of this country will go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital because it is a Government institution, as compared with the other hospital which is sited in St. Peter.

For quite a long time the administration of the hospital has attracted headlines in our national newspaper. I remember in 1966, just prior to independence and after independence, it used to be the cry that thousands of people had to wait in the Casualty for long hours without seeing a doctor after waiting from six in the morning to eleven at night. They had to go home and return to the hospital the following day.

I have been privileged to be present at an unfortunate incident in which a doctor, who was on night duty, asked whether any intelligent person would expect to find a doctor in the

hospital about half-past twelve at night although there was a patient at the hospital who required urgent medical attention. We have raised this matter on the political platforms in this country. We have said long ago that the Government should step in and take an active part in the administration of the hospital. I was present when a Bill was passed in this House. I pointed out that one of the qualifications of doctors working at the hospital should be that they should be able to read, write and understand the English language. On that occasion I was castigated by the now Leader of this House. Later the Prime Minister came to this House and agreed with me, and today I can say that I was right.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I read of an Inquiry which is going on, and the newspaper said that the Director of the Hospital is carrying on the Inquiry. We do not need a one-man Inquiry into the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We need a public Inquiry, and I have good grounds for saying this. Quite recently we have had two unfortunate cases of persons who have appeared in the docks of the Supreme Court at the Assizes: one charged with murder, and one charged with manslaughter. The result was that the deceased had suffered injuries by a stone and there was a fracture of the skull, and the injuries were not properly diagnosed. In one case the injury was diagnosed; the man was sent to a ward; the doctor came to the witness stand and said: "The man had a big cut in his forehead; I stitched it, and sent him to the ward." After repeated calls by Nurses from that particular ward a doctor, who is no longer working at the hospital, rushed from the surgery to the ward to take the man back to the surgery. Unfortunately, the man died.

5.35 p.m.

The doctor said that the doctor who performed the operation put the bone holes at the wrong place in his head because he could not understand what he was telling him. At the last Assizes one or two months ago you had a similar incident of a fractured skull which was not diagnosed and a man was sent home to come back a few days later and he ended up dead. If anybody can tell me that these things do not require a public enquiry, then woe betide each and everyone of us who cried for a pain anywhere and has to go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. There is a difference between the doctors themselves, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this goes back far. This is not just something that has arisen today. I can tell you of a personal incident in which I was involved when Mr. Batson who was a member of this House died at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I know the solicitors who

wrote the hospital asking for a medical report because there were certain allegations and suspicions surround the death of Mr. Batson, and up to this day a medical report has not come out of the hospital in respect of the late Mr. Batson because some doctors higher up said it was not going out of there and that was the end of the matter. You will see something in the newspapers that the doctors charge \$10 because it is part of the law governing the hospital. You will write for a medical report now and five or six months will go by and you cannot get it. This is whether the person is dead or alive, but do not ask about those people who have to go there and wait to see a specialist doctor. For them the situation is even worse.

In my view, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these things call for a public enquiry. There were a lot of allegations against the police and a public enquiry sat and the findings were made public. Why is it where life is concerned you cannot have a public enquiry? I have never heard of anybody being brought back to life except Christ and when he rose he went straight up.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another reason why you should have a public enquiry. You either have to amend the law dealing with the National Insurance or you have to amend the law dealing with the hospital doctors and their charges. There are many reports of the doctors at the hospital charging the stipulated \$10 to sign matters going to the National Insurance Department and the people are only getting from that department \$12, \$13 and \$14. How can it be justified to pay \$10 in order to get back \$14? Another system which has got to be rectified is the question of continuity in service at the hospital. Somebody goes up there sick and wants a medical report probably to take to another doctor, and you will hear that the doctor who attended you is not there and they cannot find the notes they have to find somebody to write them who says he is not writing them and you are lost. Now where are we going? There is a big monument up there, and whenever you open the newspapers you see "the spacious and well run Queen Elizabeth Hospital". I do not know what "well-run" means. It could be "also ran" like the horses who run around the track, but I believe that if you are talking about well run you have to talk about well run in all its aspects. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would hope that whoever is responsible will forthwith institute a public enquiry into the running of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We know that some heads will have to duck; some harsh things will have to be said, but in the long run it will do good for one and all. It is the public which cannot afford to pay that has

got to run to the hospital that we will be doing a little bit of justice to and will be removing a little bit of the fear, because as it stands now anybody who happens to have to go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital must leave home with some sort of fear as to whether or not he will be attended, whether or not he will get proper treatment, or whether he needs to be detained they will send him back home to die overnight.

I think it is time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we allay the fears of those who cannot help themselves. I have constantly heard even in this House people say that things which should not go to the Casualty go there, but you have to remember that everybody cannot have medical knowledge. Somebody will get a hand cut off and walk to a doctor or wait until he can find a doctor; others will have a headache and run to the hospital. That is what it is there for, and if you require to staff the Casualty to such an extent that you can then divert people, I do not know anything about medicine, but I personally believe that the Casualty should be so staffed that when somebody goes in the nurse can say, yours is not an urgent case, come back tomorrow; yours is urgent, go up to Ward so-and-so. I think this is what should be done. This question of building outside hospitals that people with a cut finger can go there, let me say that a cut finger can kill you because you can bleed to death while on the way to the outside hospital and particularly if you do not know what to do.

We have said long ago in this House that it is time that certain institutions in this country be given priority attention, and I say now that it is time that a public enquiry will tell us whether or not the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is really performing the function that this country can be proud of. It is now a teaching hospital, and how does it sound that practically the whole world knows today that two persons died because of a poor ambulance service? How does it sound that people have died from fracture of the skull because of wrong diagnosis? It only shows that those taught in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are liable to come out not knowing what they were supposed to have been taught, and I think it is time we do something about it.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not risen to disagree with anything that has been said on the other side of the House, but for the benefit of the hon. member for Bridgetown I would like to explain something in relation to the police as my Ministry holds responsibility for the police. There was a time in Barbados when the police ran an emergency ambulance service. That ambulance

was donated by the St. John's Ambulance Brigade. At the moment that ambulance is no longer in service. If you are going to run an ambulance service, it must be properly run. You must have at least a stretcher, you must have a bed provided within the ambulance on which a person can lie, and you must also have drugs available for the benefit of the patient on the way to the hospital. Now I have been told by the hon. member that the police were first contacted and they said they were unable to help. This is true and I do not think the police have any reason to feel ashamed of saying that they could not help. They do not have any ambulance to provide a service and if one is going to think in terms of the police having to take one of the police cars to transport a person in that condition which has been drawn to my attention at the Hospital, that also would have been inadequate. In those circumstances which prevailed one needed an ambulance provided with adequate facilities in getting the person from his residence straight to the hospital.

5.45 p.m.

If you try to send a person by a taxi, a motor car or any other method of conveyance you might only be adding insult to the injury, so I would like to repeat that the Police have no need to be ashamed to state that they were unable to help in this situation, because at present they are unable to help. I will go a step further. I do not think it is even right to saddle the police with all these duties they are being called upon to do. In addition to the normal exercise of maintaining law and order in this country they are responsible for security, they are responsible for immigration, they are responsible for counter intelligence, and you can go on adding to the number of duties which the police are being called upon to do in this country, and it is unfair to the police. You are giving them so much responsibility that they cannot do any one of these things properly, and they are going to have to take a serious look at what the police are being called upon to do. Then again you are even getting further problems, because when you think in terms of what the police are being called upon to do you find that many of the duties bifurcate and run into different Ministries, and very often you get some cloudiness of the delineation of command when one wants the police to do certain things.

I have spoken in the past about the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and what is being said here tonight we are all well aware of. Cabinet has already discussed the issue and we feel just as

strongly as members of the Opposition that an incident of this nature has occurred in Barbados and that it has taken the death of two people to shock the Barbadian conscience into activity. It is very sad that things had to go so far before the Barbadian people could get up and take notice of what has been going on. I am not going to repeat myself, neither am I trying to speak for the Minister of Health, but I strongly feel that it is not enough to call for an enquiry, what we need now at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is action, and this is the feeling of my colleagues on this side, that action is required especially coming out of this incident, and if heads have to roll they must roll and let them roll. We feel strongly on this issue, and therefore I am not here to take any issues with the hon. members who have spoken on these incidents, they have my sympathy, and moreover the poor people of Barbados have my sympathy, because what has occurred here recently is an indication of the contempt which certain privileged people in Barbados have for the working and under-privileged classes of this country. It is regrettable that this type of thing still continues to go on in 1972 when we in Barbados are claiming that we are enlightened, and I will go a step further to say this at this stage that unless the privileged people of Barbados get up and shoulder their responsibility and concern for the under-privileged people in Barbados they are going to be left with no other alternative than to be one day seeing that the under-privileged and working-class people of Barbados get up and oppose them and try to overthrow the establishment by unconstitutional methods. I think it is high time we get up and do something for these people rather than standing on the sidelines and trying to pretend that we are better off and therefore we are not concerned with the less fortunate people in this country.

I am going a step further. While we may criticise the Government — and I accept that it is the responsibility of Government — we have to bear in mind that lots of things which the Government would like to do (and when I say Government I am not referring to the Democratic Labour Party Government alone) a Government suffers a lot of obstruction in what it would like to do because of the peculiar attitudes of people in positions who have to carry out what Government would like to do. Government may decide that we have free medical attention at the hospital and you provide the hospital with facilities and the money to pay the people, but the Ministers themselves cannot go into the hospital and see that the people get it, we have to provide people, doctors, nurses, orderlies and many other people to provide it, and unless these people who have to discharge it have the correct

attitude towards the less privileged people in this country, nothing much is going to be achieved. While a lot of criticism may justifiably be thrown at Government, we have to look carefully at the role of the privileged people in Barbados who adopt this attitude towards the less fortunate people in this country, and that is what I have to say here on this matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister seems to be under the impression that I was criticising the police by saying that they could not do anything, all I was saying was that I think in those circumstances the police should have assisted the man by contacting the hospital for him, not sending a van or anything like that. An official call to the hospital by the police may have had some action which a private call would not have had.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have had the privilege of listening to the Hon. Minister of Home Affairs, and as he sat there came home to me this much heartening phrase, "how long is too long if it is bad." Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Minister in so many words told us here this afternoon that eleven years of mal-administration is the net total of what we are reaping here today, but I want to go further. I have stood on the floor of this Hon. House and have thrown out my all, I did not cut myself and bring forth the blood that was necessary at the time to get hon. members of this House to save the lives of those two people we are discussing today. If hon. members who were then present had given their assistance that was so necessary in having the type of investigation instituted when an hon. member of this House, the late Louis Lynch, was murdered at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, if that type of investigation had been embarked upon then these two people and many others who have gone on unnoticed might have all been living today. At least we could feel happy within ourselves that we had done all that rest within us to have given them a chance to live.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of us — and particularly the Government members — must all feel guilty in some measure of the death of these two people we are discussing here this afternoon, because they had it within their hands from time to time to have set up the necessary machinery to protect the lives of numerous others. What you find is this, the administration of the hospital is going to go from bad to worse. The Acting Minister of Health in her statement tells us that the Minister has instituted an immediate enquiry. They are good and encouraging words, but Mr. Deputy Speaker, the very statement of

the Minister bears out all that I have tried to say here this afternoon.

5.55 p.m.

It makes us believe or understand that the Government itself is accepting that all of the Inquiries carried on at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the past were not impartial and fair. That is what this statement says. If that is the case, where do we stand at a moment such as this?

It is all right, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for hon. members to bear in mind that this lady has gone on leaving behind eight or nine children, and another lady has gone on under similar circumstances. We will certainly reach the point where other people have reached in Barbados. After a few weeks they are dead and gone, and the whole matter will be forgotten. Hon. members of this House must come to grips with their conscience at some time or other. We are not going to have Ministers merely telling us that when the Inquiry has been conducted and the full facts are known the House will be told. We want a public Inquiry.

With regard to the question of disciplinary action, we do not want to hear about that. What we want is an Inquiry which will reveal that, at the time when an ambulance was not available and even the police could not afford transportation, the hospital ambulance was being used for conveying pig's food out of the Institution. You could not get an ambulance to take people to the hospital to save their lives, but other people were allowed to use the hospital ambulance to convey pig's food at the time when the ambulance was urgently needed. Let them investigate the matter as we have done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want the members on the Government side to laugh at this matter. When the hon. Louis Lynch died and was murdered at the hospital, some members on the other side also laughed, but their day will come. Some hon. members go to the hospital and they come out saying that they had this treatment and all sorts of treatment. They are Ministers of the Government and members of the House of Assembly and they will get proper treatment. I do not know how they will treat me, but that is a matter entirely for them. If I became ill I would go there tomorrow. I have no fear.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I tried to draw situations obtaining at the hospital to the attention of this hon. House, some hon. members assumed that I had something against certain people working at the hospital. That is nonsense; I do not even know some of the people who work there; I have no interest in them; I want to

see that everybody who goes to a public institution receives proper treatment regardless of his station in life. That is my concern, and that is the type of vein along which I would like to see hon. members addressing their minds to such situations.

For instance, just over a year ago a man from Haggatt Hall became involved in an accident and suffered a brain injury. He was seen by a doctor at the Hospital. After a short time he was discharged from the hospital and he died the following day. This man was suffering from brain injury together with spinal injury and he was discharged from the hospital to die the following day! Mr. Deputy Speaker, where else other than Barbados, where you have people who have more pride than sense, could anything like this occur? Would that man have been discharged one day merely to die the following day and that would be the end of it?

I understand that the Government has said the matter is statute barred and nobody can bring an action at this stage. What about the dependants of this poor man? Is it a case that he is dead and gone? he must be forgotten, and his dependants must be left by the wayside? There must be no compensation for them, and the guilty people at the hospital must be left to hold their chest high and walk around with a licence to murder! Must we allow this sort of thing to continue year after year without anybody trying to do something about it? The moment that somebody talks about the conditions at the hospital it is said that he has something against a doctor or somebody working there, and people are left to die like flies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, no words can explain the human suffering that is undergone by the thousands who find themselves waiting at the door of the Casualty Department at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I remember an occasion when I had to table questions in this hon. House. I am saying it is true that a doctor has given instructions to an orderly to switch off the lights at night, so that the crowd of people will remain in darkness. Let us take it for granted that some of the people are not as sick as would warrant all of them being at the Casualty at a particular moment. It is much better, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for one half-sick person not to be turned away from receiving treatment at the hospital. People who are sick with pains and all sorts of ailments are not going to remain there in the dark. The rows and the fighting will start, and some people will feel that they do not know when a bottle is going to strike them and so on.

6.05 p.m.

If one of those people turned away from that Casualty that night as a result of the lights being switched off and died a day or two following, are you going to tell me that that doctor whoever he might be ought not to face a nine man jury and sit in the dock before the Chief Justice? Are you going to tell me this because he is a doctor and has a profession behind which to hide? I heard the Minister of Home Affairs make mention of some of these privileged people, but let the Hon. Minister tell us this: it is his Government of which he is part and parcel that has done and is doing everything to protect and maintain the status quo, if I can put it that way, and to make it possible for these privileged people to ride rough shod over the poor hungry people in this community. Some of the people in other professions just cannot get rich like the way some of these doctors have become as if overnight. They have studied their profession, they are supposed to be competent people and they must be suitably rewarded for their labours. That is my contention. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no doctor should let it go down in the hospital that he is a blood sucker. What is more, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a Minister of Health who cannot claim to be ignorant of the things we are making mention of here today. Under the circumstances then, Sir, are we asking too much? Would we be demanding too much? Would we be demanding more than justice to the community if we asked that the Minister be called upon to resign now?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we go on, I picture a television programme with our Health Minister and perhaps our Acting Health Minister telling it to the nation how the nation dies like flies at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. (Hon. F. G. SMITH: How could that be true?) Mr. Deputy Speaker, what the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works would like to catch at is this: we are here this afternoon debating the death or matters arising from the death of two persons. This happens to be the latest two to have come before the public's eye; but what can the Hon. Minister say? What can the Leader of the House say? What has the Minister of Health done during the past year to bring about a standard of relationship between the doctors at the hospital where you still have until this day the 3rd October, 1972, some not speaking to each other? If they want to communicate they jot notes and have a nurse or some Orderly pass it to the other. There is no exchange of word or opinion orally. Exactly where are we heading under such circumstances? What is more amusing is that I believe that even the Acting Minister of Health should know the doctors to whom we refer.

Now we have had time and again a case of medicine being prescribed for patients and we have

gone over this long and hazardous journey of those patients having to return to the hospital and some of them even losing confidence in the druggists and not taking the medicine when they received it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was I who tabled questions here in this Honourable House asking Government to look into the question of the shortage of druggists throughout the island as a whole, that we did not have enough competent and qualified druggists to compound medicines for the population that required such services, but we found ourselves with a sort of reply that then suited the Government. What could we do under the circumstances? We had to accept the kind of replies that the Government gave. The result today is that the druggists that are employed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital like those employed at the District Hospitals as well are all tired, some retired and some too tired. Let me ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are we going to be satisfied with the diagnosis of a doctor who is too tired? Are we going to be satisfied and feel happy taking medicine compounded by a druggist who is half asleep when he is measuring the medicine or counting whatever it is? How could you feel comfortable in those circumstances? This is a situation that the Government has been begging for.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government has been begging for the death of these two people. We are sorry, Sir, setting aside the feelings of the immediate relatives of these two people, that it was not possible to have had the corpses now to lay on the table before the members of the Government on that side, and to bring before them the little children and dependents of these poor people weeping the loss of their parents, and to bring home to the Government the circumstances which follow these pathetic cases and all this to be attributed to the mal-administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

6.15 p.m.

You will admit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I had even queried the Government on the admission at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in room C.12 of a member of the hospital staff who had been admitted there, and the hospital had no record of this. I need say no more than that the Government must accept it fairly and squarely that they are responsible in some measure for the death of these two people.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: According to Standing Order 16(3) the hour of 6.15 has passed. I am wondering if there will be more debate on this or if we will have to interrupt.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, debate on this has to stand over

till 8.30 because it is a definite matter of urgent public importance and the moment of interruption is 6.15.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I never expected this debate would have gone on so long, but I think we will have to suspend until 8.30.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking for leave to permit the appropriate Minister to give a short reply.

Mr. MOTTLEY: We are quite prepared to stay on.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it may be better at this stage to suspend the Standing Orders in order to permit at least one or two members of the Government Party to give some indication as to what we are doing. The Government should have an opportunity of replying even though it may agree.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are talking with the Minister of Health, only if they give notice other members may reply. I am suggesting that if the Minister responsible would get her papers in order we will hear her at 7.00, or if it is proved and we have some guarantee that we will be able to continue. I would suggest 7 o'clock.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 5, 14, 16, 18, 40 and 45 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, what are we deciding? Is the urgent matter of public importance going to continue as well as the reply?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The only motion before the House is the motion for adjournment on which the Hon. member spoke.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, we are trying to accommodate the Opposition, we could have been home long ago. All we are trying to do is to regularise the situation, and that is the thanks we get.

Mr. ADAMS: We are accommodating the Government because the rule says that at 6.15 the urgent matter of public importance goes on. I am asking the Government what accommodation it wants, what time does it envisage we can go

home. We have 45 minutes before the dinner hour and I am asking what accommodation the Government wishes.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, the accommodation we need on this occasion is that two Government Ministers will reply very briefly, the Acting Minister of Health and the Acting Attorney General, the Minister of Communications and Works. It will all be done within half hour.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, no two Ministers can reply.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As Ministers of Government they have the authority.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, only one Minister has the right of final reply. If the Minister of Communications and Works wants to ask the leave of the House to speak on the Hospital administration I hope that we will extend the courtesy to him, for the other side has never extended to us that courtesy. One Minister has the right to reply. Let the Minister of Communications speak and let the Minister of Health reply.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: This is a legal matter and almost all the members over there are lawyers.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is an insult to the lawyers, I am no lawyer.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question that those Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I shall not be very long.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir, I think one of the Standing Orders he should suspend is No. 15.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I have given what Standing Orders which we wish suspended. These are 5, 14, 16, 18, 40 and 45.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The one he wants suspended is 15, if not the Minister cannot speak and the only member who can reply under 15 is the Minister responsible for the hospital so in order for the Minister of Communications to speak you will have to suspend Standing Order 15.
6.25 p.m.

You cannot suspend Standing Order No. 16 at this stage because 6.15 has gone. If the Leader of the House will look at the Standing Order, he will see that it will be necessary to suspend

Standing Order No. 15 in order to enable the Minister of Communications to speak on the matter. He was just talking about lawyers, and he must accept what I have said.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move that the reference to Standing Order No. 16 in the Resolution now lately passed be corrected as a reference to Standing Order No. 15. It is obvious that it was meant to refer to Standing Order No. 15. If we are going to deal with the matter of urgent public importance, you cannot suspend Standing Order No. 16.

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

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am deeply grateful to the Opposition for their spirit of compromise. I should like to say that this side regrets the death of these two unfortunate persons with as great sincerity and feeling as the Opposition, because no Government, no citizen, or no human being could feel happy when persons have died under the circumstances which are alleged. This Government feels very strongly that some inquiry of an impartial and independent nature should be instituted to get at the facts of the particular case. I should just like to let the Honourable House know that, with Cabinet approval, I have instructed Mr. Jim Reid, who is a Senior Crown Counsel in the Attorney-General's Department over which I have the honour to preside at this moment, to be the Chairman of this Inquiry. (*Asides.*) I am not going in for any hospital inquiry; I am dealing with the death of two persons under circumstances which cry out, demand and ask for a thorough, detailed, and searching investigation. So serious do the Cabinet and I view these particular deaths, that the evidence in this Inquiry will be conducted by a Crown Counsel in the Attorney-General's Department. He is a gentleman by the name of Mr. Nelson. So strongly does the Government feel, that if a public inquiry is demanded or desired it will be granted and carried out. We have nothing to hide, because such circumstances must never be allowed to occur or to recur.

Now, it is all right to feel very strongly on these things. The first time the Government knew of the incidents was through the newspaper. This is understandable, because the persons involved, for reasons which may be laudable or may not be, did not report to the Ministry of Health the treatment meted out to their relatives at the hospital. The Minister only heard of it when it appeared in the newspapers of this country. After all, the Director of the Hospital is not expected

to go into every death. You assume and presume that doctors in an institution, who have taken the hippocratic oath, who were drawing the taxpayers' money, some of whom have sprung from the same lowly, humble people with whom they treat, would be expected to give a fair day's work for a fair day's wage and to act and behave beyond the call of duty in serving the community which gave them their education. The Director of the Hospital can only be guided by the reports which come to his knowledge, and the Ministry has instituted an investigation.

I can tell you that the Prime Minister returned from abroad last night; he was shown the preliminary report of this Inquiry, which is not completed, and he nearly hit the roof. He said he would resign as Prime Minister unless something is done to ferret out the culprits and bring them to justice. The Prime Minister feels as strongly as his colleagues do in this matter.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir. In view of all the Prime Minister has said, let the Minister state whether this is going to be a Public Inquiry. A Public Inquiry means that people can be represented by lawyers and so on.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I think the hon. member will appreciate that if he wants a Public Inquiry, then he cannot get the expedition that is required in this matter. I have instructed that this Inquiry is to start tomorrow morning at nine o'clock. If you can get the people concerned to continue it and to look after the question of briefing...

Mr. MOTTLEY: The people concerned must be properly represented.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I do not know what you have in mind. You are raising matters that are not within my knowledge. If you can get an opportunity tomorrow morning to go to the hospital at nine o'clock we hope to start this Inquiry there. If it suits you or any counsel...

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Sir. I know the Minister feels the same concern as not only the members of the Opposition but the general public feels today. Would it not be better to let two days elapse and call for a Public Inquiry where persons can make their representations rather than to have a hasty Inquiry which will not ferret out what the general public wants to know so that the Government would be able to act upon it?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, first of all, I do not think a one-man Inquiry will have the authority

to make people appear before him to give evidence, and this is going to be a vital and important factor of any inquiry. The person carrying out the inquiry must be endowed with certain powers to enable him to probe until he gets to the bottom of the matter. There is no doubt about it that lawyers, doctors and solicitors will band together in clans because it is a matter of life and death. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are not asking for too much.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for the City has already said that two weeks have passed and nothing has been done. The hon. member is now asking for more time, and then you will hear that the Government is doing nothing in the matter. We are not carrying out an inquiry into the entire hospital administration. If citizens feel as strongly as that side feels and this side feels, then Mr. Gittens, Mr. Neblett — (*Asides.*) We can compel the civil servants to attend the Inquiry. If they refuse to attend the inquiry, then that will be the best way to get rid of them. (*Asides.*)

I am not having an inquiry into the entire administration of the hospital. I am having an inquiry surrounding the circumstances of the non-arrival of ambulances when requested to find out who was responsible; who was negligent; what is the service like, and where it fell down. Do not think that you are getting any full-blown inquiry into the administration of the entire hospital.

Similarly, with regard to Sybil Worrell, we want to find out who were the doctors who attended her; why she was not admitted to the hospital; why the ambulance failed to go for her and a million and one things. You, as lawyers, know that this inquiry carried on by independent minds does not rob the families — if the members of the Opposition feel as strongly as they say they feel — of bringing actions in the law courts for damages or negligence against any person. This will not be an inquest or an inquiry held by a Magistrate.
6.35 p.m.

This is for the magistrate to go into the circumstances surrounding the death of these people, to make his findings and to say who is lying, who is telling the truth, who is to blame, so that disciplinary action can be taken by the appropriate authorities to punish the culprit. The families will have the right to bring if they are so advised, cases for negligence for the death of their relatives.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, would the Minister state whether this enquiry is being

carried out under the Commission of Enquiry Act, or is it purely a Civil Service enquiry? The Minister cannot really be serious to think this will satisfy somebody with a Civil Service enquiry. How are you going to force Mr. Gittens, Miss Neblett's reputed husband and the other gentleman to attend? How can you force people to tell the truth unless you hold it under the Commission of Enquiry Act?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: You do not have to force them because the member for Christ Church paid tribute to Mr. Gittens as a great public servant who did so much. Is Mr. Gittens now facing an independent legal mind going to refuse to come?

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, the Minister must not think that he is the only person who knows law. The only way you can demand the people to attend and to give evidence for which they can be prosecuted in a law court for perjury is if the enquiry is held under the Commission of Enquiry Act, and if you do not do that, the whole enquiry is useless. How can you force the people at the hospital to tell the truth in an enquiry like that?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As the hon. member for Bridgetown knows, kissing a book does not make you tell the truth. I have been called a liar in here already and I was not on oath. I have called the Leader of the Opposition a liar and I was not on oath. Can't you look at a witness under cross-examination without the pretense of kissing a book, not only with the legal consequences that flow from it, and know if Mr. Gittens or another witness is telling the truth?

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, I do not want to interrupt the Hon. Minister, but all I would like to find out is what sort of protection would these non-Civil Servants who volunteer to appear before this Commission have in respect of charges brought against them whether for libel, slander or whatever the case may be, because remember they will obviously have to call the names of the professional men who are doctors, and if two or three of them together decide to prosecute that man, what protection is the Minister going to give to those people?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As I understand it, if we are dealing with the death of these two people, there is no doctor involved in the death of Oughtna Neblett.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, the Minister must not say so. In the case of Sybil Worrell a doctor is involved because he refused to admit her to hospital; so do not get up here and try to fool us.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I said that in the case of Miss Neblett there is no evidence of a doctor having seen her except to pronounce her dead. I did not say in the case of both. I am dealing with them separately. In the case of the other lady the possibility of libel from laymen or the witnesses who gave evidence is as remote as hell is from heaven.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Minister would give way, in his other capacity as Acting Attorney General, the Minister must know that if a witness is going to feel free to speak his or her mind without the threat of litigation, not necessarily litigation that will succeed, he needs the ordinary protection that is given to witnesses, and the Minister must know that the best enquiry in this matter, if the Government really feels seriously about this, is an enquiry in which a witness can come out and speak the truth without having to spend money retaining lawyers in people who must defend their position. If the Prime Minister seriously feels so strongly about it, he should have called for the resignation of the Minister instead of not coming to the House today. All this hypocrisy must stop. The Prime Minister feels strongly about this and he is up in Culloden Farm, and the people are dead.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: How can he call for the resignation of the Minister when he is endeavouring to find out the real and true facts of the case? In the case of Sybil Worrell I say as a lawyer now that the possibility of a layman commenting on the diagnosis or treatment given by the doctors who saw her is as remote and far apart as heaven is from hell. All they can say is that she went there, she got this or got that. It would be for another professional man to say whether the treatment was good enough. All the witnesses from the reports given are going to say is when they rang and what reply they got. What is libellous about that? This is not the first enquiry to be held. People have lost their jobs all over the world. As the member for Christ Church West himself knows, people have got dismissed from this public service ...

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the further we go in this the more entangled it becomes when you talk about a quasi-Civil Servant enquiry. Do not let us hide anything, let us call names. The doctors who carry out 90 percent of the post mortems are always saying that the wrong diagnosis was made, and therefore you are bound to call a doctor who will tell you she died of something when she was diagnosed for something else. That man needs protection because you are obviously going to end up with two medical men or one medical

man and other medical men on two sides of the fence fighting.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Is the hon. member as a lawyer telling me that if the doctor who did the post mortem came and gave as his considered opinion that the diagnosis was wrong that the exposes himself to libel?

Mr. BOLDEN: The others may try to sue him and then he will have to spend money trying to retain counsel.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Any magistrate you appoint is a Civil Servant. The Chief Justice is not a Civil Servant, but any magistrate is a Civil Servant. The Government has decided to appoint Mr. Reid who was a former magistrate to take the evidence, not on oath, allow people to cross-examine ...*(Asides)*. You can't tell the Government what method to use.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, I do not want to tell the Government what sort of enquiry to hold, but if the Government is genuinely serious, it would hold a proper Commission of Enquiry where witnesses are summoned and made to attend and give evidence on oath.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point made!

Hon. F. G. SMITH: All I would ask the hon. member for Bridgetown is to ask the people who came to him and gave the report to turn up at the hospital tomorrow morning at 9.00. That is your duty as a citizen and that is the duty you should ask of them if you want to get at the truth and the facts. Similarly the hon. member for Christ Church West on whose constituency it is bordering can ask Mr. Gittens and Miss Neblett's reputed husband and whosoever he knows can give evidence to go to the hospital when they will be heard tomorrow. This is the public duty you can perform in letting us get to the facts of this case.

Mr. FORDE: If the Minister wants this side to carry out the functions of the Government, we will willingly accept if they will resign now, because if he is going to tell us that his Civil Servants for ten days have not been able to even get near these people, he is having an enquiry and has not informed the principal parties, what sort of enquiry is he in a hurry to start tomorrow? I will inform Mr. Gittens if he wants me to get in touch with him, but I do not consider it my duty. It is the duty of the person who is holding the enquiry. I do not want any allegation that we have interfered with the conduct of the enquiry.

What I would like the Government to believe is that the people really want a proper enquiry, not an inter-departmental enquiry on this matter, and that is why he should not delay in holding a public enquiry; and it is not true to say, with respect, that a public enquiry cannot be conducted expeditiously.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have seen members getting up as if they are in Committee. I will put down my foot from now, You have had sufficient. I will hear the Hon. Minister on this subject and then the Acting Minister of Health.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Thanks so much. I shall not be long. Mr. Reid was a magistrate who adjudicated on the freedom of citizens; he is not in the Ministry; he is an independent legal mind who has presided in the courts of this Island. Mr. Nelson will marshal the evidence before the enquiry. I assume that every citizen in Barbados who has a sense of civic pride and decency will only be too pleased to go and say what part he played or what part he was forced to play in these tragic instances.

6.45 p.m.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, will the Minister state whether in my capacity as counsel I will be able to attend and cross-examine witnesses? You tell me if that is possible, whether as legal counsel for Sybil Worrell, deceased, I will have any legal standing to appear at the enquiry and cross-examine.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I have instructed the person investigating to give any counsel the opportunity to hear and cross-examine and to bring evidence, and the Government has given me that authority because we have no intention of hiding anything.

Mr. MOTTLEY: How can the Minister really be genuine, telling us now at 7 o'clock that he has given that instruction and is now telling us for the first time today he is holding an enquiry tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Earlier in the afternoon you and the hon. member for St. Joseph said it should be convened in less than 24 hours.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not mind the Hon. Minister of Communications if he finds himself in a tight corner speaking out, but what I said and I repeat, if the hon. member feels as strongly as he says — and he said something about a citizen's sense of civic pride and decency — I think that we

represent 40% of the citizens and they represent the other 60%, and what I said was that if the Government was setting up this enquiry in at least two days' time it will give enough people time to come forward before the enquiry.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Point made.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: If you can assure me that you want an opportunity to be legally represented, Cabinet wants a full report with complete details by Thursday morning when we meet. I will have to inform the Prime Minister that the Opposition members have asked to postpone it so that they can get their house in order.

Mr. FORDE: On a point of order, let the Minister get the record straight. We have asked as Opposition parliamentarians in this Parliament to have an enquiry to find out very properly what took place, we are not looking in any personal interest to make money for ourselves, I would like to get that straight here and now. The people of the country want a public enquiry.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: In the first place, the main point is why did the ambulance not turn up in time to take this unfortunate lady. In the second place, did the doctors give the correct diagnosis and why was she sent home on two occasions and died subsequently, and there is possibly a third point. I say now that Cabinet feels that a qualified legal practitioner who has held judicial office and is a fair, independent and impartial man can head an enquiry to find out the facts and find out whether the ambulance driver is to blame, whether it is the chief orderly, a nurse or whoever it is, whether the clerk who spoke to the man checked to see whether an ambulance was there and all these things.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, the Minister said that there was a possible third point, but all we want to know is that there is going to be a full, fair and impartial enquiry into the general administration of the hospital.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As I said already, we do not have to protect anybody, and it is well known that Jennings gave as an opinion that in matters like these the Minister automatically resigns but I do not agree with that. Do you mean to tell me that a Minister must resign because of the slightest thing done by an orderly, an ambulance driver, a clerk or anybody else?

Mr. FORDE: On a point of elucidation, would the Hon. Minister tell us that if because of the wrong chlorination of the water supply of

this island some people should die that these deaths would not warrant his resignation?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Most definitely not, I do not work at the pumping station and I am no chemist. Anyhow, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I promise this Hon. House most sincerely that they will have every opportunity to know whether this enquiry is honest, fair and impartial and that the facts will be known by the public of Barbados. We will find out where the fault lies and whether we can prevent similar incidents from occurring at the hospital.

6.55 p.m.

If you have ever read the English Act, as the hon. member for Christ Church West will know, you will realise that in England a surgeon comes in; he washes his hands and cuts off the left foot when the right one should have been amputated. They have just increased the medical fees in England by nearly £10 to £15 a year, because they had to pay out nearly £1 million in damages for hospitals. We regret these things, and we must take steps to see that they do not occur again. We must minimise the possibility of error, but do not let us fool ourselves that, in any institution dealing with human life, there is a 100% recovery rate or a 100% possibility that there will not be a mistake. This sort of thing happens in the best run hospitals in America, Canada or in Timbucktu. Our job, as citizens and as human beings, is to see that that human error, either in treatment, or in the administration, or in whatever facet it is involved, will be reduced to a minimum.

I can assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that as long as men run institutions, as long as human beings have to run institutions, then that margin of human error will be there. God forbids, unfortunately, that someone: perhaps me, you, the Leader of the Opposition, or the member of the City may have to pay the price. We can only express our regrets in this matter. We must put our heads together and endeavour to remove that human error in every sphere of life and in every activity of mankind. That human error is your business and mine. The Government is endeavouring to find out how that human error can be reduced to a minimum so that lives may not be lost. This is the reason for this not Departmental Inquiry but the use of independent minds to ferret out the truth in order that the public of this country will realise that this Government has as deep a concern for the sanctity of human lives and for the survival of its race as any member has on the other side. Do not go around pretending and thinking that you alone value human lives and that you alone have

shed tears for the people who have died, because that is not so. The Leader of the House, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education were all as shocked as you were when we read the circumstances under which these two people had died. We have dedicated ourselves to see that immediate steps are taken so that this thing should not happen again.

Hon. Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am immensely concerned about these cases. I have heard what has been said by members of the Opposition, and I must say that they have spoken a bit of truth with regard to what has happened and what is happening at the hospital today. It is really deplorable and, as a woman and a mother, I feel very sorry about the death of these two people. It hurts me and I grieve to think that 7 children in the first instance and 3 children in the second instance are left motherless, and that the death of these two people followed each other so closely. What really amazes me is to see that we in the Ministry had to learn of these cases through reading of them in the *Advocate-News*.

The time has come when the public must let us know what is happening, and when there is ill-treatment or any sort of malpractices meted out to them at the hands of the doctors or anyone working at the hospital. At least members of the public should be able to write a report, sign their names to it, and let the Ministry know what is happening. If members of the public would send us a note of what is happening, we will treat it in confidence. We want to know what is happening. A lot of things are left covered up, and then the Minister will be blamed for them. How can a Minister be blamed for things when he does not know anything about them?

The Statement that I have made this evening is a Statement by the Honourable Minister, and I want to tell you that he is very, very concerned about the matter. He was sorry that he had to go away on Government's Business at a time like this. If he were here this afternoon, I am sure that he would let the public know how strongly he feels about these matters. I am hoping and praying for the day when Barbados will see a national health service. I often wonder what is happening to Barbadians. Are we losing sight of the good things for which we stood before? Is money the main objective in life?

As a Junior Minister, I would seem to think that a hospital such as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital — a hospital which the Government has sought to obtain and on which it is spending

millions of dollars for Barbadians to work in and to relieve sickness and all sorts of things — would be run as a proper hospital. A hospital should be something like a sanctuary: a place of rest; a place for harmony. What is happening here? There seems to be some subversive effort to destroy the hospital and to destroy the Government.

I say here this afternoon that, if I am endowed with the powers of the Minister, the public will know all the facts involved. If it is my duty to come back here, you as Opposition members, will be told all the facts. I have nothing to hide. I am a human being, and those two people who have died were human beings. It is regrettable, and I do not intend to leave one stone unturned in this matter.

You have heard what has been said by the Honourable Acting Attorney-General. I can assure you that he and I will see that everything is done to make sure that the public is well aware that we in the Ministry are aware of the faults, of the subversive efforts, the turmoil and the non-cooperation that exist at the hospital. I should like to say that we do not make people. The people who work for us are Barbadians, and they should be responsible people. What is happening? We, as Government Ministers, cannot be responsible for the callousness and indifference of these people. Are there allowing party politics to interfere with their jobs? Party politics have no right in any hospital. The hospital should be an independent institution, because people from your section and my section must be administered to within the walls of the hospitals, and we should have reliable people working there.

I hope I have satisfied hon. members, because I do not intend to speak for too long on this matter. I intend to come back with more facts and speak on the matter.

7.05 p.m.

After the enquiry has been concluded I will come here and tell you everything. I have not got anything to hide. We love the people just as much as you love them; so please get this quite clear.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened in amazement to what the Minister of Communications and Acting Attorney General has had to say. I have heard the Minister say that the Prime Minister is so concerned about what has happened. I am not one who believes in mere words. If you are concerned, you should show you are concerned. I believe in action; so do not come here and try to pull something over anybody's eyes. The Minister may have been a

lawyer before me, but he is not the only lawyer in here. What arrant nonsense the Minister got in here and talked about a Commission of Enquiry by Mr. Jim Reid. I am one of those people who have had to go before Mr. Reid and I have the highest regard for Mr. Reid's integrity. I would not even object if Mr. Reid was Chairman of a Commission of Enquiry set up under the Commission of Enquiry Act to give him the power to summon to that enquiry all witnesses that he considers can give necessary testimony so that those witnesses would be protected, and so that he himself in any report he makes would be protected. That is why the Legislature in its wisdom in 1908 passed a Commission of Enquiry Act.

What does the Minister want me to believe? That under the present arrangements Mr. Reid as Chairman of the Enquiry can seriously make recommendations in any report? (A VOICE: To find facts.) That is probably why the Minister appointed him, to find facts. But can he state anything which in any way may be critical of a doctor and not open himself to legal action? The very fact that under the Commission of Enquiry Act 1908 Section 10 protects the Commissioner from any such action is why that was passed to protect both him and the witness from any future action. Can you see Mr. Reid making any statement which a doctor may consider to be defamatory of him to the Cabinet, unless what is being done is going to be sent to Cabinet and there it will remain and not be made public? That would not be acceptable to the Opposition. Everytime the Minister speaks, he opens his mouth and the words drop out. He says there will be an enquiry tomorrow, Wednesday, for the purpose of reporting to the Cabinet on Thursday. The Minister cannot be serious to tell me that the Government is going to rush an enquiry like this. Are you going to say that all the witnesses that could give relevant testimony in this matter can give it in the space of one day and be cross-examined?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order, we are not rushing anything. All we are saying is that we would like the report most urgently, if possible by Thursday. If the Commissioner assures us that we cannot get it by Thursday, there is nothing we can do because Parliament is not meeting until two weeks hence and it will give us time to report properly as the Minister promises.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I really suspect that all that has happened here is that Mr. Reid was appointed since this debate began. Let the Minister get up and deny it.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On Thursday last, and my colleagues can support me, Cabinet agreed that an independent person, either a magistrate chosen after consultation with the Chief Justice or some person with legal training should conduct the enquiry; so do not tell me about any appointment being made just now.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The Minister said it was agreed last Thursday, but why does he not say when Mr. Reid was appointed? When was Mr. Reid appointed? It is obvious that Mr. Reid was appointed since this debate began, and that is the point the Minister would not get up and deny. The fact that he remains seated is indicative of the fact that Mr. Reid was appointed only since this debate began. This shows that the Government is acting in ill faith. Now, Sir, let us be realistic. The Minister as Attorney General must know that no proper enquiry can be held in such time. I heard him list the things he has to do. He has to find out why the ambulance did not go; where the ambulance was; what time he received the call. I would think that you have to call the Orderlies, you have to call Mr. Went, Mr. Gittens, the two nurses in Obstetrics, the hospital operator, and all this in two enquiries. You have to check the records of various things, and when it comes to Sybil Worrell's enquiry, you have to call the doctor who saw her in the afternoon, the doctor who saw her the night, the Sister on duty during the day, the Sister on duty during the night, the taxi driver, the Orderly on duty during the day and the Orderly on duty during the night. The Minister cannot be serious to tell us that this can take place in one day in a genuine enquiry; so I am saying that the Government is not acting from any proper motives. They are only making fun and trying to tell us they will have an enquiry because we have called for one; but we are calling for a public enquiry. In view of the acting Minister of Health saying that there are subversive forces working at the hospital and that politics come into vogue there, how can the Government say it does not want a public enquiry? How can the Minister tell people to come and make statements and that they will be treated in confidence and he does not want a public enquiry?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Acting Minister of Health, the person responsible for the hospital said that a lot of things are being covered up at the hospital, therefore we are asking you at this stage to uncover them and let the public know them and let us have a public enquiry so that nobody can come in here in future and say that things are being covered up at the hospital. What has politics got to do with the hospital? I can only come to the conclusion that the

Government is condoning what is happening at the hospital. Whom are you protecting? Why do you want to protect the doctors at the hospital? Why can't their activities be subjected to a public enquiry the same way police activities were subjected to a public enquiry?

7.15 p.m.

It was the Minister of Home Affairs who spoke about people in certain positions doing certain things in failing to have a Commission of Enquiry set up, and you are now condoning the exact thing that the Minister of Home Affairs complained about, protecting people in certain positions. Why do you want to protect the doctors at the hospital? They are no different from anybody else. You are doing exactly what the Minister of Home Affairs warned about, and I am glad to see that the Minister of Home Affairs in his speech expressed the same sentiments I expressed in two letters to the newspaper, that a lot of the people in this country do not care for poor people and unless they wake up something is going to happen in this country. You care nothing about poor people; if you did you would not protect the hospital in the manner in which you are protecting it now.

Let us bring the subversive activities in the open in a free, fair and independent enquiry, because you will have this enquiry today and in six months' time we will be back before this House with the same thing happening, people will continue to die at the hospital through the negligence and the mal-administration of the people at the hospital. Because the doctors threaten the Prime Minister you cannot protect them all the time, people cannot use their friendship for protection. In this country everything has got to come into the open and the time is now, we cannot accept this inter-departmental enquiry. The Minister has not got the guts to listen to any criticism, he is going to tell us something about an enquiry starting tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock. I have no doubt that if you were to telephone any of the people involved now they would not know anything about it, but the one place you should not have that enquiry is at the hospital. How can there be a fair and independent enquiry under those circumstances? Justice is not only to be done, it must appear to be done. Listen to the words of your own colleague, the Minister of Home Affairs, he has issued a warning which I agree with. If you do not listen to him something more will happen.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question that this House now stands adjourned until Tuesday, 17th October at 2.30 p.m.....

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, under Standing Order 16 any member other than a Minister may at the time appointed under

Standing Order 8 rise in his place and ask for leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance. Such a matter is contained in a letter to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, dated 3rd October, and I propose to raise it now which concerns the security surrounding the Prime Minister and the alleged attempt to kidnap the Prime Minister and the asking for ransom in the sum of \$2 million. I have spoken at length this afternoon on other matters, but as you will see from the letter there will be other speakers on this matter, so at this stage I will give way to the Leader of the Opposition who will speak on this matter.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are certain times in the public affairs of any country when you run across a situation which makes you wonder whether to laugh or to cry. I did not shed any tears one way or the other over the situation of the security of the Prime Minister, but it gave me a lot to think about. I do not read the *Democrat* newspaper and I believe when they libel it will be reported to me in due course, and the claim for \$91,000 will prove sufficient to solace the harm which I suffer, but that is in the future. It has been drawn to my attention that there is an account circulating in Barbados of the Government receiving a \$2 million ransom request for the ransom of the Prime Minister. I know perfectly well you cannot ask a question in here and no Minister can be required to consider the question whether something you read in a newspaper is true, and I am not asking anybody whether something I read in the *Democrat* is true. In any case I would know better than that, because the *Democrat* I take to be a political newspaper, and if we believe political newspapers like ambassadors are known to tell lies on behalf of the Party, I am therefore prepared to assume that anything I see in the *Democrat* which cannot be independently checked is untrue.

I have seen no picture of any ransom note, what I have heard is a very alarming and dangerous story about the security of the Prime Minister, and although Ministers are not obliged to be questioned or to answer questions I would think there is sufficient public concern about this matter to demand that the Acting Leader of the Government make some such statement as to satisfy that public one way or another as to whether there is really a formal threat to the security of the Prime Minister or anyone in Barbados. As far as I am concerned, I would not be prepared to pay not even \$200 for the whole Cabinet, I would pay a little more for the Parliamentary Secretaries, but I would very much hope that this aspect of the matter would be

treated totally as a joke. I personally do not believe any ransom note written by anybody has been received, I can accept that a ransom note will be as forthcoming as Mr. Jim Reid's letter of appointment at some time in the future. I was not aware that you make a demand for ransom in advance of a kidnapping, I thought you would hold on to your material first. In other words, the whole story stinks, and somebody must make the public in Barbados understand this and they must not let the *Democrat*, the organ of the Democratic Labour Party, hamper them from being reassured in this matter.

7.25 p.m.

Now, we have had a reference to the murder of the Chief of Police in Bermuda. To the best of my knowledge that might be anything; it might be personal; it might be resentment after once again the Bermuda Conservatives have won an even greater majority than the Barbados Conservatives have won in the last election. They have won, I believe, 30 seats out of 40. Once again, perhaps, in Bermuda the Chief of Police is resented by those who only won the 10 seats. I do not know, and there may be all sorts of reasons.

You have the killings in St. Croix also mentioned in this article. Now, these are real dangerous and desperate acts. To join them with a fancy story about reliable information that terrorists are demanding \$2 million ransom from the Barbados Government — for what? To join these two terrible incidents with this fancy story about the terrorists is to do no service at all to the people of Barbados. It is a most dangerous, desperate and irresponsible act. I am obliged to the hon. member for St. Peter for pointing out to me that in certain countries, and not by any means in countries where dictatorships prevail, it is an offence to create public alarm. It is an offence of public mischief to publish false stories of this nature to the alarm and despondency of the general public.

Now, the hon. member for Christ Church North Central, who has served in the British Army during the war, will be aware that numerous prosecutions were instituted in England — England the home of civil liberty — during the war for the publishing of false rumours of this sort under Regulations then in force. These are dangerous matters with which to trifle.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are not debating the *Democrat*, but the outline of the story has to be put to the House. It is said that the Barbados Government gets a \$2 million ransom threat. The Government is not obliged to confirm or deny

that, but if it is untrue it should be denied. I repeat that. This ransom threat comes from terrorists. These terrorists are supposed to be connected with those who carried out murders. If that is true, then the Government of Barbados owes a duty to the Government of Grenada and the Government of the United States Virgin Islands to make all information available to them, before it spreads alarm and despondency.

But then you get the internal inconsistencies of the story itself. The story says that the Prime Minister is guarded 24 hours a day by a dozen members of the United States Secret Service. I have not checked on that. The United States Secret Service is a Department of the United States Treasury concerned mainly with finding out who forges bank notes and concerned with finding out who is creating frauds in the American Treasury. By some fluke it was given the duty of guarding the President of the United States and Presidential contenders nominated by Presidential aspirants and guarding their families. It also guards the wives of past Presidents and so on. If it guards the heads of Overseas Governments, I do not know. I know that when you are in New York you are guarded by the New York Police and not by the Secret Service no matter who you are. If you are a King you are guarded by the New York Police and not by the Secret Service. Of course, this is a technical matter that will, perhaps, give members some insight into the quality of the story.

The unfortunate thing is that the Prime Minister is quoted as having said in Israel at Tel Aviv Airport on September 13 that he is not afraid of any threats. He drives his own car and shops at Cheapside Market in Barbados without escort. It is only now some weeks after that we hear what these threats are. The whole matter is clouded in doubt. It is no secret that there have been diplomatic activities in and out of Barbados relating to this matter. Comments have been made that the only source of which this information is available is the *Democrat*!

Now, *Reuters News Agency* has no knowledge of any threats against the Prime Minister in New York. No other newspaper or source of information has confirmed any of this so-called alleged security situation. Certain people, I am informed by a person who is reliably believed to be close to the ear of those who have information to give — his presence in the Gallery cannot be adverted to because of the Rules contained in the Standing Orders — that he knows there are two letters. If the source is Mr. Tudor I could very readily dismiss it, because Mr. Tudor is another of those people who, as far as I

am concerned, nothing he says can be believed until confirmed by another outside authority.

We must know about these things. The tourists season is coming on now. The *Democrat* newspaper has linked Barbados with the killings in St. Croix and the murder of the Commissioner of Police in Bermuda — matters which have been canvassed extensively in *American News Magazines* as explosive conditions in the Caribbean in those particular areas. Now the *Democrat* newspaper headlines that Barbados is also linked with this kind of activity. I would expect that the Minister of Tourism would be in a very vulnerable position himself if the terrorists are out for shooting the foreigners. I would expect him to be exceptionally interested, personally and politically, and in the interest of his own Ministry in seeing that a rumour like this gets scotched at the earliest possible opportunity.

Sir, we have had a few disturbances in Barbados recently. The Secretary of the Barbados Workers Union says that somebody has threatened to burn down the Union. I very much hope it is not anybody who has seen how well insured the Union is, but let that be, again, as it is. I understand there have been bomb hoaxes at two hotels as well as a bomb hoax at CDC. When I heard of the bomb hoax at CDC, I said that it was somebody who wants to take one of the young ladies who work there to the sea for the afternoon and he wanted to have a couple of hours off. Apparently, you have to read the *Democrat* and take this, again, as it is. You may have to take it more seriously.

Now, the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation and other organs of information tell us that there were explosions at an electrical sub-station at the Pine. There was an explosion in my bathroom three or four days ago. Somebody left on the electric water-heater, and it exploded because there was no water running through it. I do not believe that anybody left a bomb there. There are explosions in sub-stations every day, but the news is being prepared and presented in a manner most harmful and dangerous to Barbados at the present time. Nobody for one moment is appreciating that in dramatising this nonsense and making yourself feel important — a \$2 million ransom note must make you feel important — I had better write and demand \$3 million in return for withdrawing the Opposition of the Barbados Labour Party at the next election and see whether we will be paid that amount. All these are examples of self-dramatisation that are not called for and are positively dangerous.

Now, Sir, I do believe that I am going to select the one thing that I think the Prime

Minister may have exposed himself a little bit recently. When I first heard of this story, I heard that the Arabs were threatening to kidnap the Prime Minister because he was so much a friend of Israel. I was very amused by the reports I heard about the Prime Minister and his friendship for Israel. I have always believed that we who have the names of the whites, but the colours whether mixed or otherwise of the slaves, obtained those names through ownership rather than descent.
7.35 p.m.

Therefore if the Prime Minister knows that the name Barrow is a Jewish surname, something unknown to anyone who has ever written an ethnological dictionary, a book on surnames or otherwise, he knows more than, I think, any of us knows, but also he knows that he obtained the name by descent and not by ownership. My name, Sir, is Adams. My family comes from near Adams Castle in Christ Church. There is still a multitude of Adamses living there at Vauxhall in the constituency of the hon. member for Christ Church North Central. The Adams family lived and reigned there for many years and great liberals they were in the early 18th century history of this House of Assembly; and Adams was expelled from the House from Christ Church three times for opposing the Provost Marshal selling some slaves, and three times the electorate of Christ Church unanimously returned him to the House, but I do not say he is my ancestor. His ancestors owned my ancestors, and his descendants owned my ancestors in the year 1837 when the slaves were made free and all the people in Adams Castle tenantry in Vauxhall were called Adams because they were owned by Adams, not because any of Adams' blood is in me that I know of; and I believe that we have nearly all got our names that way. Anyhow that is only by the way.

The Prime Minister went out of his way to say that he was Jewish by descent, Jewish by sentiment, Jewish by feeling, Jewish by appreciation, and I am glad that those who supported the Democratic Labour Party financially so well in 1971 were so amply rewarded by this tribute to the traditional financial genius of their people in Jerusalem or Tel Aviv or wherever it was. Mr. Bernstein and the others were taken back to the ancestral home that they never thought they would see when they were dismissed from the Crown Life Insurance Company in Trinidad, but again that is only by the way.

The Prime Minister is one of the few, indeed if not the only Head of State whom I have ever heard has visited Israel. Certainly he is the only

one who has visited there in recent years. (Asides) I do not think that General Amin visited Israel. I would not like to classify General Amin and the Prime Minister in view of the fact that the same issue of the *Democrat* says that a psychiatrist has said that if General Amin walked into his consulting room he would have no hesitation in calling the police to have him taken into custody and put under lock and key in an asylum. I do not believe that anyone would want me to say that the only Heads of State to visit Israel recently were General Amin and the Prime Minister; not under those circumstances. I hope it is not true. But certainly the Prime Minister has exposed himself.

Now to be dead serious for a moment, Sir, If I could find words to express my appreciation of Israel greater than the Prime Minister's, I would find them, because I have a great admiration for Israel and the Israeli people and indeed the Jews spread around the world. They have been a much persecuted people and they were a highly talented people who enriched societies wherever they go, and I say this despite their activities and total and complete hostility for as long as I have known to the Barbados Labour Party and its work in this Island. I have never known any Jew who supported our party here, and yet they can all have my assurance that I appreciate the Jewish people and Israel as much or more than the Prime Minister, and I hope more rationally than the Prime Minister. But I can see that this great appreciation of Israel may attract the attention of gentlemen who even though when they are in Barbados it is politic to associate themselves with the same Prime Minister and the same Israelis, — I refer to Arabs, for let us not forget that all the Syrians and Lebanese down here, they are the stuff of which Black September is made. Their views may be different because they have to accommodate themselves here, but it is men like them. Black September does not have anything to do with black people; it has to do with people with names like Abed and Moses. I am not attacking anybody of that name here, but just let it be understood who the Arabs are. The Arabs are people of the same colour, the same semitic background as the Jews. Let us just understand it. And these same people undoubtedly are capable, I believe of coming to Barbados and assassinating the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition and all of us. (A VOICE: Are you afraid?) I am not worried.

If I had had to admire the Prime Minister as I have said before, I have had to admire the Prime Minister for doing more than U Thant and all of them can do at the United Nations. Never

have I admired him more than when he sat down as Chairman of the Board of the Trident Publishing Company when Mr. Saunders, Mr. Bernstein and Mrs. Karp on one side and Mr. Matouk and Mr. Abed and Mr. Moses on the other. I am unaware that any other negotiator in the world at the present time is able to bring Arab and Jew so successfully together. But the overseas Arabs are not the local Arabs who are assimilated by the greatest assimilator of all, the one that you brush and feel between your hands at the present time. They are genuinely dangerous people, and I think that if it is conceived that there is some threat from the presence from Black September, from El Fatah, from any of them to the Prime Minister because of his friendship for Israel, the statement that exposes a ransom note and the general validity of this story should also say whether there is any apprehension of danger from Arab sources to a country that has so outspokenly demonstrated its friendship towards Israel and politicians who run that country. All of this should be set out in a statement just as the Honourable Lady, the Acting Minister of Health, has set out her position in a statement and in a reply to the House.

The Prime Minister's security is clearly not taken so seriously nor should it be by the Opposite side as the deaths of two people in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, but because something so monstrous has happened as those deaths should not blind us to the fact that a \$2 million threat against the Prime Minister of a country would warrant a statement in that country's Parliament if under any circumstances it was genuine or should be taken seriously. It is inconceivable that Mr. Heath, President Nixon or anyone should be subjected to a threat, whatever the threat is, and no statement made, and I am calling on the Leader of the House who has taken notes so assiduously throughout the whole of this debate, and I realise by the fact that the hon. members on the other side have readily conceded the public importance of this debate, to make this statement here and now, make the ransom notes documents of the House, and tell us whether it is true that the Prime Minister is closely guarded twenty-four hours a day. How very embarrassing that must be to be in Washington and have them watching you twenty-four hours a day! You cannot even go for a walk to the Lincoln Memorial or go out and take a little drink after dark or whatever the delights of Washington may happen to be and not be watched not by one, but by a dozen members of the United States Secret Service. It has in about 70 and 12 out of the 70 United States Service are guarding the Prime Minister. All this deserves serious attention.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could be a little frivolous but I do not expect the Leader of the House to be frivolous in a matter such as this. What more can I say on this? Who would be paying this \$2 million? I am sorry the Minister of Communications is not in his seat. This ransom note that the terrorists are demanding, is it meant to be a personal cheque from the Prime Minister? Is it meant to be raised upon the five estates that the Minister of Communications and Works is walking about and saying the Prime Minister owns, or is it meant to be a charge upon the Government? That is why I am sorry he is not in his seat.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would ask the hon. member to refrain from accusing other Ministers.

Mr. ADAMS: I am not accusing him. I believe that if you can own five estates with the Prime Minister's salary, his financial acumen should be as much admired as that of the Hon. Minister of Housing. Hon. members would be familiar with the Minister of Housing's position. All these things should be canvassed by the Leader of the House, and I am hoping for a comprehensive statement on it from him before we go home.
7.45 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: If there are no other hon. members ready or willing to speak at this stage I could probably make my short statement, and it is to this effect. This is serious business. All that appeared in the *Democrat* as far as I know — I am not in a position to say whether it is true or not, because in the first place I have not had an opportunity of discussing all the matters with the Prime Minister who only returned here last night. Certain matters are not true, but I am not in a position to say if all are true. I take it that all are true in that we make true statements in the *Democrat*. The *Democrat* gives a true and honest representation of facts.

The second point is that even if I am aware of all the various statements or some of the statements contained therein, I am not in a position to release anything that has not been given permission by Cabinet, to make a disclosure of any Cabinet secret or any security matter which is a matter of great security and falls under Security and Defence. One is sworn as a Minister and one is sworn as Acting Prime Minister, so if you are trying to place me in a trap of becoming incarcerated I am not falling into that trap.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, I consider it can be a security matter, therefore the Leader

of the House may not wish to tell us what information he has on the matter in St. Croix, but since it has appeared in the Press he must tell us surely whether or not it was true that the Government has received a ransom note demanding \$2 million and whether it was a fact that a dozen secret agents guarded the Prime Minister 24 hours a day. That could never be a Cabinet secret, so he must tell us whether it is true.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: How could I be in a position to disclose what happened to the Prime Minister in Washington or in London or in Israel? I was not there with him and I am not aware of what happened out there and I have not had an opportunity of discussing anything with him.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the House likes to tell us as it is, but sometimes he gets himself into very difficult positions. He said that some of the things reported in the *Democrat* are true, others he does not know of as yet and he cannot tell us that which is true because the Cabinet has not taken a decision. He also said that the *Democrat* is the only paper which tells the truth and gives the full facts as they are. Let him tell us or the country now how the *Democrat* got it and nobody else; is he admitting to this House that there is a leak in the Cabinet? Is the Editor or those connected with the *Democrat* in possession of information which is secret to the Government and the Cabinet which cannot be revealed to this House but can be revealed to the Government Printing Office? This is a twofold position which I cannot accept, because he is saying he cannot disclose it, but we want him to get incarcerated by the Cabinet for disclosing secrets.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member has made a speech.

Mr. ADAMS: The Minister says he cannot tell the House which is true because the Cabinet has not made a decision, will he therefore have a Commission of Enquiry set up to investigate this matter? Somebody must have leaked it to the *Democrat*, he can take the precedent set by the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works and say he has already appointed somebody to investigate it. If the House cannot be told let him give us the assurance that he will have an enquiry into it, and let me remind him it is not only a breach of the Privy Councillors oaths and the Cabinet's oaths, it is a breach of the Official Secrets Act of 1911 and the minimum period of imprisonment is, I believe, 14 years.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: It is for that reason that I am not in a position to disclose any secret and I will not be inveigled by you or anybody else into doing it.

Mr. ADAMS: I am asking him to investigate who leaked it to the *Democrat*, therefore you must have a Commission of Enquiry to investigate who disclosed it to the *Democrat*. If the *Democrat* has true but secret information the Director of Public Prosecutions must know.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is a point of courtesy for the Hon. Minister to reply. (Hon. C. E. TALMA: I have nothing more to say.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister says he can give no further information.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is all good and well for the people out there to laugh, but you must remember that this country depends on sugar and tourism and if the Hon. Leader of the House is going to get up in Parliament and say that some of the reports in that newspaper are true without telling this House what the security arrangements are, how can this be looked at outside of Barbados? Do you realise what could happen?
7.55 p.m.

The next thing you will see is that the tourist season might fall to the ground.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, Sir. The Prime Minister is back in the country, and he is in charge of defence and security. As from last night I am not acting as Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is back and he is in charge of things. If you want any statement of that nature, then you must get it from the Prime Minister. I tried to see if I could find him just now. The appropriate Minister is the person who must give the answers.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think the Leader of the House began by telling us that these are serious matters. (*Asides*)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Just a minute. An hon. member is questioning the Speaker as to what the hon. member is speaking on. I should like to let that member know that I have taken the Chair because they know that I am capable of performing the duties as Speaker. I have read letters from the member for the City, and he has stated who can speak on these two matters. I just want it to be made clear that I am not allowing hon. members to get up as if they were in

Committee. Their names are down and they can speak.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the House began by saying that these are serious matters. If that is so, then it would be well for all of us to learn from the Leader of the House what part of these matters he considers to be serious. There can be no doubt that the report is alarming. I, personally, do not believe anything in the report. In the first place, it is not date-lined. Now, as the hon. member for St. Thomas has stated...

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order. Before I replied I especially asked if anybody else wanted to speak. Nobody else wanted to speak at the time, but the debate still continues!

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point I was making is that if any part of the report is serious, undoubtedly, the Minister would be glad to let hon. members on this side know what he views as serious. As I have said, I do not believe any part of the story, as published, to be true at all. If there are really terrorists at work, I believe that they have heard of the suffering of some 250,000 people in Barbados and they feel that it is about time that the people ought to be relieved of the suffering. That is, of course, if there is any truth in this matter. I do not believe it, but the terrorists may want to relieve the country of its suffering under Prime Minister Errol Barrow.

Now, Sir, as the hon. member for St. Thomas has said, what kind of terrorists operation is this? You do not let your hostage go wild and then send a ransom note. You are asking for a ransom from the Government for what! Even since the Prime Minister has become a Jew, I do not think the Jews would put up \$2 million ransom in case anybody steals the Prime Minister! He has done so much for them; he has made it possible for them to get so much money, but I do not think they would put up \$2 million. I am sure the rest of the population would do nothing of the kind. So far as Barbados is concerned, the Treasury cannot stand \$2 million.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we might be laughing at one or two things in this matter. A report has been published and it must either cause the Prime Minister some concern, or it must cause the public some concern. If the publication of the report has caused the Prime Minister some uneasiness, undoubtedly, the editor of the newspaper has committed a criminal libel on the Prime Minister. On the other hand, if all of this has been done just to create public alarm, to

bring the country into disrepute, it might very well affect our tourist industry as the hon. member for St. Joseph has said. He has definitely created a public mischief. The Prime Minister will either have to come out and defend the editor, or he himself must let us know how he feels, whether he has suffered or has not suffered, as a result of the publication.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we believe that the Leader of the House is in an awkward position, because we know that he knows that it is a big hoax. We know that he knows that one of the reasons surrounding all of this is merely to divert the people's minds from the true issues that are confronting and oppressing people in this country. That has been an old communist technique: when vital issues are before the people; when they are suffering and oppressed, you should have side attractions. This is nothing more than a side attraction.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, public servants have been looking during the past months for salary increases. Many of them have been waiting until the Prime Minister returned from abroad; they have been awaiting until Parliament meets again to hear what is happening. Every time you go up the stairs, public servants want to hear if something is coming their way. This bomb scare, threat notes and a ransom of \$2million and so on are intended to occupy the people's attention if only for a split-moment to give somebody a breathing space to catch up with some situation.

I want the Leader of the House to tell us what he knows. I do not want him to give us any State secret. My view is that there is not State secret involved in this at all. What the Leader of the House is trying to make us believe is a State secret is something that is being said along Nelson Street and the Wharf. It is no longer a secret. I should like to hear him make some comment on what he considers to be serious.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member has already spoken on this matter.
8.05 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all I have to say is that the author, the editor and the publisher of the *Democrat* are a bunch of people who should be banded together and put in a tar barrel, carried out to sea and dumped with some weights on to the barrel, because they have shown total disregard for the existence of the people in this country. I heard the Minister of Home Affairs say tonight

that it is time that the privileged class begin to think about the underprivileged, and it can certainly be shown by an article like this which is a vicious, sinister article, because if you have disturbances in St. Croix, the Bahamas etc. which are predominantly the tourists playground of the West Indies and people who still want to go abroad can find places like Barbados and St. Lucia because of terrorism in those countries, the persons who are responsible for this article have now driven those people out to Europe.

The Leader of the House speaks about this being a serious matter and he has added to the confusion by saying that some of the things are true. He cannot say anything because his Cabinet has not given him the authority to disclose it; but even so he should have here and now disclaimed all knowledge of the *Democrat* and what it has printed. He should have come in here and said straight off the cuff that the *Democrat* was only looking for publicity even if it were true. A thing as serious as this is something which any community would cover up until it knows whether or not such threats are being made. Nobody should say anything about this until the Prime Minister comes back and he is asked; but to come here and say that the *Democrat* is the only newspaper that tells the truth about what is going on and then turn around and say that he cannot...

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, the hon. member is notorious for misquoting people, especially members of this House.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, I am asking the Hon. Minister to withdraw that statement. What he is saying in effect is that I am a liar.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not see that.

Mr. BOLDEN: He said I am notorious for misquoting people.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The word "notorious" means you are notable.

Mr. BOLDEN: He is notorious for not remembering what he said five minutes before and he will get up now and prove my point. Mr. Deputy Speaker, all I am saying is that he will show you how notorious he is. He said that from last night he was no longer Prime Minister. This is the *Democrat* of Friday, September 29, published at a

time when the Leader of the House was holding the position of Prime Minister of this country.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, if the hon. member would read the article he would see it starts off by saying what happened in Israel. I was not in Israel; I do not know what went on in Israel. What sort of absurd nonsense is this? How can I get in here and say whether it is true or not?

Mr. BOLDEN: Do you see how notorious he is for forgetting what he says? He said his Cabinet has not given him authority to say anything, and asked whether we want him to be incarcerated for disclosing Cabinet secrets. He is notorious for forgetting what he said three minutes earlier; and this was published at a time when he headed the Government on September 29, and I still deem it his responsibility for having taken this before the Cabinet as it stood at the time and making a public statement; but he waits until the 2nd or 3rd of the month to come in here and pass the buck to somebody else.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, I did not even know that this was being raised until I heard it read. I heard the Deputy Speaker read it for the first time.

Mr. BOLDEN: I am going to finish by saying that it appears that the Opposition is now the watchdog of the country and we have got to tell the other side what to do, because the Hon. Leader of the House has just said he did not know anything about this problem until we raised it.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, before I get accused of receiving stolen property again, I had better just make it clear that the newspaper to which reference is made is the property of the House. It is one that comes addressed to the Clerk, and if the debate is now over, I will hand it to him for the reference of hon. members with the very sincere hope that nobody will come and fight me for it on its way over.

The question that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 17th October, 1972 at 2.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
8.15 p.m.