THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1971 - 76

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FIRST SESSION OF 1971-76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 19th June, 1973

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.10 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour N. G. A. MAXWELL, LL.B., (Speaker); Hon. C. E. TALMA, C.B.E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., (Econ.), LL.D. (Prime Minister); Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, (Minister of Home Affairs); Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, (Deputy Speaker); Mr. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B.; Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, O.B.E.; 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); Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND; Mr. A. MORRISON; Hon. L. E.

SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ), (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport) and Mr. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Minutes of this Chamber for Tuesday, 29th May, 1973, Thursday, 31st May, 1973 and Tuesday, 5th June, 1973, are before you for confirmation, and unless there are any alterations or corrections, the Minutes will be confirmed.

There being no alterations or corrections, those Minutes are duly confirmed.

I have the honour to inform this Honourable House that I have received from the Accountant General, Accounts and Statements for the months of July and August, 1971.

Mr. CRAIG entered the Chamber and took his seat.

STATEMENT BY Mr. SPEAKER

For the benefit of the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown in particular and of all Honourable Members in general, I must advert to an article appearing on Page 1 of the Advocate News for Saturday, 16th June, 1973, under the caption "Mottley to Raise Refuse, Q.E.H. Issues".

In brief the report stated that the Honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown had written to the Speaker informing him of the Honourable Member's intention to bring up the business of the

administration of the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board on the motion for the adjournment of the House when it sits on Tuesday. The report went on to state that the said Honourable Member wrote the Speaker giving notice of his intention to move the adjournment of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance - the recent resignation of specialists from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

In fact, I had received letters from the Honourable Member on the 15th June, 1973, giving notice of his intention to raise these said matters, among other things, today.

While I will not characterise the disclosure to any section of the Press of the contents of correspondence between any Honourable Member and the Speaker as a breach of privilege of this Honourable House, yet this disclosure is highly improper and to be deplored. It is my ruling a mild contempt of the Speaker's functions.

I am sure that the Honourable Member intended no slight upon the duty of the Speaker in ruling on the propriety or otherwise of such a matter. I am equally sure that this was not an attempt to prejudice me in the exercise of a function which all Honourable Members including the said Honourable Member - have placed in my hands.

As it is, the Honourable Member's attempt to raise matters related to the Q.E.H. as a matter of urgent public importance under Standing Order No. 18 is in my judgment out of order for reasons I will give at the appropriate time. And yet we find this matter appearing in the Press to be discussed in this Honourable Chamber as a foregone conclusion.

All Honourable Members have duties to the general public. This I readily concede. Yet the performance of these duties need never conflict and will never be allowed to conflict either with the privileges of this House or with the duties of the Officer presiding over its deliberations which duties arc held in sacred trust for all Honourable Members.

Hence it would be in keeping with the dignity of Parliament if the contents of communications between all Honourable Members and any presiding officer of this Chamber were not disclosed to the Press until the Presiding Officer has had a chance to deal with them in the proper way as the Rules and Conventions of Parliament dictate and these findings communicated to the Honourable Member in the proper manner.

DOCUMENTS LAID

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance, I am commanded to lay the following-

Report of the Registrar of Trade Unions for the year 1972-73.

Mr. ADAMS entered the Chamber and took his seat.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at St. Judes, St. George, for the purpose of providing a playground for St. Jude's Mixed School.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following-

Resolution to grant the sum of $916,739 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1973-74, Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1973-74, No. 6, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Resolution to grant the sum of $32,000 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1973-74, Part II -Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1973-74, No. 7, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following-

Resolution to grant the sum of $862,500 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1973-74, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1973-74, No. 8, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

I may mention that I have sought Your Honour's leave and the permission of the Leader of the Opposition to deal with this Resolution in all its stages today, and I am hoping that leave will be granted.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The Leader of the House is seeking leave to deal with the last Resolution in all its stages today, and if there is no objection, leave will be granted.

There being no objection, leave is granted.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following-

A Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to narcotic drugs.

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

A Bill to amend the Soil Conservation (Scotland District) Act, 1958.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker I beg to give notice of the following-

A Bill to amend the Commissioners of Probates Act, 1903.

Mr. SPRINGER entered the Chamber and took his seat.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. HINDS:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Resolutions -

WHEREAS the economic level of self-sufficiency of the nation depends in great measure - not solely upon the nation's ability to produce but to a corresponding extent that monies earned be applied intelligently, yet, without compulsory inhibitions;

And Whereas there is growing concern for consumer problems in the nation and seemingly increasing impatience with the gap between actual living conditions and what consumers generally believe to be pragmatically possible;

And Whereas the demand is urgently present that every consumer must be enabled and encouraged - not merely to make intelligent choices and be a skilful buyer, but in the wider sense to broaden his knowledge of managing his personal financial affairs and accepting a wider social and economic responsibility within the nation;

Be It Resolved therefore that this House calls upon Government to take urgent active steps to include and/or improve consumer education on the curricula of our nation's secondary schools and tertiary institutions and at all extension classes and that strictest emphasis be placed on the spread of such education if the consumer is to assist in reducing the high cost of living about which so many quite justifiably complain today. 12.20 p.m.

Whereas school meals, first implemented under the Government's Nutrition Scheme in 1937 as a mid-morning snack of milk and biscuits for the benefit of all children attending primary schools, and later extended to comprehensive schools; and was in 1963 embarked upon as a pilot scheme by Government to provide a hot lunch for 2,700 in six primary schools;

And Whereas the project now involves over 80 schools with approximately 18,000 children participating; but with projections to 1973 - the end of the current 3-year agreement with World Food Programme and the Barbados Government - the number of children participating is expected to reach 34,000;

And Whereas large numbers of children who were fed the meal to advantage in primary schools gain scholarships to the Government grammar schools or bursaries to Government-aided schools where there is no school meals service;

Be It Resolved that this House requests the Government to note that the gaining of a scholarship to a grammer school does not in itself act as a filip in removing the low miserable sub-standard conditions which surrounded some boys or girls between 5 and 11 years of age; that at 114+ and onwards the need for the meals assistance is greater; and

Be It Further Resolved therefore that the provision of the school meal be made available to all Government schools and that an interim scheme for providing a substitute meal be embarked upon immediately without causing any embarrassment to the necessitous cases in the several schools.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER:

Notice of question dealing with the Barbados Fire Service standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Peter.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker to enquire of the appropriate Minister

Is the Minister aware that the Barbados Fire Service is ill-equipped with both appliances and men to combat a situation involving any serious outbreak of fires in this Island?

2. Is the Minister aware that neither one of the five stations is capable of responding to the day-to-day calls with the exception of Seawell, where appliances there are old vehicles, tyres dry rot and blown out, and have been reported on as inadequate?

3. Is the Minister aware that for the greater part of this year and up to 15th June, 1973, the St. James Fire Station which covers St. James, St. Peter, St. Lucy and St. Thomas has been without the use of Water Tender No. 3 which carries 500 gallons, and the station was left with a utility tender which carries no water at all, but is only equipped with a few feet of hose and a portable pump?

4. Is the Minister aware that with there being no fire hydrants at Boscobelle, Gays, Mount, Baltic, Date Tree Hill, Black Bess or Rock Hall, St. Peter; or at Grave Yard, the Risk, Pie Corner or Josey Hill, St. Lucy, a fire call from such areas would have to be answered by an appliance travelling out from the Bridgetown Headquarters?

5. Is the Minister aware that Headquarters at its best is equipped with only three appliances?

6. Is it a fact that the small tender at the St. John Fire Station which carries only 100 gallons of water - and is expected to cover St. John, St. Joseph, St. George, part of St. Thomas and part of St. Philip - has been considered unserviceable and has been recommended for a Board of Survey but is still in use and

has to be relied upon?

7. Is the Minister aware that two of the three water tenders at Headquarters (City) have been reported on as uneconomical units and a source of trouble for fire-fighting?

8. How long ago has Water Tender No. 4 been at the Workshop of the Ministry of Communications & Works and how long has it been "written off"?

9. Is the Minister aware that there are firemen who work 96 hours per week? And, with the shortage of men at all five(5) stations, "lieu days" for Bank-holidays worked are pretty remote and men are often denied the privilege of short-leave?

10. Is the Minister aware the firemen are no longer inclined towards cleaning glass-windows and performing similar duties as are detailed?

11. Will the Minister investigate all matters relating to Barbados Fire Services and take steps to remedy such defects as are evident in the light of the importance of the Service to the national life generally?

Mr. SPEAKER:
Question re groups attached to Government maintained or Government aided schools.

Mr. HINDS:
Mr. Speaker, to enquire of the appropriate Minister

How many Government maintained or Government aided schools have one or more of the following groups attached thereto :-

(a) Cubs or Scouts;

(b) Brownies or Guides;

(c) Animal Defenders and

(d) 4-H Clubs?

How many of each of these groups were affiliated to the Barbados Youth Council during the School year 1971-72?

Mr. SPEAKER:
Question re non attendance of school children.

Mr. HINDS:
To enquire of the appropriate Minister

Is the Minister aware that despite the provision of subsidised school meals at a number of schools and the provision of transportation at a reduced rate to all school children that several children attending primary, all-age and comprehensive schools do not attend school for either the first or last week of each term in each school year?

If the answer to the above is in the affirmative, will the Minister state what steps have been taken by his Ministry to show its concern over such a state of affairs, with a view to remedying same, or what steps Government propose taking in the matter?

Mr. SPEAKER:
Notice of the questions standing in the name of the hon. member for Bridgetown.

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

1. Will the Minister state what is Government's policy in relation to the area of land between the Princess Alice Highway and the sea?

2. Will the Minister take steps to have the area properly landscaped?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Is it a fact that a directive has been given that the technicians in the laboratory and X-ray departments of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who are on call must be called out by the doctor personally otherwise there is no duty on them to attend the hospital?

2. Will the Minister state the reasons for such a directive?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Would the Minister state what is the Government's policy in relation to the working hours of the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force now that the civil servants have been placed on a 40 hour week?

2. If there is no policy at the moment, would the Government state whether it is intended to reduce the official working hours of the members of the Royal Barbados Police Force?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Is the Minister aware that the living accommodation now provide at some police stations for the Station Sergeants is unsuitable and inadequate?

2. Will the Minister state what steps, if any, will be taken to remedy this situation?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Is the Minister aware that the legislation dealing with the Landlord and Tenant Act is in need of being brought up to date?

2. Will the Minister take steps to have this legislation brought up to date?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Will the Minister state whether it is Government's policy to introduce an Alien's Land Holding Act to prevent aliens from purchasing and holding lands in Barbados without a licence?

2. If the answer to 1 above is in the affirmative, will the Minister state when a Bill to to this effect will be introduced in Parliament?

3. If the answer to 1 above is in the negative, will the Minister state the reasons therefor?

12.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Is the Minister aware of the present three tier system of distribution of goods to the consumer in this country?

2. Is the Minister aware that this present system creates hardship on the consumer?

3. Will the Minister state what steps are being taken to remedy this situation and relieve the hardships now experienced by the consumer?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Will the Minister state the number of persons on the staff of the Price Control Commission who carry out day-to-day investigations?

2. Will the Minister state (a) the number of cases brought before the court since the establishment of the Price Control Commission (b) the number of convictions?

3. Will the Minister cause a report of the operation of the Board since its inception until now to be laid in this House?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Will the Government cause a copy of the document known as the "Georgetown Accord" to be laid in this House?

2. Is it the intention of the Government to publish a White Paper on the Treaty setting up the Common External Tariff for the CARIFTA Area, so that the implications of it may be discussed before the Treaty is signed?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Is the Minister aware that recent dumping and burning of refuse at Gun Hill, St. George are causing great inconvenience to the residents of the area therefrom?

2. Is the Minister aware that this fire and smoke are causing damage to the fruit and other trees in the area?

3. Would the Minister state what steps will be taken to remedy this sitution?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

1. Is it a fact that the Minister of Health worked in the Casualty Department recently?

2. Will the Minister state the reason for this?

3. Will the Minister state what steps, if any, are being taken to remedy this situation that necessitated his having to work in the Casualty?

Mr. Speaker, there were three other Questions submitted.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Those Questions are out of order.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I am not aware of that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER:
They were ruled out of order, and reasons were to be given.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I have not received any reasons.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The Questions are out of order. Will you kindly take your seat.

BILLS FOR FIRST READING

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend and consolidate the law relating to narcotic drugs be now read a first time.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:
I beg to second that.

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

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Soil Conservation (Scotland District) Act, 1958, 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.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Commissioners of Probates Act, 1903, 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.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

STATEMENT BY THE HON. MINISTER OF

HEALTH RE ADMINISTRATION OF THE

QUEEN ELIZABETH HOSPITAL

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:
Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would like to make a statement relative to the functioning of the Ministry of Health.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Permission granted.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:
Mr. Speaker, the present Minister of Health assumed office on November 1, 1972, against a background of general dissatisfaction and complaints amongst the people of Barbados relative to the functioning of the Casualty Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. I would like to point out here that one of the consultants reported to have resigned by the Press was at that time in charge of the Casualty Department at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Since November 1, 1972, a number of events have taken place relative to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and these events have definitely improved conditions there. The Minister has had discussions with the Hospital Director, the Matron, the Chief of the Medical Staff, representatives of the consultants and representatives of the various categories of workers employed at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. A plan for the reorganisation of the Casualty was developed and finally approved by the Cabinet. It must be pointed out that the Minister himself was obliged to initiate plans for the reorganisation of the department after the failure of the hospital to put forward any proposals for the operation of the Casualty Department.

Everyone will readily agree that the sore point of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is the Casualty Department; therefore, any Minister with any regard for the legitimate aspirations and the needs of the people of Barbados must be concerned with the quickness with which a solution is brought to bear upon the affairs of the Casualty Department. When we did not get any proposals put forward by responsible people in that institution, then it was left to the Minister himself to put forward proposals. These proposals were referred to the staff of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for their discussion, approval or rejection. After some discussions and the making of modifications, the proposals were accepted by the staff and referred back to the Minister of Health. These proposals were then sent to the Cabinet, and I must point out here that the Cabinet readily agreed to the implementation of the proposals relative to the Casualty Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Neither the Ministry nor the Hospital Director at this stage, can trace any proposals having been put forward by anyone of the consultants at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. These proposals, as approved by the Cabinet, are being implemented. A delay has been occasioned by the absence of cement in the country, and it is expected that when cement becomes available again in adequate supply, these plans will be completed and the reorganisation of the Casualty Department of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital

will then come into operation.

I would like to point out briefly that the proposals for the reorganisation of the Casualty Department at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, approved by the Cabinet and now being implemented, call for a separation of emergency cases from other non-emergency cases which now go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. One of the problems of the Casualty Department has been and still is that a large number of people who only require a general practitioner's service, go to the Casualty Department every day; therefore the Casualty Department has been overburdened and continues to be overburdened. Unless drastic steps are taken to reorganise the Casualty Department, one is likely to find that it remains in its present state failing to give adequate satisfaction either to the public or to the doctors and nurses who work there.

One of the urgent things to be done is to have a clean separation of cases requiring emergency treatment and cases who require general practitioner's services. With the new proposals, there will be trained people who will screen a person visiting the hospital to determine whether he is qualified for emergency treatment. I would like to point out that the conditions under which a person would be considered to meet emergency treatment have already been laid down by the Medical Staff Committee of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. 12.40 p.m.

I would also like to point out that the Casualty would then operate on a 24 hour basis whereas the Outpatients Department, the name which has been given to those people seeking non-emergency treatment, will work from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. As a result of these proposals an increase in the staff of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is necessary and I would like to point out that this matter has already been attended to.

On May 15, the Prime Minister in his capacity as Minister responsible for Establishments, agreed to and approved increase in staff for six additional medical officers at the level of the Registrar and Senior House Officer grade, and already appointments have been made to five of these posts. I do this to indicate that there is no slackness or lethargy on the part either of the Ministry or the hospital to get adequate people to serve the hospital. Since May 15, five appointments have been made to these posts. In addition to this, proposals have been put up and are now being worked out to institute a chronic and convalescence service in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The object of having a chronic and convalescence service is to relieve the undue burden being placed on the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We believe that many people who now go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital go there for one primary reason and it is that the treatment is free, and if the same free treatment qualitatively and quantitatively can be provided in their own locality, many people who now go and spend long periods at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital will no longer be inclined to go there; therefore we have proposals which are now being worked out to institute a chronic and convalescence service to relieve the burden on the Queen Elizabeth

Hospital.

The Minister has put forward a number of proposals relating to the conditions of service of the consultants at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. There have been complaints in the past and still are that the consultants at the hospital are not giving enough of their time to the problems of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and to the non-paying patients who frequent the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

After discussions with the representative of the consultants, the Ministry is in a position to state quite clearly that the consultants have seen a need for new conditions of service and have agreed favourably with the implementation of new conditions of service.

In addition to this the Minister has had discussions with representatives of the Pan American Health Organisation to obtain PAHO assistance to evaluate the present medical service, to pinpoint its faults, areas for development, present needs and future needs, and to indicate the areas in which a National Health Insurance plan may reasonably apply,

A Special Committee was set up to look at the question of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in 1965, the Constitution, the institution of a Hospital Board and related issues and problems. The Committee has reported and the recommendations as put forward by this Committee are being acted upon. This does not exhaust the various actions taken by the Ministry of Health since November 1, 1972, but they certainly indicate that the Ministry has not been inactive or indifferent to the needs of the people of Barbados or to the legitimate requests of the staff of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

There is a lot of speculation going on now in the country prompted by reports which have appeared in the one and only daily newspaper of the country. It is my belief that a canon of good journalism is that facts are checked out before they are published, In a country where there is only one newspaper, I believe that this responsibility takes up or assumes greater proportions than in other countries because the people of this country have to rely on one paper. There is no other paper to give them another view, and if the people of this country are not to have their passions inflamed, if the people of this country are not to be mislead and take inordinate action to get their problems addressed, then this grave responsibility must be assumed and executed by the members of the daily newspaper in this country,

There are presently 28 posts at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital: ten senior consultants, eighteen consultants of which five are now vacant as follows in Casualty one consultant; in Paediatrics one

consultant; Anaesthetics one consultant; one senior consultant; one consultant; Radiology one consultant, making a total of two senior consultants and three consultants, a total of five. The recruitment of a senior consultant in Radiology is at an advanced stage and offers of appointment have been made for the posts of senior consultant and consultant in Anaesthetics. Decisions with respect to the recruitment to the vacant posts in Casualty, in Paediatrics are awaiting the outcome of finalisation of plans for the reorganisation of these services.

During the past four months, there have been three resignations of specialist staff at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital - Senior Consultant in Radiology on 18th February, 1973, Consultant to Casualty on 31st May, 1973 and a Visiting Surgeon part-time on 15th June, 1973. These resignations were publicised in the daily press which on 7th June, 1973, featured an editorial concerning the first and second resignations. The following facts surrounding these events seek to place them in their true perspective. Dr. R. Webster, a Barbadian, had expressed an interest in this post and was brought here from Canada in June, 1972, at Government expense and on the authority of the Public Service Commission, to see at first hand the equipment and facilities which were available in the department of Radiology. He expressed an interest in the post and was duly offered an appointment on 13th July, 1972. He accepted the offer and assumed duty on 13th November, 1972, stating that he would work for a period of about one year and would then review the position. On his assumption of duty, Dr. Webster submitted to the Hospital Director proposals for further development for the department of Radiology involving requirements for additional space, additional staff, medical, technical, nursing, clerical and subordinate and additional furniture and equipment. The proposals represented a considerable financial outlay, not to mention space requirements which are obtainable within the confines of the present hospital structure. It was explained to Dr. Webster that some of the additional equipment which he sought, another X-ray unit, an X-ray film processor, had been included in the 1973-74 Estimates and that the additional space the department needed would become available on resiting the Physiotherapy department in a new building for which provision was made in the 1973-74 Capital Estimates. Notwithstanding some elucidation of the situation, however, Dr. Webster wrote to the Chief Personnel Officer on the 29th December, 1972, forty-seven days after his appointment, tendering his resignation from the post,

I would like to point out here that on receiving a call from Mr. Wesley Hall who requested me to have a talk with Dr. Webster, I sent and called Dr. Webster to hear his side of the story.

During the course of an interview with the Minister on the 3rd January, 1973, Dr. Webster asserted that his decision to leave the hospital was due among other things, to the alleged unco-operative attitude which some of the technical staff of the department displayed towards him. The Minister advised Dr. Webster to remain and assist with the development of the department, but nevertheless, the doctor eventually terminated his appointed on 18th February, 1973. Mr. S. M. Lele was appointed to this post of Consultant Casualty with effect from 2nd February, 1972, on contract for a period of two years. The position was created for the purpose of taking charge of and reorganising the Casualty Department.

According to information supplied by the Hospital Director, the Consultant submitted a plan to the Director in November, 1972, outlining proposals for the physical alterations of the Casualty, and it is understood that these plans form the basis of the drawings which were subsequently prepared by the Ministry's executive engineer and approved by the Minister for improving the services of providing an accident and emergency unit, thereby separating emergency from non-emergency. It should be noted, however, that shortly after the Minister assumed office in November, 1972, he prepared an organisational plan for the Casualty and Out-patients' Department which was submitted to the Hospital Director on llth November, 1972, for comments of the Medical Staff Committee which was subsequently approved in principle by Cabinet on 15th February, 1973.

Pursuant to the Minister's plan, six additional posts of Registrar Senior House Officers for the Casualty were approved on 10th May, 1973, and recruitment of five of these posts have already been effected. Further work on the structural alterations of the Casualty is now well in hand, but this has suffered a set back - unfortunately I am repeating some of what I said already - due to the cement shortage. These alterations when completed, will speed up the patients processing in Casualty. 12.50 p.m.

In these circumstances it is difficult to appreciate the validity of the statement Mr. Lele is alleged to have made to the Press after the termination of his contract 9 months prematurely on 31st May, 1973, that he became convinced that nothing would be done about the problems and so could take it no longer. It is also interesting to note that on the 2nd May, 1973 Mr. Lele submitted a letter to the Chief Medical Officer which contained proposals for the establishment of an orthopaedic service headed by a consultant in which position he was interested,

Dr. H. Bagnall, visiting surgeon, a Canadian nuero-surgeon, visited the island early in 1971 and informed the hospital authorities that he wanted to reside here and practise his speciality in, as he is reported to have told Mr. Leacock, Senior Consultant Surgeon, a less strenuous atmosphere than he was accustomed to in Ottawa. Mr. Leacock's advice was sought on the question of Dr. Bagnall's possible employment at the hospital, and in May, 1972, Mr. Leacock wrote to the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health and expressed the view that the 50 to 100 neuro-surgical cases seen each year at the hospital would not justify the employment of a whole time neuro-surgeon but that the opportunity should be taken to secure Dr. Bagnall's services as a part time visiting surgeon initially. Dr. Bagnall returned in the following year and was appointed as visiting surgeon part-time with effect from 14th July, 1972. Despite the circumstances surrounding his recruitment to the part-time post which had been fully examined and discussed by both the Ministry and the hospital authorities within a few months after his assumption, Dr. Bagnall commenced a compaign in support of his contention that the hospital needed a full fledged neuro-surgical department.

The Minister, after consideration of these facts and in consultation with the Hospital Director, concluded that in the context of the numerous competing demands for the development of the hospital and with the limited available resources, the establishment of a fully fledged orthopaedic service should have priority over the development of neuro-surgery owing to the high incidence of cases requiring orthopaedic care. Eventually Dr. Bagnall was invited to discuss his position with the Permanent Secretary, and on 21st February, 1973 was duly apprised of the Minister's views on the matter.

In his interview with the Press published in the Advocate-News on 15th June 1973, Dr. Bagnall is reported to have stated that the public funds are being wasted since it costs about $1,000 to refer a patient to Jamaica for neuro-surgical treatment which could be provided here. This reference is obviously to the medical aid scheme under which persons in straitened circumstances are assisted financially in seeking medical attention overseas. Dr. Bagnall's assessment of the situation was however completely illogical since the cost of operating a full time neuro-surgical department is estimated to be in the vicinity of $100,000 per annum whereas the financial assistance rendered to cases referred annually to Jamaica under the medical assistance scheme is approximately $15,000.

Dr. Bagnall is also reported to have told the Press that there is a lack of overall policy at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Assuming that the reference intended was to the policy of development, here too it must be pointed out that his contention is without merit. Apart from such recent significant developments as the Intensive Care Unit and the Cobalt Unit of the Radiotheraphy Department, it would have been within Dr. Bagnall's knowledge that the University of the West Indies and the Ministry arc in consultation on plans for the expansion of programmes for the teaching of medical students and for the development of a programme for post graduate medical education both of which will contribute substantially to the overall development of the hospital's services.

I will go a step further. We are to spend $100,000 a year just to service people here, but this does not take into consideration the cost of establishing a neuro-surgical department for the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. The cost is substantial, a rough estimate presented to the Ministry had indicated that the cost would be in the vicinity of $1.5 million. In addition to this the plans submitted by the erstwhile senior radiologist in the hospital called for expenditure of $2 million. I would like to point out here that we are a small country and I do not think I have to impress upon anyone that our resources are limited and that we have to cut our suit to suit the cloth we have. We cannot be compared to Canada, the United States, Australia or Britain It is all right for people to come into Barbados and state that they have been accustomed to using certain equipment in other places and if we want their services then the Government must spend this amount of money to retain their services.

Already there is a lot of concern about the quality and quantity of medical services given to people in

this country. We in the Ministry of Health are convinced that in spite of the large sums being paid there are still large numbers of people in this country who cannot get adequate medical attention, and therefore it is the responsibility of this Government - and I am sure this Government is prepared to fulfil that responsibility - to ensure that people get adequate medical care. We have to evaluate all proposals put up to the Ministry, but what strikes me very strongly is that we seem to be carried away by the fact that when a person from overseas comes here and makes a statement to the Press that person is considered to be speaking the truth and everybody thinks that that person's mouth is a Bible. We well know by now what we need in Barbados, if we do not know then unfortunately something is wrong. We have to decide what we need in this country, we cannot sit back and wait for outsiders to come in and tell us what they think we should have. This is unfortunate. We have a situation here where people, despite the fact that we have been independent for seven years, still continue with the colonial attitudes. We hear a lot being bandied to and fro about the resignations of two foreigners, but yet in this country there has been a time when Barbadians have been forced out of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and nobody has shown any interest nor taken any step to enquire why people like Dr. Waldron, Dr. Carl Massiah and many other names I could mention cannot come back here and work. Why for example the Edghill brothers with good first class, post graduate qualifications and training cannot work at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, why for example Dr. Wilson who worked at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital as a Registrar and applied for the post of Consultant in Casualty was not given it in preference to... (Mr. MOTTLEY:What about Dr. Webster?) I do not know, I was not there at the time, but I am saying that people do not want to investigate and question these things, but when you get some foreigner coming in here and making a statement it is displayed on the front page of a newspaper, and especially at this time, we see that this seems to be an effort or a direct conspiracy to embarrass not only the Minister but the Government; of this country.

I think we should take stock of what is going on in this country. I have every reason to believe that if there are posts in this country and we are going to spend money on people in these posts, that money is better spent on giving the posts to Barbadians. I say openly that it is my belief that Barbadians once they came back here and settle down will have no reason to leave the country and go overseas. 1.00 p.m.

We have reason to believe that this continual recruitment of overseas staff who coine in and go back out has put a burden and a strain on the quality of the service which the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been giving. It is my opinion that it is better at all times, where it is possible, to recruit and retain Barbadians, but the present atmosphere in that institution does not permit many people to remain.

I would like to refer to the position of Dr. Webster who spoke with me in the Ministry of Health for about half an hour telling me of the reasons which led up to his resignation. I am not in a position to state whether what was told to me is true or not, but I would like to give some idea of the problems which some Barbadians encounter when they return to Barbados to offer their services to this country. He pointed out to me that, when he went to the hospital and sought to be introduced to the medical staff, he was turned down bluntly. When he sought to discuss his problems with the Hospital Director and the

medical staff, he was dismissed contemptuously. When he went to his department at nine o'clock in the morning, he found many members of the staff were turning up after nine. He requested them to come in by 8.30 a.m., but they refused to do so. These are matters which will frustrate a person who is not as rigid and as tough as he should be.

I am well aware of the fact that some people feel that I should not be a Minister, but this is entirely a matter for the Hon. Prime Minister. The people who have those feelings do not have any say as to who should be a Minister and who should not be a Minister. There are people who feel that I should not be here and their intention is to create as many problems as possible in order to create the impression that the Minister should be removed. I do not own the Ministry; I do not make my living out of a Ministry; I can make my living elsewhere, but I would like to make it clear that I have a responsibility not only to the Prime Minister and to the Cabinet, but also to the people of this country. I would be failing in my duty if I merely sat down in my department and allowed any type of proposal to be forwarded without scrutinising it to my satisfaction and to present it in a manner that would satisfy the Prime Minister and Cabinet Members.

I must point out here that the proposal for the establishment of a Neuro-Surgical Department came to my attention when I was discussing the Estimates for the Ministry of Health with the Prime Minister earlier this year. When the Prime Minister questioned me about the huge sum of $500,000 which was required to buy equipment for the Neuro-Surgical Department, I was not in a position to answer the Prime Minister. I turned to the Hospital Director and asked him to justify how the amount got there. It was included in the Estimates after the Minister had approved the Estimates. In other words, it was included without the knowledge of the Minister. I asked the Hospital Director to put up the proposal in the correct way, and I should like to state that up to this day no proposal has been submitted by the hospital to indicate the need for a Neuro-Surgical Department. This is very embarassing to the Minister.

When we hear these statements made outside and taken up by people who do not know what is going on at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, then the Minister must feel hurt. I know that I am in a position to help solve the problems at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital because of my knowledge as a doctor and because I am the Minister of Health, and it is right that matters, pertaining to my Ministry should be referred to me for my approval and action. I expect that courtesy if nothing more. Unfortunately, I find that it is the practice I am not given this courtesy. Some people prefer to go out and complain rather than referring certain matters to the Minister for his attention and action.

There is a lot more that can be said about conditions at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, but I do not want to delay the House any longer. I hope that this statement which I have made will clear up some of the doubts now lingering in the minds of certain people in Barbados, and will cause the people of Barbados to sit up and take a close look at some of the things which are going on in this country.

I am very sorry and sad to see the attitude adopted by the one and only Press in this country. I would like to point out that we, as Ministers, are accountable to the people of Barbados. Once in five years we have to go back to them and give an account of ourselves, and if they are not satisfied with our performance they can get rid of us. On the other hand, there are people in Barbados who want to exert power without accountability, but they do not present themselves to the public of Barbados for selection and approval. They seem to think that, after a Government have been elected by the people of this country, they have a right to dictate to the Government and say what should and should not be done, and if the Government do not acquiesce to their demands, then they set about to undermine and obstruct the Government from satisfying the legitimate demands of the people.

I understand that in countries where I have lived, events such as these have forced some of the Governments in those areas to introduce restrictive legislation relative to the Press. I hope that we will never see conditions in Barbados going to such an extent that this will have to be done. It is all right to talk about the freedom of the Press, but I do not want people to think that they can hide behind the term "Freedom of the Press", and then put out all kinds of atrocities and disrespect to the elected Government, members of Parliament, and the people of this country. I think it is high time that people understand this, and I think that the time is now .

Mr. FORDE entered the Chamber and took his seat.

STATEMENT BY THE Rt. HON. E. W. BARROW re THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW. Mr. Speaker, this is a statement on the Establishment Of The Caribbean Community. At the conclusion of the Eighth Conference of Heads of Governments of Commonwealth Caribbean Countries, held in Georgetown, Guyana, in April this year, the Minister of External Affairs signed on behalf of the Government of Barbados, the Georgetown Accord which was adopted at that Conference. (Asides.)

Mr. Speaker, I think that, at this juncture, I should like to draw to your attention that there were many interruptions during the statement which was made by the Hon. Minister of Health, Ministers are entitled to be heard in silence.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is for the Chair to rule on. (Applause.) There must be no applause from either side. Mr. Prime Minister, I will discharge the functions and duties which are reposed in this office to the best of my ability.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:

Mr. Speaker, I am merely bringing to your attention something that happened which I will not tolerate and I hope that Your Honour does not intend to tolerate. I am merely bringing to your attention what I understand is the Standing Order with which I think hon. members should comply. I will not continue with this statement if I am going to be interrupted by Jackalish noises from the other side by illiterate and stupid people.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Unparliamentary language! Withdraw those words.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:

I said by illiterate and stupid people, if there are any in here.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Unparliamentary language! Withdraw those words.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:

I am not going to continue my statement if I am going to be interrupted by illiterate and stupid people. 1.10 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I do not like to bandy words. I am asking the hon. member to withdraw the words "illiterate and stupid".

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:

I will lay my statement because I have no intention. (Mr. SPEAKER rose)

Mr. SPEAKER:
I am asking the hon. member to withdraw the words "illiterate and stupid".

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
I will withdraw the words "illiterate and stupid".

Mr. SPEAKER:
When I am on my feet will the hon. member kindly take his seat? It is quite unnecessary for the public's business to be conducted in this atmosphere. Let the hon. member continue with his statement.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:
On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. For guidance sake, I would like to know when an hon. member should withdraw a statement. If an hon. member uses the word "illiterate" which is in the Oxford Dictionary...

Mr. SPEAKER:
No point of order. Let the hon. member take his seat.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:
I am asking for guidance.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Let the hon. member take his seat. The Speaker is not here to decide on hypothetical questions. Let the Hon. Minister continue his statement.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:
On a point of privilege. (Asides). Look man, I was elected in here like anybody else.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let the hon. member leave the precincts of the House at once for the balance of this day. The hon. member cannot make statements on his feet to this effect. Will the hon. member kindly leave the Chamber at once?

Let the hon. member take his seat.

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS:

I will take my seat if you tell me to do so, but I have done nothing for you to ask me to leave the Chamber.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Under Standing Order No. 40(2) (a) "the Speaker or the Chairman shall order any Member whose conduct is grossly disorderly to withdraw immediately from the House during the remainder of that day's sitting.

(b) If, on any occasion, the Speaker or the Chairman deems that his powers under the previous provisions of this Standing Order are inadequate, he may name the Member, in which event the procedure prescribed in paragraphs 3, 4, 5, and 6 of this Order shall be followed.

(c) The Marshall shall act on such orders as he may receive from the Chair in pursuance of this Standing Order.

3. Whenever a Member has been named by the Speaker or by the Chairman immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair, or of persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House by abusing the Rules of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed by such Member in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the question on a motion being made, no amendment, adjournment or debate being allowed, "That the Member be suspended from the service of the House."

I deem the hon. member's conduct has been grossly disorderly and I therefore name....

Hon. A. DaC. EDWARDS left the Chamber.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW On a point of privilege, I do not see how you can name the hon. member after you have taken other proceedings against him by asking him to leave and improperly not stating the period for which you have asked him to leave. I rose to my feet as a Minister and I am on a point of privilege. I have been elected in here and have been in here for twenty years. You have just come in and I know more about the Rules of this House than anybody else in here.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Will the hon. member withdraw the remark?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
I said I know more about the Rules of this House than anybody else, and I am not withdrawing that statement.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The hon. member made a personal reference to the Chair.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
I have made no personal reference to the Chair. I said I know more about the Rules of this House than anyone else in here. I do not regard that as a personal reference.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Let the hon. member kindly take his seat.

The conduct of the hon. member for St. Andrew being grossly disorderly, I therefore name Arlington DaCosta Edwards.

Mr. ADAMS:
I rise according to Standing Order No.....

Mr. SPEAKER:
Let me confer with the Clerk.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker, I am on a point of privilege and I want to know if they are reserved for the Opposition alone. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The hon. member for St. Andrew has left for the remainder of the day. He will not now be named.

Let the Hon. Minister for Finance continue his statement.

Rt. Hon. E, W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker, I will only continue my statement if I am given the assurance by the Chair that I am going to be heard in silence.

Mr. SPEAKER:
It is entirely out of order and superfluous. The Chair will not give any assurance regarding the carrying out of its duties.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, are you telling me that you have no intention of making hon. members carry out your instructions?

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let the hon. member take his seat. A statement is being read. Let the hon. member continue. All hon. members will observe the Standing Orders.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:

STATEMENT MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON TUESDAY, 19TH JUNE, 1973, ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY

At the conclusion of the Eighth Conference of Heads of Government of Commonwealth Caribbean Countries, held in Georgetown, Guyana, in April this year, the Minister of External Affairs signed on behalf of the Government of Barbados, the Georgetown Accord which was adopted at that Conference.

2. Under that instrument, the Governments of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago undertook to sign and ratify a Community Treaty in order to establish a Caribbean Community and Common Market as between their respective countries with effect from August 1, 1973.

3, The Governments of Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St, Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent undertook to sign and ratify the Treaty so as to become parties thereto on 1st May, 1974, whereas the Governments of Antigua and Montserrat declared their intention to give urgent consideration to joining in the Accord.

4, The establishment of the Caribbean Community will see the achievement of an aspiration that began in December, 1965, at Dickenson Bay, Antigua, when the Governments of Antigua, Barbados and Guyana signed an agreement to establish a Caribbean Free Trade Area. During the two years following this agreement, studies were carried out to see how far the liberalization of trade could be linked with other regional efforts to promote the development of the area. This culminated in crucial decisions being taken at the 1967 Heads of Government Conference in Barbados. That Conference not only endorsed the framework of the Dickenson Bay Agreement, but also accepted a number of positive proposals designed to carry the regional movement beyond the limited strategy of a free trade area.

5. The Heads of Government enumerated areas where a regional effort would be likely to allow greater benefits to accrue to the area. Indeed, these were set out specifically in Annex A to the CARIFTA Agreement, indicating that the regional association was intended to be a dynamic institution. Thus the Annex anticipated a Common External Tariff, a programme for the location of industries in the Less Developed Countries, a regional policy on the granting of incentives to industry, marketing arrangements for an agreed list of agricultural commodities and the establishment of regional sea and air carriers, among other things, 1.20 p.m.

6. The CARIFTA Agreement came into effect on May 1, 1968, and by August 1968 covered the following territories: Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago. In May 1971, Belize (British Honduras) became a member.

7. Successive meetings of the CARIFTA Council of Ministers and of the Heads of Government grappled with the problem of further economic integration and functional cooperation. After five years of in-depth studies, of deliberations and of bargaining, the Seventh Heads of Government Conference of October 1972 took the decisions to establish a Caribbean Community embracing efforts at economic integration, but also including the coordination of foreign policy and the institutionalization of existing areas of functional cooperation.

8. The Caribbean Community will have as its principal organs the Conference of Heads of Government and the Common Market Council. As Institutions of the Community there will be a number of Standing Committees of Ministers. Associate Institutions will also be recognised.

9. An integral feature of the Caribbean Common Market will be the establishment of a Common External Tariff and Common Protective Policy which Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago agreed to adopt with effect from 1st August, 1973, as between themselves. Members of this House are aware that by virtue of some aspects of my recent budgetary proposals, Barbados will already have begun to meet its obligations under the Community Treaty.

10. The Governments, parties to the said Accord, also agreed to establish a Caribbean Investment Corporation, to apply an agreement for the Harmonisation of Fiscal Incentives, and to conclude a Double Taxation Treaty, by the 1st June, 1973. The three relevant instruments have already been signed by the Minister of External Affairs.

11. Another measure provided for is the elaboration of a scheme for the Rationalisation of Agriculture in the Region to be introduced by 1st July, 1973.

12. The Community and Common Market are intended to promote the coordinated development of the Region and to increase intra-regional trade thereby reducing dependence on extra-regional sources. The community will institutionalize the machinery for the many shared services, which already exist and which even the most prosperous of the More Developed Countries could not operate on its own. Moreover, the region as a whole will carry more bargaining weight when confronting third countries, trading groups and international organisations.

13. In order to reap the benefits that the new Community and Common Market offer, Barbadian businessmen - indeed regional businessmen - must undertake a re-examination of the needs of the area and structure their production lines to meet these needs. The Common Market should provide an opportunity for our industrial and agricultural sectors to leap forward. With the necessary determination, the Region's economy can become vibrant within a relatively short period of time.

14. This Government has constantly recognized the desirability of developing closer relationships with the other English-speaking Caribbean territories - not only because of our similar historical, cultural and economic background, but also because of the need to protect our small communities from exploitation by undesirable influences. I need hardly remind honourable members that only two years ago, the Governor-General stated in his Throne Speech -

"My Government will continue to play an active role in the attainment of economic integration in the Commonwealth Caribbean. In particular, no effort will be spared to ensure that satisfactory decisions are reached on such important matters as the harmonization of fiscal incentives, the rationalization of agriculture and the location of industries."

Thus the package contained in the Community Treaty places high priority on the strengthening of the economies of the West Indian territories. Within the framework of this Community and the Common Market lies the opportunity for greater and more rapid economic development for the area.

15. I propose to join with the Heads of Government of Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago and

sign the Community Treaty at Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago on 4th July, 1973, the anniversary of the birth of the late Norman Washington Manley. When the Community Treaty has been ratified in accordance with our constitutional procedure, that Treaty and all other relevant instruments will be laid on the Table in both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, can we ask how soon we can get copies of the statements made by the Prime Minister and by the Minister of Health? Whether or not the statement made by the Minister of Health deals with a matter of urgent public importance, it is certainly a matter which is engaging the attention of many people at this time.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I give the hon. member the assurance that the Clerk will deal with this as usual with expedience.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to state that oral reply to Parliamentary Question No. 62 asked by the hon. member for Christ Church West is now ready.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that reply to Parliamentary Question No. 75 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph is now ready.

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

Mr. SPEAKER:

Will the hon. member for the City refer to his communication to me dated 15th June, 1973?

Mr. MDTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, on 15th June, 1973 I wrote to you in the following terms

June 15, 1973

Hi$ Honour the Speaker, Parliament Buildings, Bridgetown.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 18 of Standing Order of the House of Assembly, I hereby give you notice of my intention to ask for leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance.

The mater I propose to raise is the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with special reference to recent resignations of Specialists therefrom-

In addition to myself the following Members propose to speak: -

W. C. B. Hinds Esq., H. DeB. Forde Esq., C. L. Bolden Esq.

Sincerely,

ELLIOTT D. MDTTLEY, M.P.

Secretary of Parliamentary Labour Party.

Mr. SPEAKER. I rule this out of order for the following main reason. It is not a matter of definite urgent importance within the meaning of the relevant Standing Order, and it is supplemented by the fact that the same hon. member has a letter of the same date giving notice of his intention to raise the self same matter under Standing Order 17(2) which manifestly corroborates my judgement that in the hon. member's own estimation, the matter can be raised under a motion for the adjournment of the House, and obviously therefore it is not a matter of urgent public importance.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I anticipated you with this ruling, Sir. 1.30 p.m

ORDERS OF THE DAY SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 43, 44 and 49 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting, subject to the usual proviso that the Opposition be allowed to deal with any matter that is considered to be of urgent, public importance at the end of Government Business.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

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

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I am asking for leave to deal with Item 1 standing in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister, and it is to move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Agricultural Aids Act, 1905.

Mr. SPEAKER:
If there are no objections, leave will be granted to the Hon. Leader of the House to take charge of the Bill to amend the Agricultural Aids Act in the absence of the Rt. Hon. and Learned Prime Minister. There being no objections, leave is granted.

AGRICULTURAL AIDS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1973

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple Bill which will merely amend the Agricultural Aids Act 1905(2) to provide a higher rate of interest than it is at present. In other words, it is to increase the rate of interest from 6% to 8%. This is the object of this Bill, and I would like to draw to the attention of the House the fact that the Government, in pursuing its policy of diversification of agriculture, has made further decisions in connection with the Agricultural Aids Act, 1905, which will implement Government's policy in so far as agricultural diversification is concerned.

There are many other amendments in relation to the cultivation of cotton and other crops besides sugar and farming in general animal husbandry, poultry, etc., and instructions have already been given so that other amendments will be coming here shortly. It may well be that a new Act may have to be brought down to repeal the old Act. This will take a little time, and the matter is now being looked into very

carefully. In the interim, we want to have this Bill passed in its present form to increase the rate of interest until the new Act is ready.

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

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

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the House, in introducing the Bill, said that it was a very simple Bill to increase the rate of interest charged from 6% to 8%. These words, Mr. Speaker, as simple as they may sound, are going to impose the greatest hardship this country has ever experienced in its agricultural life, and it will be reflected in the livelihood of every man, woman and child including the tourist industry regarding which we, in this House, have been bamboozled by statements relating to the number of people who have entered Barbados prior to the time when the Prime Minister came here with his budgetary proposals and told us that the statements were completely untrue and incorrect.

I am going to outline to this House the problems which the people will have to face by increasing the interest rate by 2%. First of all, we must understand the purpose of the Agricultural Aids Act. Mr. Speaker, it is a method for the working, primarily at this time, of plantations from year to year. It is a question of providing money at a low rate of interest in the hope of encouraging agriculture in this country. I would say that the budgetary proposals for the most recent budget were bad. It was a bad budget. The budget would have been a good one if the foundation had been laid some two or three years ago.

When 1 came to this Chamber in 1970, I said in 1971 that there was no foundation being laid for agriculture in this country, and the time would come when the country would be faced with the problem of providing food for its people. The time has now arrived, and with a budget which adds a levy of $20 a ton on sugar at a time when the country is hit by such things as fire and drought, when you take the agricultural history of this country and look back at the years 1937 to 1940, you will see that our production of sugar has been 70,000 tons less than what it was estimated that we could produce, simply because we could not obtain the quantity of fertilisers we needed. We are going through the same thing now. There was a drought, and it is only by heavy fertilisation of our lands that we can hope to reach the standard of production we desire to reach. In any case, by spending $20 a ton on fertilisers at this time it must increase the cost of production of sugar.

Mr. Speaker, if you add another 2% on operating costs over a given period it will reflect itself in the cost of production of sugar and in the whole system of agriculture. If you look at Government's policy of diversification, you will find that long ago the plantations had to plant l2l/2% of their lands in foodstuff Now, that 12%% has been altered, and I am told it has been altered without consultation with the expert in the Ministry of Agriculture.

You have what is supposed to be a yam industry which was built up based on the fact that we were producing yams, potatoes and other things in an area on land which would be thrown back into cane. Because of the low price of sugar over the last three or four years, you have

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
I have made no personal reference to the Chair. I said I know more about the Rules of this House than anyone else in here. I do not regard that as a personal reference.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Let the hon. member kindly take his seat.

The conduct of the hon. member for St. Andrew being grossly disorderly, I therefore name Arlington DaCosta Edwards.

Mr. ADAMS:
I rise according to Standing Order No.....

Mr. SPEAKER:
Let me confer with the Clerk.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr.Speaker, I am on a point of privilege and want to know if they are reserved for the Opposition alone. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The hon. member for St. Andrew has left for the remainder of the day. He will not now be named.

Let the Hon. Minister for Finance continue his statement.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker, I will only continue my statement if I am given the assurance by the Chair that I am going to be heard in silence.

Mr. SPEAKER:
It is entirely out of order

and superfluous. The Chair will not give any assurance regarding the carrying out of its duties.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:
Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, are you telling me that you have no intention of making hon. members carry out your instructions?

Mr. SPEAKER:
Let the hon. member take his seat. A statement is being read. Let the hon. member continue. All hon. members will observe the Standing Orders.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW:

STATEMENT MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER IN THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON TUESDAY, 19TH JUNE, 1973, ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CARIBBEAN

COMMUNITY

At the conclusion of the Eighth Conference of Heads of Government of Commonwealth Caribbean Countries, held in Georgetown, Guyana, in April this year, the Minister of External Affairs signed on behalf of the Government of Barbados, the Georgetown Accord which was adopted at that Conference.

2. Under that instrument, the Governments of Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago undertook to sign and ratify a Community Treaty in order to establish a Caribbean Community and Common Market as between their respective countries with effect from August 1, 1973.

3. The Governments of Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent undertook to sign and ratify the Treaty so as to become parties thereto on 1st May, 1974, whereas the Governments of Antigua and Montserrat declared their intention to give urgent consideration to joining in the Accord.

4. The establishment of the Caribbean Community will see the achievement of an aspiration that began in December, 1965, -at Dickenson Bay, Antigua, when the Governments of Antigua, Barbados and Guyana signed an agreement to establish a Caribbean Free Trade Area. During the two years following this agreement, studies were carried out to see how far the liberalization of trade could be linked with other regional efforts to promote the development of the area. This culminated in

crucial decisions being taken at the1967 Heads of Government Conference in Barbados. That Conference not only endorsed the framework of the Dickenson Bay Agreement, but also accepted a number of positive proposals designed to carry the regional movement beyond the limited strategy of a free trade area,

5. The Heads of Government enumerated areas where a regional effort would be likely to allpw greater benefits to accrue to the area. Indeed, these were set out specifically in Annex A to the CARIFTA Agreement, indicating that the regional association was intended to be a dynamic institution. Thus the Annex anticipated a Common External Tariff, a programme for the location of industries in the Less Developed Countries, a regional policy on the granting of incentives to industry, marketing arrangements for an agreed list of agricultural commodities and the establishment of regional sea and air carriers, among other things, 1.20 p.m.

6. The CARIFTA Agreement came into effect on May 1, 1968, and by August 1968 covered the following territories: Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago. In May 1971, Belize (British Honduras) became a member.

7. Successive meetings of the CARIFTA Council of Ministers and of the Heads of Government grappled with the problem of further economic integration and functional cooperation. After five years of in-depth studies, of deliberations and of bargaining, the Seventh Heads of Government Conference of October 1972 took the decisions to establish a Caribbean Community embracing efforts at economic integration, but also including the coordination of foreign policy and the institutionalization of existing areas of functional cooperation.

8. The Caribbean Community will have as its principal organs the Conference of Heads of Government and the Common Market Council. As Institutions of the Community there will be a number of Standing Committees of Ministers. Associate Institutions will also be recognised.

9. An integral feature of the Caribbean Common Market will be the establishment of a Common External Tariff and Common Protective Policy which Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago agreed to adopt with effect from 1st August, 1973, as between themselves. Members of this House are aware that by virtue of some aspects of my recent budgetary propooals, Barbados will already have begun to meet its obligations under the Community Treaty.

10. The Governments, parties to the said Accord, also agreed to establish a Caribbean Investment Corporation, to apply an agreement for the Harmonisation of Fiscal Incentives, and to conclude a Double Taxation Treaty, by the 1st June, 1973. The three relevant instruments have already been signed by the Minister of External Affairs.

11. Another measure provided for is the elaboration of a scheme for the Rationalisation of Agriculture in the Region to be introduced by 1st July, 1973.

12. The Community and Common Market are intended to promote the coordinated development of the Region and to increase intra-regional trade thereby reducing dependence on extra-regional sources. The

community will institutionalize the machinery for the many shared services, which already exist and which even the most prosperous of the More Developed Countries could not operate on its own. Moreover, the region as a whole will carry more bargaining weight when confronting third countries, trading groups and international organisations.

13. In order to reap the benefits that the new Community and Common Market offer, Barbadian businessmen - indeed regional businessmen - must undertake a re-examination of the needs of the area and structure their production lines to meet these needs. The Common Market should provide an opportunity for our industrial and agricultural sectors to leap forward. With the necessary determination, the Region's economy can become vibrant within a relatively short period of time.

14. This Government has constantly recognized the desirability of developing closer relationships with the other English-speaking Caribbean territories - not only because of our similar historical, cultural and economic background, but also because of the need to protect our small communities from exploitation by undesirable influences. I need hardly remind honourable members that only two years ago, the Governor-General stated in his Throne Speech -

"My Government will continue to play an active role in the attainment of economic integration in the Commonwealth Caribbean. In

particular, no effort will be spared to ensure that satisfactory decisions are reached on such important matters as the harmonization of fiscal incentives, the rationalization of agriculture and the location of industries."

Thus the package contained in the Community Treaty places high priority on the strengthening of the economies of the West Indian territories. Within the framework of this Community and the Common Market lies the opportunity for greater and more rapid economic development for the area.

15. I propose to join with the Heads of Government of Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago and sign the Community Treaty at Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago on 4th July, 1973, the anniversary of the birth of the late Norman Washington Manley. When the Community Treaty has been ratified in accordance with our constitutional procedure, that Treaty and all other relevant instruments will be laid on the Table in both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, can we ask how soon we can get copies of the statements made by the Prime Minister and by the Minister of Health? Whether or not the statement made by the Minister of Health deals with a matter of urgent public importance, it is certainly a matter which is engaging the attention of many people at this time.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I give the hon. member the assurance that the Clerk will deal with this as usual with expedience.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to state that oral reply to Parliamentary Question No. 62 asked by the hon. member for Christ Church West is now ready.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that reply to Parliamentary Question No. 75 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph is now ready.

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

Mr. SPEAKER:

Will the hon. member for the City refer to his communication to me dated 15th June, 1973?

Mr. MDTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, on 15th June, 1973 I wrote to you in the following terms

June 15, 1973

His Honour the Speaker, Parliament Buildings, Bridgetown.

Dear Sir,

In accordance with the provisions of Standing Order 18 of Standing Order of the House of Assembly, I hereby give you notice of my intention to ask for leave to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance.

The mater I propose to raise is the administration of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital with special reference to recent resignations of Specialists therefrom.

In addition to myself the following Members propose to speak:-

W. C. B. Hinds Esq., H. DeB. Forde Esq., C. L. Bolden Esq.

Sincerely,

ELLIOTT D. MOTTLEY, M.P.

Secretary of Parliamentary Labour Party.

Mr. SPEAKER. I rule this out of order for the following main reason. It is not a matter of definite urgent importance within the meaning of the relevant Standing Order, and it is supplemented by the fact that the same hon. member has a letter of the same date giving notice of his intention to raise the self same matter under Standing Order 17(2) which manifestly corroborates my judgement that in the hon. member's own estimation, the matter can be raised under a motion for the adjournment of the House, and obviously therefore it is not a matter of urgent public importance.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I anticipated you with this ruling, Sir. 1.30 p.m

ORDERS OF THE DAY SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 43, 44 and 49 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting, subject to the usual proviso that the Opposition be allowed to deal with any matter that is considered to be of urgent, public importance at the end of Government Business.

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

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

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I am asking for leave to deal with Item 1 standing in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister, and it is to move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Agricultural Aids Act, 1905.

Mr. SPEAKER:
If there are no objections, leave will be granted to the Hon. Leader of the House to take charge of the Bill to amend the Agricultural Aids Act in the absence of the Rt. Hon. and Learned Prime Minister. There being no objections, leave is granted.

AGRICULTURAL AIDS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 1973

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, this is a very simple Bill which will merely amend the Agricultural Aids Act 1905(2) to provide a higher rate of interest than it is at present. In other words, it is to increase the rate of interest from 6% to 8%. This is the object of this Bill, and I would like to draw to the attention of the House the fact that the Government, in pursuing its policy of diversification of agriculture, has made further decisions in connection with the Agricultural Aids Act, 1905, which will implement Government's policy in so far as agricultural diversification is concerned.

There are many other amendments in relation to the cultivation of cotton and other crops besides sugar and farming in general animal husbandry, poultry, etc., and instructions have already been given so that other amendments will be coming here shortly. It may well be that a new Act may have to be brought down to repeal the old Act. This will take a little time, and the matter is now being looked into very carefully. In the interim, we want to have this Bill passed in its present form to increase the rate of interest until the new Act is ready.

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

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

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the House, in introducing the Bill, said that it was a very simple Bill to increase the rate of interest charged from 6% to 8%. These words, Mr. Speaker, as simple as they may sound, are going to impose the greatest hardship this country has ever experienced in its agricultural life, and it will be reflected in the livelihood of every man, woman and child including the tourist industry regarding which we, in this House, have been bamboozled by statements relating to the number of people who have entered Barbados prior to the time when the Prime Minister came here with his budgetary proposals and told us that the statements were completely untrue and incorrect.

I am going to outline to this House the problems which the people will have to face by increasing the interest rate by 2%. First of all, we must understand the purpose of the Agricultural Aids Act. Mr. Speaker, it is a method for the working, primarily at this time, of plantations from year to year. It is a question of providing money at a low rate of interest in the hope of encouraging agriculture in this country. I would say that the budgetary proposals for the most recent budget were bad. It was a bad budget. The budget would have been a good one if the foundation had been laid some two or three years ago.

When I came to this Chamber in 1970, I said in 1971 that there was no foundation being laid for agriculture in this country, and the time would come when the country would be faced with the problem of providing food for its people. The time has now arrived, and with a budget which adds a levy of $20 a ton on sugar at a time when the country is hit by such things as fire and drought, when you take the agricultural history of this country and look back at the years 1937 to 1940, you will see that our production of sugar has been 70,000 tons less than what it was estimated that we could produce, simply because we could not obtain the quantity of fertilisers we needed. We are going through the same thing now. There was a drought, and it is only by heavy fertilisation of our lands that we can hope to reach the standard of production we desire to reach. In any case, by spending $20 a ton on fertilisers at this time it must increase the cost of production of sugar.

Mr. Speaker, if you add another 2% on operating costs over a given period it will reflect itself in the cost of production of sugar and in the whole system of agriculture. If you look at Government's policy of diversification, you will find that long ago the plantations had to plant 121/2% of their lands in

foodstuff. Now, that 121/2% has been altered, and I am told it has been altered without consultation with the expert in the Ministry of Agriculture.

You have what is supposed to be a yam industry which was built up based on the fact that we were producing yams, potatoes and other things in an area on land which would be thrown back into cane. Because of the low price of sugar over the last three or four years, you have provided an industry where people would be encouraged to plant and sell these commodities, but today things have gone through the window. If you add 2% to your operating costs it will raise the price of the commodity, whether it is yams, potatoes, or sugar cane. The reason for increasing the interest rate by 2% is not due to the fact that the Government is bringing down something new in this Bill. 1.40 p.m.

The answer lies in at least one bank in Broad Street which is reputed to lend some $15 million a year in agricultural aids and the authorities of that Bank have asked why must they continue to lend money in agricultural aids at 6% when the other banks and institutions - I do not want to call names - in Bridgetown are involved in hire purchase goods and make a mark-up of from 16% to 26%.

I recall saying in this Chamber that this Government has got to look at the whole system of lending of money for consumer goods, otherwise we are going to land into trouble. Now this is upon us and this measure is to appease the wrath of the banks in Bridgetown because they want more than 6% on their money. We have come back to the question of whether we are true to our country and whether our nationalism means anything to us, because the banks have been enjoying a privilege in this country for all these years. Banks do not set up in any country unless they are making money. That is a foregone conclusion; so you must then ask yourself who must contribute to the agricultural development of the country. If the banks at this time are going to penalise you with an 8% interest on the very commodity which causes this country to turn over, is it.not showing you, Mr. Speaker, that the banks themselves are only now trying to get as much as anybody else? The Government cannot provide the money necessary for the sugar industry or for the other food crop industries which are necessary. We are at a stage in our development where we must look for some method of getting us over the hump. With the budget which has been introduced, it means that more people have to go into planting of foods, and plantations and small farmers will have to specialise. It is true that we have not got a proper marketing system which is part and parcel of the whole agricultural livelihood.

I remarked in this Chamber before that many people were growing carrots while the Barbados Marketing Corporation was importing carrots, and the plantations and other people were ploughing carrots back into the field. That was part of the money borrowed from the banks at 6% or 8% being ploughed back into the field, money lost, time lost and labour lost. What are we going to do? First of all, I would say that it would not have been necessary to increase the interest from 6% to 8% if the Government had long ago taken note of the spending in consumer goods in this country, because the

volume would not have risen to a point where the other people are now saying they want to get this percentage as well. If the Government had controlled the amount of money which could be spent in consumer goods, I am satisfied that the banks would not now be forcing us for 8% interest. I have called for in this Chamber already what is similar to the English Board of Trade. I have asked the Leader of the House to bring down an amendment to the Hire Purchase Act. One was brought to this Chamber and was withdrawn and never came back. If we have such a Bill and if we have regulations from the Government which can control the volume of consumer spending, the banks will be forced to lend their money for other profitable things such as agriculture, which would in fact enhance our entire community.

Another thing that is involved here is the burning of sugar cane. If you look at the 2%, you will see that it is bound up, because if you increase the cost of production, there is a system which says that the only way you can get over that is by your volume of production, but what are you faced with? (a) The industry has been going through a crisis for about five years in which we are faced with the question of burning of sugar canes. What did the industry do? It fought on a two-fold position. It imported labour to reap the canes although many people may disagree with me and say that with the importation of labour the Government took a wrong step. They were forced into a wrong position of allowing the burning of sugar cane, or as they call it, controlled burning, but what has this done? It has destroyed the soil structure of this country and there is no department of Government as yet which can tell you what are the biological or chemical changes of the soil as a result of burning for five or six consecutive years. (b) It has resulted in the loss of at least five tons per acre of sugar cane being reaped. Once you give people the right to burn sugar canes, it is difficult to catch or convict anybody who burns canes illegally. On top of that, the .producers were faced with getting two machines, one called a Don Mizzi and the other called a McConnell. What has happened here is that you have one indiscriminate person walking around trying to tell people that it is better for a man to walk behind a machine that cuts burn canes without thinking of the consequences. I relate this to the man who saw a golden egg and killed the goose to get it. Our agriculture is at a stage where we are going through a period of trial and error. With one machine you have to leave a space of twenty feet for the machine to operate and I give this story to show you, Mr. Speaker, that if you increase the cost of money for operations, then you are forced to cut down on the areas available for planting; then you are hit with not only fires but a drought ; then you are hit with a $20 a ton levy on sugar cane. We must ask ourselves where we are going to end up. That is the problem with which we are faced, and I do not think the Government should come to the House and tell us that they are bringing down a new Agricultural Aids Act which will include cotton and all other commodities.

I said in this Chamber that the Government had cut off the subsidy to agriculture this year. If you followed the Estimates carefully and analysed them, you would have seen that the sum provided in the Estimates related to a period of last year for subsidies, but there was none for this year, and if you are going to put the squeeze on agriculture, the budget calls for the massive production of foodstuffs in this country, and when I charged in this country that hotels like Sandy Lane and the Hilton who were holding cold storage space were bringing in all of their food from outside to the detriment and not to the enhancement of the community, people did not believe it. I say again now that I do not give this country

six months before there is a terrible calamity starting with the production and obtaining of food. If the Government had taken note earlier and given the farmers the encouragement they needed, if the Ministry of Trade had been operating with the interest of the country at heart and not on the advice of a few expatriates who believe they can suck this country and then run, we would not be faced as we are today.

Mr. Speaker, look in the newspapers today and you will see that here we are with a budget which, as the Prime Minister says, will bring together the Caribbean and will cause us to produce locally, but we see they are still bringing in whole chickens from outside. Ask the hotels how much of their food do they buy locally and they will tell you very little. That is the effect of bad planning where the ground work should have been laid three or four years ago. You cannot go into it now because you have not got the rainfall.

We heard so much, Mr. Speaker, in this Chamber of the Government giving a subsidy for irrigation. How many pumps have been put down in the last two years? What is the production of food over the last three years? The answer is very little, because as the Minister of Agriculture rightly said, in order to encourage farmers to produce, they must be assured of a market first and he must be assured of a proper return befitting his labour. How can you produce when the Government has not provided the proper marketing facilities, or if they are there they are not being used for the purpose for which they were set up? How can you produce when you cannot get rid of your produce at a profitable price? 1.50 p.m.

We are now faced with the 2%. This 2% is not simply because we are bringing down a new Act, that does not hold good, the 2% is because the banks want more money on their interest but the banks have taken care of that. Early last year the banks sent letters to farmers who had borrowed money from them telling them that if the sums borrowed in the respective years were not paid in by the end of October in each year, they will be transferred to a regular overdraft account bearing interest between 9/4% and 101/4%. I say the Government should be bold enough to tell the banks that if they have any interest in this country, especially at a time when we are faced in the industry with decision making and we do not know how we are going to come out, at a period of time when the Caribbean cannot meet its sugar commitments, when the plantations cannot lay off labour, when we are trying to industrialise and mechanise the industry, they should hold strain on their 8% and let the industry catch its feet. If the Government had guts it would tell the banks before they get an extra 2% that they should make those people involved in sugar provided the necessary training facilities and pay proper wages to the workmen in order that the country as a whole will benefit, because any increases to workmen must result in the increased circulation of money in the country. To put 2% on money at this time is adding a burden. You have already added $20 a ton on fertiliser, and these are the problems people face, because this year several of the plantations cannot pay back the money they have borrowed.

There is a problem where the plantation owners have planted one variety of cane which was

recommended to them, people have estimated they will have 40 tons an acre but they come out at 26 and 28 tons an acre from first crop canes. That in itself is a loss, and I am wondering whether the Government is being advised correctly on what is happening in the industry. If the Government is being advised, are we being led by the banks? I know the Prime Minister stated in his budgetary proposals that the banks are the net importers of income, $31 millian, but they have been operating for a long time, they are not going to close down tomorrow and they will enjoy the benefits. I think the Government should have looked carefully at the 2% interest.

Mr. Speaker, let us also look at it in the light that it is only equitable for the banks to assist the country at this time. What is happening to our National Insurance Fund? These funds are being placed in the banks and lent out by the banks at 121/4% interest. Why can they not balance what they get on one hand against what they are losing on the other hand? Because in the long term there is no question of loss, Sugar is at its premium price in the world today and will be for the next two years, and any sugar which is sold will bring more money into this country. I would not like to refer to the windfall issue we had some years ago, but even if it came in by way of a windfall the banks will benefit, and that is why I say the Government should look at this.

There is another problem, Mr. Speaker, where we have just had a Land Tax Bill. The land tax has put added taxation on land, which means that anybody involved in agriculture must recover a little bit more. You cannot put in any more produce in a given area, you can put in more time, so therefore you have to set off all these things. I will move that the rate be 7% and not 8% if you want an increase, but over and above that the Government should say no to the banks. The banks are already planning that from the moment it is passed the interest is going up to 8%. The two are inconsistent, you cannot have a budget which calls for an increase in agricultural activity in the country, you cannot have a levy oh fertilisers and you cannot have an increase in the borrowing of money, nor can you have an increase in taxation. You cannot stimulate the industry, you cannot get on with a diversification programme like this. The Leader of the House says they will bring a new Bill, but there are several problems still. It has been proven that because of our system of agriculture we can only grow vegetables and other food crops for a maximum of three years. You must go back to sugar cane whether you are a peasant farmer or plantation farmer, and this is because we have a high wind factor to contend with, we still think that the blackbird arid the sparrow are good things to have around when they are the biggest enemies of the diversification programme in this country, we have a perennial grass problem because we are in a climate where we have sunshine and rain for twelve months in a year. In the United States and other countries they have frost and snow to help the soil.

There is yet another problem. Mr. Speaker. There is still a duty placed on weedicides coming into this country, and this is a problem we have to face nowadays. The next point is that the Government has given people to understand - and they have not said anything to contradict this - that agriculture is infra dig, but throughout the world the peasant farmer is a glorified man in his own right, and when you have these problems to face at this time, if the Government is really honest in telling you that the budget is

designed to stimulate agriculture in this country, I cannot see how they can tell you they want 2% interest. That cannot be the answer. A year ago we called in this House for a negative list when the Government came down with the Bill to ban certain things coming into this country. We said we would vote for it and give the Minister the right to put on the negative list at any given time a commodity which we could produce in this country, but they did not do it. They did it with motor cars, the registration of taxis and the registration of minibuses but they did not do it with food. Three years later you come with a budget that now calls for the introduction of more food crops into this country when the farmer up to today cannot be assured of a profitable market, because you have a Ministry of Trade which appears not to be cooperating with the other agencies in this country, 2.00 p.m.

Where are we going? What must I tell a farmer tomorrow when he asks me what is the reason for raising the rate of interest at the bank? It is known that some people are trying as fast as possible to get rid of their agricultural land. The Government should be bold enough to reconsider the matter of raising the rate of interest to 8%. The position is that the Sugar Industry Bank, which also lends money to farmers, will find itself flooded when people go to the Commercial Banks because of their policy. You cannot help agriculture in this way. This is a way of burying agriculture even further. We will soon find ourselves as an importing nation of foodstuffs. I think our importation bill is something like $46 million.

Sir, I have asked the Government in this Chamber to centralise the borrowing agencies for agriculture in one department where we can obtain money for irrigation, cultivation, fencing, and so on, under one roof. Since 1970 I have been asking for that to be done, and it is now 1973 and nothing has been done in the matter. If these things were under one roof and the Government were getting proper advice, then they would have foreseen the difficulty this country is now facing. People are now telling you that if we do not have about three or four inches of rain by the end of this year we will not have a good sugar crop next year. We will also have to fertilise heavily in order to improve our crops, but we are now talking about increasing the cost of production.

Sir, with the recent Land Tax Bill and the other penalties applied to agriculture, then I would have to say that this is unfair legislation and it is not going to help the country. Mr. Speaker, we on this side are so convinced of the priority of our charges that we shall divide the House on every issue on this matter today.

The question that the Bill be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

AYES:

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. LOWE; Mr. WALCOTT; Mr. SPRINGER; Mr. GREAVES; Mrs. EASTMOND; Mr. HOPPIN; Mr. MORRISON; Hon. F. G. SMITH and Mr. WEEKES - 14.

NOES:
Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN, and Mr. FORDE - 6.

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

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

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

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 1 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the Committee dividing as follows:

AYES:

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. WALCOTT; Mr. SPRINGER; Mr. GREAVES; Mrs. EASTMOND; Mr. HOPPIN; Mr. MORRISON; Hon. F. G. SMITH, and Mr. WEEKES - 13.

NOES:
Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN, and Mr. FORDE - 6.

Clause 2 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part.

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

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, Clause 2 deals with substituting the figure "8" for the words "six pounds". If you will look at the Clause carefully, you will see the position. (Asides). Mr. Chairman, they do not want to hear the truth. They have the people's money in the Savings Bank and they are giving them 4% interest. 2.10 p.m.

Ask Barclays Bank how much money they are holding of people's savings at 4%. The banks in Bridgetown have people's savings and they pay 4%. It is the Bajans' money they are lending back to Bajans.

I beg to move that the figure "8" be deleted and the figure "6" be substituted therefor.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I beg to second that.

The question that the figure "8" be deleted and the figure "6" substituted, was put and resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:

NOES:

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon G. G. FERGUSSON; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. WEEKES, Hon. F. G. SMITH; Mr. MORRISON; Mr. HOPPIN; Mrs. EASTMOND; Mr. GREAVES; Mr. SPRINGER and Mr. WALCOTT - 13.

AYES:

Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN and Mr FORDE; - 6

The question that Clause 2 stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

AYES:

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. WEEKES; Hon. F. G. SMITH; Mr. MORRISON; Mr. HOPPIN; Mrs. EASTMOND; Mr. GREAVES; Mr. SPRINGER and Mr. WALCOTT - 13.

NOES Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN and Mr. FORDE - 6.

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:-

AYES:

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. C. E. TALMA; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. WEEKES; Hon. F. G. SMITH; Mr. MORRISON; Mr. HOPPIN; Mrs. EASTMOND; Mr. GREAVES; Mr. SPRINGER; Mr. WALCOTT and Mr. LOWE - 13.

NOES:

Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN and Mr. FORDE - 6. 2.20 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill do now pass and be cited as the Agricultural Aids (Amendment) Act, 1973.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmativet the House dividing as follows:

AYES:

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, Hon. C. E. TALMA, Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, Hon. P. G. MORGAN, Hon. F. G. SMITH, Mr. WEEKES, Mr. MORRISON, Mr. HOPPIN, Mrs. EASTMOND, Mr. GREAVES, Mr. SPRINGER, Mr. WALCOTT and Mr. LOWE -14,

NOES:

Mr. ADAMS, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. MOTTLEY, Mr. HINDS, Mr. BOLDEN and Mr. FORDE - 6.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be now suspended for one hour.

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

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

On resumption:-

Mr. SPEAKER:
The sitting is now resumed. Question Time will now be taken.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER:
Question No. 62 standing in the name of the hon. member for Christ Church West.

Mr. FORDE Mr. Speaker, to enquire of the appropriate Minister:-

1. Is the Minister aware that all the avenues in Harts Gap in Christ Church are in need of repairs? 2. Will the Minister state on what date, if at all, it is intended to commence such repairs? 3. Is the Minister

aware that September Square in particular is in a very bad state of disrepair? Will the Minister state if, at all, and, if so, when it is proposed to carry but repairs to the roads in this area?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:
Mr. Speaker, the answer to that question is as follows

Repairs to some of the road surfaces of the avenues in Harts Gap were necessary and these have been given attention. A drainage problem is however presented by the low lying nature of the area.

Repairs to September Square are also necessary, but the condition of this Road is largely affected by faulty drainage. Consideration will be given to including this road in the road programme as early as possible. In the meantime a solution to the drainage problem is under study, and the drainage report has just been presented to the Ministry.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Question No. 75 standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Speaker, to enquire of the appropriate Minister-

In view of the number of fires which have occurred in Bridgetown in recent years causing serious loss of property and lives, would the Minister please state as follows:- (1) What steps are being taken by Government to combat and prevent these fires? (2) Would the Government institute legislation requiring the Government Electrical Officer to carry out electrical inspection of all houses in the Bridgetown area, with power to order the disconnection of electrical supply where necessary.

Hon. G, G. FERGUSSON:
Mr. Speaker, the reply is as follows

The three tugs operated by the Port Department have been specifically equipped to assist in fighting

any major fires which may occur in Bridgetown. Legislation which will make it obligatory for electricians and wiremen to be licensed is being drafted and will shortly be introduced into Parliament.

It is also proposed to increase the staff of the Electrical Inspection Department to permit periodic inspections of electrical fittings and apparatus at any premises.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would tell us what provisions are made for electrical inspectors to inspect premises now which they suspect of having defective wiring.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

At the moment there is no provision as such for the immediate inspection of buildings which they suspect, provision is being made, as the Minister says, for periodic and compulsory inspections, but at the moment there are no means whereby they can go in and inspect if they suspect defective wiring.

Mr. CRAIG:

I wonder if the Minister would be able to state how soon he envisages this legislation to come before Parliament. What part of this year?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

It is difficult to answer that question. As soon as possible depends on the speed with which the Attorney General, with his numerous tasks for other Ministries, can get the drafting done.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware that with the shortage of staff the Government Electrical Department is not equipped for carrying out these periodic inspections?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

The Electrical Department has been suffering because we cannot get an electrical inspector. The present engineer is a retired man and is only holding on. I agree that it is not equipped, but the whole. department is being reorganised in this regard. We expect to get a young Barbadian Electrical Engineer to understudy the present engineer, and we hope to improve the service.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will remember, part of the reply to the question is that it is also proposed to increase the staff of the Electrical Inspection Department to permit periodic inspections of electrical fittings and apparatus on any premises.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can tell us how long this staff shortage has been drawn to the attention of the Government?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Quite some time, but we have been having a public relations and a personal relations problem in the Ministry. The moment you have to rely on retired people to carry out this work, you get problems.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, would the Minister tell us what is the number of the personnel they propose to add to this department?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

It depends on the number of requests for inspections and I could give you an answer to that question now. What we ask for does not necessarily mean that the Chief Establishments Officer will grant us.

Mr. FORDE:

Will the Minister state what concrete steps he has made for training people in this particular field and at higher levels of training?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Again the hon. member will know that the question of training and equipping is a matter purely for the Public Service Commission and the Chief Training Officer, and they both fall under the portfolio of the Prime Minister. 3.30 p.m

Mr. FORDE:

Is the Minister aware that there is correlation between the Ministries? Will the Minister tell us what plans his Ministry have submitted?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I know that my Ministry has been pressuring the Personnel Department and the Training Department to try to get Barbadians to staff the Ministry, but beyond that my hands are tied.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Will the Minister state whether Light & Power have submitted a repor to the Government in respect of the present state of wiring and electrical fittings in the Bridgetown area?

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is not a proper supplementary. Question Time has now ended.

RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, we will now revert to Government Business.

I beg to move that Government Business be now resumed.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, we would not be very long when we reach Private Members' Business. We have had experience that, in fact, Government Business become long and drawn out and we cannot get throught

the little bit of Private Members' Business, whatever it may be, or even a large amount of Private Members' Business. Now, I know that one or two hon. members have views on some of the matters which are coming before the House. I would urge the Government, at this stage, to do Private Members' Business instead of Government Business. You can set the usual time for it and have it done.

I see that there is a Resolution moved by the hon. member for St. Lucy, and I do not know if he wants to go ahead with it. There are two or three items standing in my name, questions to which will have to be answered, and I know that the hon. member for Christ Church West wishes to deal with No. 3. I see the hon. member for St. Michael West in his seat, and he may continue to speak until such time as is provided in the Standing Orders. I would seriously urge on the Government that now is the best time for Private Members' Business.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I have made a motion that Government Business be now resumed. We have given an assurance that we will remain here to deal with whatever matters the Opposition want to deal with after we have concluded Government Business. That is the reason why I suspended the Standing Orders, and an assurance was given to that effect.

Mr. CRAIG:

Mr. Speaker, you know that some of the members on the other side can safely walk out after they have finished Government Business and leave us without a quorum. We cannot depend on the Government to form a quorum for us, We are asking the Leader of the House to give us full time to do Private Members' Business, and we are looking forward to his assistance in the future.

There is a Resolution here which the hon. member for Christ Church West has on the Order Paper and he wishes to finish it. We are appealing to the Government not to use their numbers. Might is not always right.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I must warn the hon. member for St. James that he is out of order.

Hon. F. G. SMITH. Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the House has given an assurance that we will stay here and allow you to deal with their matters. Now, 8 members and the Speaker form a quorum. The Leader of the House is an honourable man and I will stay with him once he has given that

undertaking to form a quorum. You will have to accept that.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I was under the impression that when the Standing Orders were suspended the question of Private Members' Business would be dealt with in the normal course of events. Formerly, Private Members' Business was taken after Question Time. This has normally been the practice, and I see no reason for changing the procedure. Unless the Leader of the House has something special to discuss, then I see no reason why we should not follow the normal procedure. Whenever he rises and gives an undertaking that Private Members' Business will be done, it is accepted that it will be done at the time immediately after Question Time.

The question that Government Business be now resumed was put and resolved in the affirmative the House dividing as follows:-

AYES:

Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G FERGUSSON; Dr, the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. F. G. SMITH; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. LOWE; Mr. WALCOTT; Mrs. EASTMOND; Mr. HOPPIN; Mr. MORRISON, and Mr. WEEKES -12.

NOES:

Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN, and Mr. FORDE - 6. (Asides)

Mr. SPEAKER:

For the first time for the hon. member for St, Joseph; for the first time for the hon. member for St. Michael West, members are allowed to converse sotto voce!

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, the next Item under Government Business stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance. I am asking for leave to deal with this matter in the absence of the Hon. Minister,

Mr. SPEAKER:
if there are no objections, leave will be granted. There being no objections leave is granted.

RESOLUTION AUTHORISING THE BORROWING OF TEN MILLION DOLLARS BY THE ISSUE OF THE TREASURY BILLS, ETC

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the passing of a Resolution to authorise the borrowing by the issue of Treasury Bills of sums not exceeding $10,000,000 and such sums as may be required to pay off at maturity Bills already issued and outstanding. 3.40 p.m.

This Resolution speaks for itself. The Addendum sets out that this Resolution seeks authority to increase the amounts which may be borrowed by the issue of Treasury Bills by a further sum of ten million dollars. The total amount which is proposed should be outstanding against the issue of such bills in the Island will be twenty-five million dollars.

The custom has been to issue Treasury Bills from time to time and for the last few years it has been the custom to finance the variation in receipt of revenue by the issue of Treasury Bills authorised by the Treasury Bills (Local) Act, 1922, (1922-6), and by Resolution No. 32 of 1969, dated 21st March, 1969, the aggregate amount which may be borrowed by the issue of Treasury Bills is fixed at $15 million.

Mr. Speaker, the regular monthly issue of Bills is $4 million for a 91 day period, a total of $12 million being available on regular issue, with a further $3 million available for special issue. The position at 21st May, 1973, was that $3,326,000 had been taken up by the regular issue and special issue had been made of $4,537,500. The balance available for the issue at the present time is therefore $7,136,500. Now the Ministry of Finance in collaboration with the Minister of Tourism, Information and Public Relations in an effort to publicise the opportunities for investment in Treasury Bills and other Government Securities, has contemplated that at least $12 million should always be available for regular issue by public invitation to tender, and a similar amount provided for special issue. It is desirable that Government endeavour to attract some of the fixed deposits of the National Insurance Board for use as temporary borrowing for Treasury short fall and to give effect to this it will be necessary to increase the aggregate amount which can be borrowed by Treasury Bills from $15 million to $25 million.

At present the National Insurance Board is authorised under Section 33 of the National Insurance and Social Security Act, 1966 (1966-15) to invest in securities which are for the time being authorised by law as investments for funds of the Government Savings Bank, and in this connection and in consequence thereof, the Board has from time to time on the advice of the Ministry of Finance invested in Barbados Government Debentures and in Treasury Bills. On 30th April, 1973, the National Insurance Board's investments in short term Treasury Bills amounted to $1,447,500, but the Board's fixed deposits in commercial banks at that time amounted to $21,650,000.

I Hon. Members may want to get a

I breakdown of how the money is deposited. At Barclays Bank, Broad Street, $7,850,000; Barclays Bank, Hincks Street, $2,500,000; Bank of Nova Scotia, $1 million; Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, $1,550,000; Royal Bank of Canada, $750,000; Bank of America $850,000; First National City Bank $6,700,000; Chase Manhattan Bank $500,000, making a total of $21,650,000. Of this amount, Sir, $2 million is held in fixed deposits for periods in excess of one year, and the balance of $19,650 in fixed deposits for one year at rates of interest varying from 71/2% to 8%.

The position is that the Treasury's fluctuating overdraft has dictated that it would be more beneficial for the National Insurance Board to invest more of their funds in Treasury Bills, so that it is proposed that $6 million in special issue of Treasury Bills which would be due on 19th May, 1973, and a further sum of $4 million out of the proceeds of its funds presently held at fixed deposits in commercial banks be invested along these lines. That briefly is the position. In other words, the Government will be making better and fuller utilisation of the funds belonging to the National Insurance Board and having to pay a lower rate of interest than as at present in continuing to borrow from commercial banks whenever they fall short and whenever it is necessary in having more of the National Insurance Funds at the disposal of the Treasury by the issue of Treasury Bills.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. ADAMS:
Mr. Speaker, the minister of Finance has seen fit to take his leave of the House of Assembly when a

matter of the importance of an increase of the Treasury Bills issue is before the House. Here is the shepherd who left his sheep, and what sheep! Not even the Under Minister of Finance to look after the financial business of the Island. I have had the duty of reading the Budget Statement and the pleasure of reading the reply in the last few days. I look at the Budget Statement and I see for the first time in, I could not tell you how many years - I have not had the chance to research it - there was actually a deficit on current account. I look at the measure now before Parliament and I heard what the Leader of the House has said, how he has sought to wrap up the true facts behind the facade of the improvement of the finances of the investments of the National Insurance Fund.

Now some time ago it was urged on me that I should make a flat statement that there was no money in the Treasury in certain respects. Upon that occasion I did not think that the statement was entirely justified. Upon this occasion we have the Leader of the House himself to tell us that in May and June, a period when normally in Barbados the Treasury is full of money, because income tax payments by companies have been made, when receipts are up, we have the word of the Leader of the House that the Treasury is fluctuating on overdrafts and very expensive overdrafts at that.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the public debt of Barbados is charged at a very high rate. Overall on the public debt we are paying over 9% getting on to 10% of the amount of the debt for the cost of servicing it. 3.50 p.m.

The Budget statement contained the words that expansion of the public debt may be thought desirable, or some form of words to that effect, and this is no doubt the first instalment of it, but that is the official picture, that is the picture as put by the Prime Minister. That is the picture as put by the Minister of Finance who many people all over Barbados, even in the short time available to me since my return, have emphasised to me that he seems to lose the entire grip, if he ever had any grip, on the financial situation in this country, The financial situation in this country is not slight, it is not easy. Before I went away I remember asking the Research Committee of our party to make careful research of the cost of living figures of all the West Indian Islands and compare them to Barbados! and today I have been shown by the hon. member for Bridgetown a comparative figure proving and showing that no matter what the Prime Minister says about Barbados having to import its food and its products and therefore the cost of living is going to be high, that we have done much less well than other West Indian territories which also have to import their food. Just let me quote from the Quarterly Newsletter of the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute:

"It is noticeable that on comparative food prices Barbados is consistently higher on most items." When you go down the list you will find that the cost of living in Barbados, the cost of food consistently rises 50% more than in Jamaica. If you want the figures any hon. member can come and look at it, but I cannot make the book a document of the House because it is not mine at the moment. So much for the

Prime Minister's wisdom on the economics of an importing country. Hon. members on the other side have been fooled although we have plugged it over and over again that it is mismanagement of trading policy, mismanagement of import policy, mismanagement of the entire economy of the country which is responsible for the high cost of living in Barbados and not merely the fact that we have to import our food. Mr. Speaker, this is not a debate on food so I do not think it necessary to quote many figures.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I did not want to remind you on the point of relevance.

Mr. ADAMS:

Just taking one small example, no country in the West Indies produces wheat, we all have to import wheat to make bread, why is the cost of bread in Barbados the equivalent of 77 cents(G) a pound, in Jamaica, 48 cents, in Trinidad 37 cents and in Guyana 36 cents? Now that is a pure imported product. Everybody has to import wheat to make bread but we are twice as high as surrounding countries. That is a comment on the economic management of this country which is intimately tied up with this Resolution, becaasa year after year we used to hear justification for the state of the economy in Barbados upon the basis that it was well managed, that you always brought in more revenue than you budgeted for, that there was always a surplus of current account left over to finance the capital development programme, that some years indeed we had such good surpluses that we could not even spend all the money and so on. This year there is no surplus on current account, the entire capital development prograrmme certainly for the first time in the history of this Government - and I believe you would have to go back a good many years in the old Government - before there was no such surplus as would allow for example road maintenance of a capital nature. $21 million has been budgeted for in the current year's estimates, let us not forget, for maintenance programmes on capital account and there was always - because such programmes are in the nature of semi-current, I mean half current and half capital, and are put under capital, but we quite well know that the maintenance of things, such things as do not consist of repairing and covering depreciation, is partly current - but there was always something left over for that, so let us not be deceived by any fine words about the National Insurance Board choosing to transfer some of its fixed deposits into Treasury bonds. Let us not be deceived into thinking from those words that this is the true purpose of this Resolution. The true purpose of this Resolution is that at a time of year when there should be money in the Treasury there is in fact only an overdraft in the Treasury, all the figures in the Treasury are red. That is the true situation, the Leader of the House has admitted to it. As soon as you hear that, he says that the Government wants to borrow money at a lower rate than it is having to pay on its overdraft, what he is telling you is that an agonising decision has had to be made. Is the National Insurance Board going to have to give up some of its income or will the Government continue to hope that income will come in from the budget and income will come in from ordinary sources so as to allow it to manage the economy in a way that the economy ought to be managed. I have heard some lurid tales since I have been back, Sir, I have heard that one Magistrate operating in the Court

Mr. SPEAKER:
What has this got to do with the Resolution?

Mr. ADAMS:
This is a Resolution for the Government to borrow money.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
On a point of order, Sir, the hon. member unfortunately was absent when the reply to the financial statement and budgetary proposals of the Minister of Finance was made, and as shadow Minister of Finance he is now trying to seize the opportunity to get around it.

Mr. SPEAKER:
No point of order.

Mr. ADAMS:
I thought, Sir, that many hon. members missed me upon that occasion and I would have thought they would be glad to hear me now. I see the hon. member for St. Michael South Central looking at me with interest, but this is about money, this is borrowing money to put into the Treasury. Money goes into the Treasury for the purpose of going out again. A Magistrate says there is ho money in the Treasury to pay him; that is the point. We are borrowing money to put into the "Treasury; the Government is borrowing money from the National Insurance Board to put into the Treasury in order to pay its debts, because the Government has debts it cannot pay. That is the point of my saying that a Magistrate has recently declared that unless he gets his arrears he is not trying any cases, and he is right. I do not even know who he is, Sir. There are persons throughout the Public Service who have not been given their part of the second instalment of the interim award. This was urged when the salary increases first came before the House, and we criticised then the fact that the increase was not being given in one instalment. It was put off until after the expected income tax collections in the unspoken belief that all of us in here know perfectly well the Prime Minister had the hope of collecting enough money from the land tax and the income tax to pay, and we are now faced not only with the moral bankruptcy of the Minister of Finance, not only with the spiritual bankruptcy of his policy, but with the actual bankruptcy of the department which he controls. No Government in Barbados has ever had to ask in June for more money to pay the civil servants and people to whom it owes money. I know for a fact that the Ministry of Education has owed very substantial sums of money in connection with the purchase of books - the Minister knows that as well - and many other departments owe substantial sums of money in respect of ordinary everyday accounts, and there are the lower civil servants who do not fail sometimes to give the impression - I would not say this of the Ministry of Education certainly - but other departments do not fail to give the impression that if they make too much noise with the Government for their money that in the long run you will suffer. 4.00 p.m.

Do not let there be any mistake about that. I have read in the newspaper about scavengers not at work. Why were the scavengers not at work? There was no money with which to pay them and in the middle of June it is sought to expand the issue of Treasury Bills of sums not exceeding $10,000,000 and such sums as may be required to pay off at maturity Bills already issued and outstanding.

We have not heard very much about that, Sir, because the Leader of the House, in this case, has no brief to conceal anything, He merely has the brief as sent by the Minister of Finance, and I believe that all he has to read from are the figures available to the Minister of Finance. I know that a civil service department, in the words of David Lloyd George, kept one set of figures to fool the other side; one set of figures to fool the Minister; and a third set to fool themselves. I have to wonder if the brief before the Leader of the House is of that nature. He has put it straight to the House. The Treasury has an overdraft; they cannot afford to service the overdraft properly, and they are taking the money from the National Insurance Funds.

Now, when the National Insurance Scheme was first set up, I remember someone saying that sooner or later you will find that the National Insurance Funds amount to no more than a taxation reserve; the weekly amount you pay will be like some form of taxation, and at some point they are going into the National Insurance Funds to pay what should be paid out of taxation. Can the hon. member for St. Michael West deny that this is the effect of this Resolution? Taxation is not enough to meet the liabilities of the Government and, therefore, the National Insurance Funds are being raided for that purpose.

Mr. Speaker, the immediate danger may not result for many years, because since it was always, in my view, overestimated on the payment side and underestimated on the revenue side of the National Insurance, I believe that too much is collected in National Insurance, or too little has been paid out. It is the policy of our party, and I will repeat it in here again, that we regard the National Insurance Funds as trustee funds for some future occasion when the National Insurance Funds can be expanded to embrace a free National Health Service and, therefore, we deplore any use of the National Insurance Funds to pay backpay by a roundabout manner such as this. Let that be understood.

Now, Sir, the Minister has been kind enough to leak out these distributions and how the National Insurance Funds are at present disbursed. I would like somebody to tell me how it is that Barclays Bank has about $10 million. Well, the Government used to bank at Barclays Bank for a long time and they accommodated the Government and so on. However, $10 million is still a lot of money. As we go down the list we see C.I.D.C. $11/2% million; Royal Bank of Canada $750,000; The Bank of America

$800,000; Chase Manhattan Bank $500,000. I remember when I went to the opening of the Chase Manhattan Bank, I heckled the Bank Manager. The Bank Manager was a little afraid; the Prime Minister set up his face and so on, and I gather that that Bank backed off the Government a little bit, so it does not have a lot of funds invested in it. These are American Banks and Canadian Banks, but the First National City Bank has $6% million invested there. What is all of that money doing in F.N.C.B. and not in the other Banks?

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the Resolution, but if there was one thing I could support it for it would be if the Leader of the House could tell me that every penny of the $6 million was taken out of the First National City Bank and lent on Treasury Bills. I would be happy to hear that. We are all men in here and we hear rumours. When you hear us talk about the moral bankruptcy of the Government and of individuals in the Government, we are talking about allegations that are made that the First National City Bank accommodates certain persons that sit on that front bench. If there is to be any corroborative proof of that, it would be: Why is the National Insurance going to give First National City Bank nearly $7 million, when none of the newly established Banks in Barbados has been given over $1 million? These are the things that worry the public and they come out in small ways sometimes.

Mr. Speaker, I have had occasion in here before to attack some of the personnel at First National City Bank. I have not given Your Honour any notice of it, so I am not going to call them by name. I will say that to put a Barbadian at the top position of the Bank does not mean that that Bank automatically acquires all and every moral virtue that there ever was. (Asides,) If a Bank has to be attacked, it has to be attacked. I have an account in the First National City Bank in New York maintained by the permission of the Ministry of Finance. I go to my Bank in New York, but I do not cross foot at F.N.C.B. in Broad Street. If every penny of the Government's money was taken out of it, I believe it would be an advantage to the Government of Barbados. If money has to be placed in Banks, then it should be shared out equally.

I now want to deal with the positive aspects of the Resolution. (Asides) My account in New York is a lawful account. No Bank has fixed deposits for me for $535,000. The Income Tax Department are not investigating my affairs. As far as I know, the Income Tax.Department are not investigating the affairs of anybody on this side.

Mr. SPEAKER:

On what is the hon. member speaking? Let the hon. member continue to stick to the Resolution

Mr. ADAMS:

I am being heckled, Mr. Speaker, and told that the Income Tax Department must investigate my affairs. The hon. member who is heckling me - I do not see his colleague in here - should look around and ask which of his colleagues in here is being investigated by the Inland Revenue Department. He must deal with that. My accounts have never had to be audited. I usually carry them in. They are freely available, and I can show them to the hon. member privately.

Now, Sir, another reason why I am glad that some of the National Insurance Funds are being taken away from the Banks is that I do not believe the National Insurance Funds should be made available for a general expansion of consumer credit that benefits, only in the long run, the Banks and the motorcars manufacturers and, according to the latest information, even the aeroplane manufacturers in Japan, the United States, and Britain. When I heard that one of these banks has advanced $87,000 for the purchase of an aeroplane, I had to tremble at what Barbados is coming to.

Sir, I have a cutting here in the House that one or two members are looking at which illustrates the desperate dangers of allowing foreign financiers to come to these Islands of the Caribbean and areas around the Caribbean to decide to corrupt Governments. We have had the Burlington Bank, which is run by a man who is under investigation by the Canadian Financial Authorities for fraud. We have had another gentleman - he does not concern Barbados, but if Barbados is not careful it will go the same road - who, uncontradicted newspaper reports have stated, is under investigation in the United States for stealing no less than the sum of $224 million, and with this he is said to have purchased the Government of the Bahamas and the Government and the Opposition in Costa Rica. 4.10 p.m.

Well nobody has, made me offers for the Opposition. I would be glad to show hon. members the cutting. But this is the thin end of the wedge. I remember almost the first day I believe that the banks began to make a move towards National Insurance. The entire consumer credit expansion which was so liberally praised once by the hon. member for St. Michael North Central, I wonder if he would praise it so much now he has seen the damage it has done to the economy of Barbados! The entire consumer expansion has been financed by the people of Barbados through their National Insurance contributions. These monies have been put into the banks and the banks have borrowed these monies from National Insurance at 63/4%, 7%, and 71/2% ,and lent them out to Barbadians to buy motor cars at 13%, 14%, 15%, 16% and 20% I hear. I do not believe that in any other business in Barbados this Government or any other would allow any outside organisation to be making 100% profit out of the people of Barbados' literal sweat and toil, because these National Insurance contributions come from people who work for a few cents at $1.50 by the week. $21 million of the National Insurance money are keeping the wheels of banking alive. Apparently it is something to be proud of that Barbados is the only place in the whole Caribbean where the world's three largest banks operate, the Bank of America, Barclays Bank and City Bank; and it is still the only palce as far as I know it used to be advertised, where all three operate. Can we afford that?

I believe that some of the same progressive banks would themselves welcome an initiative from the Minister of Finance to bring about a general reduction in the interest rates in Barbados by putting a limit on what the banks themselves can pay out on fixed deposits. The holders of money, those persons who can afford to put $200,000 into a chicken restaurant and leave another $300,000 on fixed deposit will be offended because they will lose their interest. Persons who have the interest of Barbados at heart must understand that the holders of money must be the first people prepared to make sacrifices, not the workers in the street; not people who are affected by this Budget with no personal taxation, on 376 items raised in one way or another. It is the holders of money who must be prepared to make the sacrifices at the extra 1% or 2% of interest.

Now, Sir, indeed now that we see this Resolution come before us and now that we hear that it is $10 million that is to be started off, I can only say that at the most this can be a stop gap measure, because it is not creating money. It is the Government with its right hand making a shuffle to put more money into its left hand. What the Government gains in the reduction of overdraft interest it loses because they pay less on Treasury Bills than the Banks are paying to the National Insurance Fund. I believe before this year is out we will not only see another instalment of land tax, not only see the present outstanding land tax collected; I believe we will see more taxation again this year. I believe that however it is wrapped up, Babados this year is going to have to suffer, unless things drastically change, the first ever of its autumn budgets.

This Resolution cannot begin to cover such a situation as that.

Mr. Speaker, I may trespass a little bit on exterior matters in dealing with this. (Asides) I do not believe I have gone any further outside the limit of this than the Prime Minister would have done if he were here speaking, because I have never seen the Prime Minister hold himself down to a Resolution yet, and I am sorry he is not here. Why is he not here? (Hon. F. G. SMITH: Why weren't you here for the Budget?) Hon. members think they have made a point. If it was wrong for one, is it not wrong for both? At least I have the excuse reported to me on the phone as recently as 3 o'clock that the cable of recall sent to me - and I am going to make it a document of the House one of these days - was never delivered. What excuse has the Prime Minister got?

Mr. SPEAKER:

Is the hon. member making a personal statement or dealing with the Resolution before the House?

Mr. ADAMS:

Anyhow, it is known on all sides that for two years or more there has been some very poor economic accounting in this country. Very bad estimates of taxation, revenue and everything else have been made. In election year 1971 when the country made no real advance, according to the Prime Minister's own economic statement, it was still found possible for election purposes, as the Prime Minister freely admitted when he said he has never heard of any other kind of budget in election year than an election budget, a give away generous budget was instituted. The Prime Minister has never heard of anything in election year other than an election budget. He is now hearing what happens to people who casually without thinking, without moral purpose behind their actions, decide on an election budget when the economy cannot stand it. That was 1971.

In 1972 no corrective action was taken to restore the economy in the face of again no real expansion of the Barbados economy, and in 1973, we are all now having to suffer as is evidence by the fact that on June 19, three weeks after the budget, it is thought necessary to do something I have never seen in here before, to increase borrowing power. This is really a budget proposal in that sense, because contained in budgets are reports on how the country's expenditure is going to be financed and you will see this year that $38 million is to be raised by new taxation. This is the first instalment of the new borrowing and you are getting it within three weeks of the budget. God knows what more financial misery is in store for Barbados in the hands of the Minister of Finance! There is nothing worse I can say about the conduct of the Minister of Finance over the last few years in Barbados and his mismanagement of the economy than that if he hands over to the hon. member for St.Michael North West he would be doing a good thing. I could not say worse than that it would be an improvement to have the hon. member for St. Michael North West, and the Prime Minister can take that exactly how he wants it. He can take it to the full; and I hope the hon. member for St. Michael North West will understand that by my saying it I am not praising him either.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition is not supporting this because we cannot see our way even though the removal of some of the funds from these banks which they used to lend out in ways not beneficial to the Barbados economy might be a good thing. Despite that, we cannot see our way to support any measure designed to further the financial non-policy of the Government at the present time. We are not voting for any of these stop gap measures designed to cover up the fact that the Government is literally bankrupt at present and is unable to meet its ordinary commitments, and is therefore having to scrape the bottom of every conceivable barrel to alter the fact that it is broke, a situation that no Government of Barbados should ever be in, least of all not a Government led by somebody whose main claim to fame is that he is a qualified economist. We are now seeing the quality of his qualifications.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Speaker, Your Honour has rightly said that the hon. member has strayed a little, but I think we will excuse him. He was not here for the Budget Speech and the other members of his party deserted the Deputy Leader in that.....

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, none of the hon. members on this side deserted anyone. I do not want that down in the records as any desertion.

Mr. SPEAKER. No point of order!

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is unfair for me to say that if a motion is moved by a party and all of the members of the party are in Parliament or in its precincts.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

What has this got to do with the Resolution? Let the hon. member stick to the Resolution. 4.20 p.m.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is unfair for me to say that if a motion is moved by a member of a party and all the members of the Party are in the precincts of Parliament.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

What has this got to do with the Resolution? Let the hon. member stick to the Resolution.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Yes, Sir, I am sticking to the Resolution to show that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition who spoke made mention of things outside the Resolution, but I do not want as much latitude and he had, I am only saying that I can appreciate why he was given that latitude by you, Mr. Speaker, because he was not here when the budget was being dealt with and the members of his party deserted the Deputy Leader because they only had one vote

The real point the hon. member made relates to the question of borrowing. The Resolution here is seeking to authorise the Minister of Finance to borrow money by way of Treasury Bills. An Act of Parliament is already there so this Resolution is only to advance the amount of money and there is

nothing improper about this. The analysis which the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has made will again be found in the Act, the National Insurance Act, 1966-15 which deals with how the funds are to be invested, and the hon. member is aware that the financial administration and legal proceedings of this fund into which contributions are paid by employers and insured persons govern how these funds are to be disposed of, so there is nothing improper in investing any of the funds in Treasury Bills, that is the law.

The hon. member mentioned that already in June the Government has to be seeking funds to pay its debts, but there is nothing magical about the month of June, so the hon. member has to be realistic. The Government had to face the problem of a salaries revision and each time there is a salaries revision the Government has to pay out more money because the people are going to get more money So it is not a question of having to come for the money in June, but June is the month in which you have to meet the bill. Members of Parliament are getting higher salaries than they ever received in their whole lives, therefore the Leader of .the Opposition is enjoying a salary as the Leader of the Opposition which is a salary in itself. I do not begrudge him this salary but even if he were not a member of Parliament it is a salary in itself so you cannot get in one breath and ask what is happening in June, because what is happening in June is that the members in this Parliament have drawn more money out of the Treasury. Some of them did not vote for it but I do not believe that it is still in the Treasury, therefore this is a financial matter. Your accounting situation therefore is that you require more money in June, 1973 than you required in June, 1972 therefore any analysis of the National Insurance fund be taken as if there is any thing wrong with it.

There is nothing wrong in principle in taking some of your own money if you have surplus funds that will be invested anyhow and using it to pay some of your commitments. I hope that everybody working for the Government, not only the Parliamentarians but people like the scavengers and street cleaners, will be paid too and that there will not be any problem or any Resolution being introduced about cleaning the streets and the like. You should pay the people and get the streets clean, these are things you have to face. If you are running a country you cannot say you are not going to take money out of the National Insurance Fund, that this is something that is sacrosanct, the hon. member is right that you have taken some money from the fund to use for other purposes but not only this Government his party did it. There was a time after the war - and this is purely a matter of sound economic policy, so do not let us have any hind sight - after the war there was a tendency that in order to create a greater amount of purchasing; power and activity within the communities, many of the banks started this policy of lending people money because it created more activity and gave people the opportunity to buy furniture and other things for their homes which they could not,afford to buy otherwise The hon. member knows that the developing countries are going to be more and more oriented towards this because there are people who never Had anything before and did not have the opportunity of getting these things but they can borrow money today in order to purchase these things. That is one of the patterns of life and this was a tendency to stimulate trade, You have reached a stage now in some of these areas where, you want to take a little heat out of what they regard as an inflationary trend, and some of the banks and some Governments would have to shift the money into other areas, but the hon. member knows that so far as the National Insurance fund is concerned there is not any impropriety.

I am a member of the National Insurance Board and I would like to go on record as saying that all the members of the Board very scrupulously take, care of the public funds, because these are not-Government funds as such, this money is money that has been contributed by the workers and employers of this country. The Government only makes a contribution on behalf of Government workers like an employer in so far as the salaries and the setting up of the administration is concerned, but the Board has to take care of it, so there is nothing wrong with the Government utilising some of the National Insurance funds in Treasury Bills. You must read the Act. Some of this money is loaned to St. Lucia and to the Caribbean Development Bank, and I will tell the hon. member that one of the things in the banking arrangement - and the hon. member must know this - is that the Minister of Finance is the financial controller in so far as determining where the Board should invest because he has that overall authority by the Act.

Mr. ADAMS:

On a point of explanation.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

No point of explanation, quite out of order. A point of explanation could only arise out of something the hon. member had said.

Mr. ADAMS:

With respect, Sir, what I said seems to have made the hon. member think that I do not know it is the Minister of Finance. I know that it is not the Board's sole discretion and my speech was directed at the Minister of Finance and not the Board, so he need not dwell on that if he misunderstood me. I know it is the Minister of Finance to be blamed and not the Board,

Mr. WALCOTT:

I am coming the other way. The Minister is responsible for that, but we are not marionettes on the Board, we are men and if the Minister wanted something done which I considered to be improper I would resign from the Board, from the party and from Parliament if I felt that way. I am not a man who holds on to anything for the sake of holding on to it, I am not constituted that way. 4.30 p.m.

I want to explain that, in so far as the Board investing the money in the bank is concerned, the Board have made scrupulous arrangements, and we felt that the banks could utilise the money in Barbados

among the people of Barbados. We felt that the banks should lend people money to build houses. We are concerned with the people who want to build houses in this country, and we feel that they should be able to borrow money from the banks.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows that we do not have many commercial banks in Barbados in which to put this money. You cannot put it in a puzzling-tin. There is a limit to which you can tell the bank what to do with the money. The National Insurance Funds were started in 1957, and the hon. member is aware that there must be a quinquennial actuarial survey. You are forced to take some of these short-term investments because you cannot afford to go in for long-term investments by virtue of the fact that you are too early in the scheme.

I think the hon. member's speech should have been directed at the Resolution for a loan of $10 million and the use of some of the National Insurance funds in this connection. If you admit that you have certain financial commitments to meet, you will have to get the money either by local borrowing on a short-term

bash o by some other means. The hon. member knows at when we get more information from the actuaries, we may be in a position to consider long-term investments. So far as long-term investments are concerned, we will have to operate on advice. When money begins to flow into the National Insurance funds, you will have to get a man who knows about investments. It will not be a question of dealing with 894, and we will be dealing with millions of dollars.

As you are aware, in Barbados the staff for the National Insurance are recruited by the Public Service Commission. At one stage, we were up against a problem that we were likely to lose the Director of the National Insurance Scheme. Now, if I had to deal with the American Banks - of course, I do not know how the hon. member invests his money.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The hon. member is veering from the Resolution!

Mr. WALCOTT:
It is already part of the debate, Sir. (Asides.)

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, I have ho investment in any bank. I have a small current account, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER:
That is no point of order.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Mr. Speaker, I did not know it was a current account. I am merely dealing with what the hon. member said. I do not have any particular love for the American banks. All of the American banks, from my point of view, have a bad record regarding human relationship because they do not like workers to be organised. I do not worry with anybody who does not give people a freedom of choice. One of these days the bank workers will rise up.

So far as the money in Barclays Bank is concerned, the Bank did show that they were willing to help people with houses, and the Board felt that the Bank should get some of the money. Tthe Government's policy is that all of the banks operate here and money should be invested with all of them. If the Hon. Leader of the Opposition were the Minister of Finance he might have had a different policy, but he cannot quarrel with a person regarding how he feels about this matter.

The hon. member made a statement and I know the author of that statement. He mentioned that there would be intrusions in the National Insurance funds for certain purposes. The hon. member must bear in mind that if you have the National Insurance funds, and you want to get some money on a short-term basis - you are not going to utilise all of the money - there is nothing wrong in using some of the money. As the hon. member has said, if you put the money into the bank, the bankers will take the same money and lend you at a high rate of interest. You will be borrowing the money from yourself. Is it worthwhile to pay the bank a carrying charge on your own money?

Now, if the members on the other side are satisfied that the Government are not in need of money and they are only borrowing money for the sake of borrowing it because they have the National Insurance Funds, then that is another matter. So far as the economics of the matter are concerned, there is nothing wrong in the Government using the National Insurance money on a short-term basis. All you are doing is making money available to yourself at a cheaper rate than you would have got from the banks. I do not see where the Government would be violating any principle. I do not see why you should borrow money at a high rate of interest when you have money in the bank, unless you are an idiot. 4.40 p.m.

I think we have to do these things. The Government has taken up money and made loans to private people and the House has approved of these things. I have said in the House openly that the Government has an obligation to an organisation like the Barbados Workers' Union who want funds to put up housing for people to make a loan in the same way that they make it to the Public Service. It is going to get back the money, and once the money can be guaranteed there is National Insurance money from which it can loaned.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is veering from the Resolution.

Mr. WALCOTT:

I am talking about the utilisation of money from the National Insurance Fund. This loan, as the Hon. Leader of the House explained, is one in which you are going to utilise funds from the National Insurance Fund, and therefore I think it would be very difficult for you to say to anyone that he would not be able to speak on National Insurance. I am only dealing with the concept that the Leader of the Opposition regarded that the fund was something sacrosanct, and it should be put in a Trust Fund and let it stay there like a baby you have put in a cradle. I do not subscribe to that view. If you have to use some of the money within your local for the purpose of running the country, and the Government has to run the country and there can only be one Government at a time, you cannot say that the Government has no right to utilise such funds, and you state in the Legislature in an open and improper way all the innuendoes about other people. We know that all these things happen. The late President Roosevelt had a son who lived in Geneva; they got mixed up in banking and you had an investigation about these people. There was an investigation in the United Kingdom on Mr. Maudling because it was found that he and his family were mixed up in certain investments. You get this sort of conduct in these places, and when they occur, you expose them. There is no point in saying that you should not expose these things, but when it happens to some people here you are ready to expose them but when it happens to someone who is your friend you want to take it easy. In small communities there are no Jack Andersons to deal with these matters. I do not think that because you go to the City Bank or any other bank that this is an indication of impropriety in so far as the loan is concerned. If a man is dishonest, he is going to be dishonest morning, noon or night. I do not think that would be the answer to borrowing money because this is something that Governments must have.

Mr. Speaker, let us be quite frank. If tomorrow the hon. member took over this country he cannot say he is not paying these salaries or that he is not going to give free school meals. The hon. member talks about giving a free medical service, but it cannot be run without money, and if you institute a free medical service, every person with a stumped toe will find himself at the hospital. They would not wait for a big operation and when it conies to big operations, all the people with money would stop paying. There are people who owe $4 million in income tax, and if you investigate them, you will find that they are not people who live in Jack-My-Nanny Gap or Penny Hole. You will find that there are people who have incomes on the bank that owe the $4 million. Let me make it clear that the free medical service will

not only be for those who cannot pay. Middle class people in Barbados pay more for medical services now in a direct way because they do not want to sit in a room where others are sitting and prefer to pay to go to the appointment room because they would not be rubbing up with people who are sweaty. So your free medical service would have to accommodate all these people. I will say to the hon. member that your free medical service, free school meals and free education must cost money, and you are going to reach the stage which the Government has reached now where you have to pay people their money, and you might as well agree with them and pay this money, because if you do not agree to pay, you will create a crisis. If the magistrate who starts off at $1,000 a month says he is not trying casess the man who is working for $1.25 an hour is going to give you cases to try because if you do not pay him his money, he will show the Leader of the Opposition in more demonstrative terms why he should pay him.

I think the hon. member's speech was timely in so far as the budget is concerned and he would be failing in his duty as Leader of the Opposition if he did not take the opportunity today to get in an hour or two on something he missed earlier in view of the fact that he missed the cables and telegrams. I think all of us would have to congratulate him on the astuteness in which he got in part of his budget speech today and dealt very lightly with the Resolution for borrowing. Everyone would agree that this Resolution is necessary because we have to pay these outstanding immediate bills that the Government must pay.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, the member who has just sat down has confirmed every statement made by the Leader of the Opposition. It has been one of his performances in which he has batted on all feet with every pad on, completely covered only to convince this House that the Government is in a serious financial crisis having to borrow short term in order to meet current expenditure, one of the worse aspects of fiscal policy. That is what this Resolution is about. The Resolution is not a criticism of. the National Insurance funds except to say that they have been invested in the wrong manner for too long a time, because where you can find $21 million of the National Insurance funds out of $36 million being put simply to sit, down in banks to gain 71/2% and to be lent out in turn at 13.5% in consumer spending, that is not necessarily increasing the national wealth, and the policy there must be wrong. We cannot justify that policy any longer.

As I understand the gravamen of the charge from the Leader of the Opposition, it is that at present direct and indirect taxation in this country are not carrying the day to day living bill of the Government of this country, and the reason is simply that in the last two years this Government has not performed well in the economy. There has been no real growth. In 1971 we had a deficit of $600,000, and in this year we have to face $19 million, whereas you would have expected that on a salaries increase people would be going to higher levels of income taxation and as a result they would be paying a bit more in income tax, and without increasing the rate of income tax, Government will be making more from income tax, so that it would be answering part of the present short form in regular use. This is not happening particularly well because the economy is lagging and the problem has been outlined before.

You have lagged in tourism and in sugar, and your construction industry is in the doldrums hence Government must be candid with the country. The Leader of the Opposition has made one prediction and so has the hon. member for St. Joseph, and we predicted that within the next 18 months Government must come on a devaluation, 4.50 p.m.

I said so already in this House when talking with the Minister of Finance there that in order to take up some of the slack, unless we are fortunate that something happens in the sugar industry to help the situation, because the prospects in tourism are no better. I think it is reasonably well known that the increase in construction coming in from the medium hotels is now a very great uncertainty, and the economy is not being timed at all. Why is the Government going to come in here and try to whitewash this that they are just shifting funds from the National Insurance Fund? They should face the issue squarely and tell Barbadians they have to do two things. First, they have to save more and stop spending on things where we are exporting our money into Japan and our savings into the United States on luxury consumer goods that we can hardly afford at this time. The second thing we have to do is to produce more, and nobody knows this better than the hon. member for St. Michael West. You can only produce more if you motivate the people more, and you cannot begin to motivate the people more merely by looking at the lower income sector, you have to motivate from at the top as well, and that is where this Government has failed, and they should face the prospect that they have failed. Regardless of how much one can appeal at election time about the luxury goods that are being consumed, it is a fact that the productive sectors in the economy have failed and hence we have to resort to the worst form of financing our current expenditure, borrowing on short term from ourselves. That is the gravamen of the change today and that is why we must register a protest against this form of financing in the country.

I want to deal very briefly with the National Insurance Fund. We have urged on this side of the House that Government should have looked at methods of using the surpluses over the years for going into the equity side of investment in the country and when we have said so we have been criticised as being people who were talking about nationalising in all sectors. I want to make this clear, that the Government does no, understand that the Continental Telephone System is taking out of this country $1 million per year by way of dividends and also by way of money being sent out on technical services agreements. That is $1 million that could come back into the economy of Barbados, and if the Government had used some of the very funds of the National Insurance Board for buying into the Telephone Company and taking it over we would wholeheartedly support it. The last time I made this statement I was told that we were ad hoc socialists, but this is not a question of any ad hoc socialism, it is a question of looking at the long term interests of your country. There are many aspects on which the Government must now change its policy. It is all right at election time to fool people that you are socialists and other people are conservatives, but a close analysis of the policy of the Minister of Finance would show that he says he accepts what he calls a mixed economy and he is more conservative prone in his policies than anybody on this side could ever be, because he is afraid to intervene effectively in the economy and take over part of the financing of sectors of the economy where the real wealth will remain in the country, and to date, we are not getting yields from the equity.

Look at the Savings Bank. The hon. member for St. Michael West and myself only within the last 18 months in this House have emphasised the need to commercialise the Savings Bank in Barbados and the Minister of Finance has said that he does not intend to do this at all. In fact he poked fun at me and said that I did not know the number of branches of the Savings Bank which are hidden away as if they are some secret concave rather than progressive banks participating in this economy. What is the effect of this? Twenty one million dollars which could have been used effectively in the Savings Bank with proper policies for financing small business loans, with proper policies for financing long term mortgages among the very workers is really stored away in the First National City Bank and in Barclays Bank and all of them. We want to say quite clearly that we are not satisfied that the Minister has real control of the economy. We are fast becoming a banker's lobby in this House, because earlier today we saw an aspect of it, and unless the Government steps into the economy and takes charge of it effectively, have a look at their institutional arrangements and not only tell us that you have a Central Bank, because the Central Bank does not raise the issue. So far I have not seen one directive from the Central Bank telling the banks what liquidity they should hold, how much money they should have on short term borrowing, how much they must deposit and attempt to control the rates of interest in the country or rediverting the income into the agricultural sector which is sagging badly. What has been done in the agricultural sector to encourage investment in agriculture? The Government has spent lots of millions of dollars in plantations and those plantations have failed effectively in that if you look at the return you have from the capital coming out of this economy it is almost negligible.

If you look at the acquisition of property after property which is producing nothing this will be borne out. I can show you in the constituency of St. Michael South Central a house bought for almost $200,000 that has been closed up, and if a man even in his private capacity can allow $200,000 to remain closed up for almost a year, you can look at the yield he would have from that amount even leaving it in the commercial banks at 7l/2%. That is mismanagement, and that is why you have to come and borrow here. It is not sufficient and it is not correct to say that the reason for borrowing is simply because you have an increase in salaries at this time of the year. That is the problem which has occurred and the sooner the Government faces up to it the better. The sooner they stop white-washing the situation and merely saying at the moment we can afford to do this because we control the media, we can do as we like because it does not come out - CBC got orders not to broadcast what is said sometimes in the House - the sooner they stop doing that and tell the people the truth they would get on with the economic progress of this country.

That is all I want to contribute to this debate. We will wait and see what happens within the next six months, but I predict that if we keep going like this we will not have another election budget in Barbados for a long time to come.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

AYES:

Hon. C. E. TALMA, Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, Hon. P. G. MORGAN, Hon. F. G. SMITH, Mr. WEEKES, Mr. MORRISON, Mr. HOPPIN, Mrs. EASTMOND, Mr. GREAVES, Mr. WALCOTT and Mr. LOWE -13.

NOES:

Mr. ADAMS, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. MOTTLEY, Mr. HINDS, Mr. BOLDEN and Mr. FORDE - 6.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, the next Resolution stands in my name and it is to grant the sum of $862,500 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1973-74, Part 1 - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1973-74, No. 8, which form the Schedule to this Resolution. 5.00 p.m.

As Your Honour will recall, I asked your permission to deal with this item today.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Permission is granted.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply, and the instruction to the Committee is that it deals with this money Resolution.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. LOWE in the Chair.

A Resolution in the sum of $862,500 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, as the Addendum sets out, the Guyana Rice Marketing Board, supplier of rice under the Rice Agreement with that country, informed the Government on 23rd May, 1973 that due to severe drought this year's rice harvesting will not begin before October and for the four months period June-September only 30% of our requirements can be supplied.

In order to maintain adequate supplies during the four-month period it is estimated that 30,000 bags of 100 lbseach will have to be imported from elsewhere.

The only immediate source of supply is the United States of America, but the cost of the rice will be much higher than that from Guyana. In order therefore to maintain the current retail price of 15c per pint to the consumer, this amount of $862,500 is necessary to subsidise the price.

I think I should give hon. members of this Committee a little background information. Hon. members will recall that at the Annual Rice Conference which was held in Guyana in March 1971 - I think the present Minister of Home Affairs was the Minister then - the Guyana Rice Marketing Board pointed out that in recent years an accelerated programme of rice production had been instituted, and that the Board was then (in 1971) in a position to meet the supply needs of Caribbean countries not only for better quality rice, but also for packaged rice in 2 Ib. units as compared with bulk supply in 180 Ibs. sacks.

The Guyana Government agreed with the Board that no increase in the price of rice should be made, and the Governments attending the Conference then agreed to the current prices. First of all the rice was $23.25 per bag of 180 Ibs, Super quality rice was $27.50 per bag of 180 Ibs' The Barbados Minister reconfirmed the agreement made in 1969 that Barbados was willing to have purchases carried out on a 50-50 basis between super and first-quality rice-

We know that Guyana has never been able to supply the quantity of rice which we needed since then. In so far as this present situation is concerned, Barbados consumes approximately 100,000 bags of bulk rice and 1.4 million pounds of packaged rice annually. Under the terms of the Rice Agreement, Guyana supplied Barbados normally with all of its rice requirements at fixed f.o.b. prices. It so happens that after

hedging for some time, the Guyana Rice Marketing Board has by letter of the 21st May, 1973, informed the Ministry that on account of a severe drought experienced in that country, this year's rice harvesting will not begin until October, and for the next four months (June to September this year) it will be easy to supply - at first they said 50%, and now it is only 30%.

The average local, weekly consumption of rice in Barbados is 2,000 bags exclusive of packaged rice. From investigations carried out by the Ministry there are only a few hundred bags of rice in supply. (Asides.) At one time there were only 450 bags of rice. The situation with regard to the supply of rice is, therefore, critical. It is therefore estimated that it will be necessary to import approximately 30,000 bags of 100 lbs each to ensure that adequate supplies are available.

The latest information, Sir, is that we expect 3,000 bags of rice in the month of June. Two thousand bags should have arrived on Friday, 15th June, 1973, by a boat called the Oak Dean but that, unfortunately, broke down and could not arrive on time. Another boat is expected to bring 1,000 bags. The position is that one boat has arrived with a certain shipment, and the other one is on its way. In order to alleviate the shortage, an order has been placed for 155 tons of packaged rice and that rice should be here very shortly. The packaged rice will be from the U.S.A.

Extensive discussions and investigations have been carried out by the Minister. He has been in consultation with his colleagues in Trinidad, Jamaica and in other parts. (Asides.) I refer to the Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce, and he has been in consultation on the telephone with his counterpart in Trinidad and Tobago and in Jamaica in connection with the rice situation.

The position is that Trinidad imported an inferior quality rice which could not be used, and we cannot import that type of rice, which would be more or less 25% to 35% broken. We will be importing rice which can be utilised by the average consumer and which will be of a proper quality. It will be 15% broken and not 25% to 35%.

Mr. Speaker, the money sought is necessary in order to ensure that during the period of drought - (Asides.) - drought is an act of God, and not an act by anybody.

Mr. BOLDEN:

You are an act of creation. 5.10 p.m.

A certain percentage of rice which is 15% broken has been imported, and the idea is to have this money available in order to subsidise the rice and see that the price of 15 cents per pint is maintained. There may be other questions which I might have to answer and I have some information as regards the breakdown which at this stage might not be necessary.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. BOLDENi Mr. Chairman, when we dealt with the Annual Estimates, I began my speech on trade by saying "Taitt got us in straits". Now I say Taitt has been proven to be the purveyor of inaccuracies, because when a Bridgetown merchant during last week said that we were faced with a food shortage and there appeared to be a conspiracy of silence, the gentleman went on the television and said it was not so. How could the Leader of the House come here today and say that there were only 450 bags of rice in this country and we consume some 2,000 bags a week besides the packaged rice. Can anybody as from today believe the Minister of Trade? I have constantly said that is folly to use a midnight scholar who went to a night school and has not yet seen the light of day in the year 1973. Drought is an act of God, but the Minister is the creation of somebody and therefore if he is a Frankenstein, his creator can dispose of him.

Mr. Chairman, we have to come down to some basic facts of life when we reach a situation like this. What is the duty of the Minister of Trade? If the Minister of Trade had been in touch with the pulse of this country, if he had been following world trends, the Leader of the House would not be forced to come here today after giving short notice to ask this Committee to deal with the Resolution in all its stages in order to stave off what is obviously a critical condition which he himself admitted, because Mr. Chairman, two months ago it was reported in a Trinidad Newspaper that there was a rice shortage throughout the entire Caribbean, and Guyana had notified its customers that it would be unable to meet its commitments. Trinidad voted subsidies for the purchase of rice to the tune of $7 million. It is not only a question of short supply, but there is also the question of a dispute in the price of rice from Guyana. The Leader of the House will tell you that this is about the third shortage we have had in the last four or five months of rice coming from Guyana, and if you look at the Addendum you will see that the Guyana Rice Marketing Board as early as 23rd May this year informed the Government that they would not be able to supply the rice requirements of this country, and yet the Minister can get on television last Saturday night and say there was no shortage. All these words and fancy phrases must stop. The Ministry of Trade has brought this country to complete disgrace by its operations within the

year, and it is time that members of the Cabinet and the Prime Minister understand that they cannot fool people any longer. Is this the reason why C.B.C. has told its reporters that they must only report the positive side of things? How can the Leader of the House tell us today that there are only 450 bags of rice in stock and the Minister of Trade said it is not true? Somebody cannot tell the truth, but I am not here to judge. It is the housewives who will judge who is telling the truth.

Mr. Chairman, let us look at another factor in this whole issue of the supply of food to this country. There are other rice- producing countries than the United States, and the Ministry of Trade is to anticipate shortfalls in its supply and find alternative markets in order to keep the cost of living down to the population. We cannot vote against a sum for subsidising rice, but we must make it known that we are completely against the operations of the Ministry of Trade, because subsidy is still a method of paying out the taxpayers' money. If the Ministry had been doing its work, it would have investigated other markets like Burma where we can get rice. There are. other countries too from which we can get rice, but it is the same trend as with onions in this country. People grew onions here up to March and April this year, and if the Ministry knew that there was going to be a shortage of onions, what was the sense of exporting them from Barbados and within two weeks onions which were purchased at 12 cents by the Barbados Marketing Corporation were being sold at 60 cents, 70 cents, 80 cents and as high as $1.00 per lb.? I wanted to ask a question in this House and it was not allowed, but I am going to ask on my feet why is it that the Barbados Marketing Corporation has been made the exclusive importer of essential commodities in this country when it has proven time and time again that it cannot control and does not understand trade in this country. If the Barbados Marketing Corporation controls the importation of things like rice, deep sea fish and other commodities, it is for them to work out projections and check your stockpile and anticipate shortfalls, and take the necessary steps at the appropriate moment so that we cannot get into this situation. These things are not being done, Mr. Chairman, and it is not only rice that we will shortly find ourselves short of. We have asked before what is the duty of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. When I said here two months ago that it has now become a half-baked supermarket, members on that side were annoyed.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

On a point of order, the hon. member for St. Joseph is commenting about the Barbados Marketing Corporation being the sole distributor of essential commodities. Rice is a very essential commodity but the Marketing Corporation is not a distributor or importer of rice. There are four or five firms who rotate in importing rice, and the Marketing Corporation is not included. 5.50 p.m.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, the permits to import must move from the Ministry of Trade, there is no importer who can write anybody and ask him to send him 1,000 bags of rice, it is controlled by the Ministry of Trade. The Ministry of Trade must have the statistics, it must know the amount to be imported.... (Asides)...! hear a comment across the floor about issuing licences, but you must have some control over what you are doing. Then it proves my point.

Mr. WALCOTT:

The hon. member said that the Marketing Corporation was the sole importer, but that is a different thing from the issuing of licences. That is all it is.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, there is a certain thing called the regulation of commodity prices. If the Ministry of Trade is responsible for issuing licences it should be in control of the situation. I am glad the hon. member has risen because he has proven my point that the Ministry of Trade is in confusion. It is confused about its own operation, because if it issues licences it should know when there was a shortfall. Let the hon. member get up again and say that it is not true that the Ministry was informed since early January that there was going to be a shortage of rice in this country and that remedial action should have been taken.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member must remember what he said, the hon. member is not speaking about the Ministry of Trade, he said that the Marketing Corporation was the sole importer of rice but that is a different thing from the Ministry of Trade.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Point made.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Point made, but the Barbados Marketing Corporation is one of the importers and imports the greater quantity of rice in this country.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Chairman, I object to that, that the Marketing Cororation is an importer of rice, the Marketing Corporation is not an importer of rice.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, they say they do not import rice, they only import chicken, onions and rice then, as

well as deep sea fish. The onions are now being sold at $1 per pound, controlled by the Ministry of Trade which does not understand the needs of the community. It is controlled by the same Minister, and the Leader of the House can tell you today that we are in a critical condition with respect to rice, and the 2,000 bags which he says has arrived, one Roebuck Street merchant has said it is going to last three days. The Minister is saying there is enough rice, the Leader of the House is saying we are in a critical condition, so we must ask ourselves where we are going and what else is in short supply. What is the Ministry of Trade doing? I say it is time that this Government understands that the Ministry of Trade has not been performing its duties, there are too many shortfalls. Food is one commodity which causes any man to lose his balance; a hungry man is an angry man and a dangerous man, and I would suggest that the Government does something quickly with the Ministry of Trade.

This is not the only crisis we are facing, Mr. Chairman. A few months ago we had the crisis of the poultry farmers when the same Minister cut the recommendations which went from the Ministry of Agriculture and he decided what should be done until we ran into a crisis when there was no chicken available. When I got on the floor of this House and said that chicken imported from the United States was landed at $1.41, I understand he said at Cabinet he got his figures wrong, that it was $1.14 per pound. (Asides.) You carried back the news from the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Are you accusing the Chairman of carrying back news?

Mr. BOLDEN:
No, not you, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
The only person you should be addressing right now is the Chairman.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, you know very well I would never accuse you of carrying news because you do not sit with the others on those special days, you sit with us. There are members from the Ministry of Trade who can fool those who carry the news, and that brings us back to one point. My friend over there keeps jumping up and laughing but if the Ministry of Trade knew what it was about we would have made provision for this long ago. Trinidad made provision for it and you never heard anything of a critical situation.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order, Sir, I do not like to interrupt the hon. member, but just to set the record straight at least, the hon. member is making out that the Ministry of Trade does not know what it is doing, but as late as April 4, 1973 one of the importers of rice, T. Geddes Grant (Barbados) Limited wrote to the Ministry of Trade to this effect

"Attention: Mr. Sealy Dear Sir,

We confirm the writer's telephone conversation with your Mr. Sealy today concerning supplies of rice from Guyana. We confirm having advised that we have been in touch by telephone with both the Guyana Rice Marketing Board and Mr. John Fernandes of John Fernandes Limited.

The former advised that there is no shortage of rice, and the reason why we have not received our orders is due to the lack of shipping. Mr. John Fernandes advised that the motor vessel M/V MORUKA was in Guyana and was available to load rice immediately and that we had notified the Rice Marketing Board accordingly."

It is not that the Ministry of Trade has been doing nothing, they have been following this matter up by telephone, cables and letters.

T. Geddes Grant (Barbados) Limited is one of the big importers of rice, like DaCosta & Musson and one or two others. There are four places which import rice.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, it proves what I have been saying. I know . I could bait the Leader of the House to come out and say what I am going to say now. It proves that the Government has not got any effective communication between the suppliers of rice to this country and the people who deal with it. They depend on certain commercial interests in town. Is not the Minister aware that there is a great fight in this country existing between certain Broad Street merchants and the Roebuck Street merchants which leaves the community at large stranded? That is what you wanted to hear. Go and ask what the 'big six' are doing to the Roebuck Street merchants; ask the person in the back who is laughing, he knows. Ask him what one of the people involved in the last dispute with the truck drivers and maids told him. They told him not to mind the others but to decide with them by themselves. Ask the lady over there who runs

a supermarket if the dispute does not exist between the Roebuck Street merchants, who are the distributors fighting for a foothold in the commercial world, and the big boys in town, and the Government sits down passively and takes a letter written by Geddes Grant without investigating, when Trinidad and other places knew long in advance not only that there was a dispute about the price but that the crops were not coming up to expectation. The Hon. Minister has just said that the Minister of Trade was in communication with his counterparts in other islands to know what was going on, and Trinidad took appropriate action well in advance and Barbados in June now sees it necessary to take action.

The Minister spoke publicly about the three-tier system of distribution in this country, and he wants to break it down. This same Minister who said he would march with the consumers and protest and he cannot even direct his own Ministry how to communicate with the Rice Marketing Board of Guyana and find out the truth about what is going on. 5.30 p.m.

Let them laugh on the other side. Mr. Chairman, this is a serious matter. The Minister says that he knows about the 3-tier system, the importers, the middlemen and the retailers, and he now sends a file in here for the Leader of the House to read and tell us that he depends on second-hand information about a primary food commodity of this country. Is it not time that you look into the Ministry and deal with it appropriately? That is the situation.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Chairman, this system of allowing certain firms to be the importers of rice as well as to look after licences is nothing new. This has been going on for many years, and we have been having conferences usually in Guyana or in one of the other countries to fix the price of rice. It was usually in Jamaica first, then Trinidad, the Windward and Leeward Islands and so on, and it is done annually. You have Rice Conferences in the Ministry of Trade all the time. I think there are always about three distributors T. Geddes Grant, A. S. Bryden & Co., DaCosta & Co., and General Traders. At one time Mussons used to be a distributor, and this is how it has been operating for at least since I have been in the Government and I have been the Minister of Trade. This is the pattern in the entire rice trade. The hon. member speaks of the Marketing Corporation, but up to the present I have given you the names of the people who look after the importation of rice.

Now, we have tried to import rice from other countries and we have tried to get a quality similar to what we get from Guyana. (Asides.) Yes, we have had rice from Burma, but it takes a long time to get rice from Burma. We have imported rice from Burma with a lot of weevils in it. It will take about 60 days to get a shipment of rice from Burma. It would not be a question of a shipment of rice coming from Burma every i two weeks, and you will have to import a 6-month stock. When we ordered rice from Burma it usually ended up with weevils after a storage of six months. On the other hand, it must be remembered that Barbados has an agreement for rice within the Carifta Territories. We cannot break that

agreement, and this is something essential. We could not attempt to go out of the Carifta area and import rice until Guyana had informed us that there had been a shortfall. If we have done that, then it would be a violation of the agreement within the Carifta Territories. All of this must be borne in mind.

Now, we have tried to get rice from Belize and Surinam but Surinam does not produce the quality rice that we need. You can also get rice from Venezuela. The only two places from which we could get rice of the quality that people would use in Barbados would be from the United States and Burma, and Burma would be out of the question because of its distance from Barbados.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of information, Sir, When did they start to make enquiries from Belize, Surinam, Venezuela, etc.? Can the Minister tell us that as he goes along?

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Sir, these are the countries Venezuela, Surinam, Burma and the U.S.A. The only people who produce rice similar to what we would use here are the U.S.A. and Burma. Burma would be out of the question because of the distance and the amount of rice that we would have to import at one shipment. About thirty years ago when we imported rice from Burma we had to import a shipment of rice to last for at least four months, and rice stored in a warehouse for a long time will create weevils. On the other hand, it would cost us twice as much to get rice from the United States as it would cost to bring it from Guyana. We are buying rice from the cheapest possible source within the Carifta area. In the circumstances, we will have to subsidise the price of rice. If we do not subsidise it, people will have to pay over 30 cents a pint for it.

Mr. Chairman, it is not correct for the hon. member to say that the Minister of Trade has done nothing about this matter. He was notified and the Minister of Trade has had no fewer than 15 telephone calls to Guyana.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, I do not want the Hon. Minister to gloss over what is an essential part of the debate. I am speaking on a point of information, Sir. I asked him when were the enquiries in Belize, Surinam and Venezuela started? He now says that the Minister was notified and I would like to know when. This is essential; we do not come here to make jokes; I am serious when I get up to speak in this Chamber, and if you want to be helpful you must tell us as it is.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Chairman, only about two weeks ago I was acting for the Minister of Trade when it was brought to my attention that there was a shortage of rice, and the worst thing we could have done in the community was to tell the people that there was a shortage of rice. If I said that there was a shortage of rice, the people with the money would have bought all of the rice and the poor man would not have been able to get any rice.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order. Is the Hon. Minister telling us - Mr. Chairman, this is where the integrity of the Government stands or falls - that the Minister was notified of the shortage on the 5th May, and the worst thing to have been done would have been to tell the people that there was a shortage of rice?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Absolutely no point of order.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Chairman, I make absolutely no apologies for it. I was acting for the Minister of Trade, and I told him to make negotiations outside as to where we can get rice rather than creating the impression in the country that there would be a shortage of rice. It is known that the poorer the people are the less chance they would have to get any rice. I move around in this community, and I know that the people with money would go to the supermarkets and buy all of the rice while the small shopkeepers would have no chance of getting any rice. It would be my responsibility to see that the people are protected.

Mr. Chairman, we know how much rice has come to Barbados; we know that we could get rice here in time to make good the shortage as a result of rice not coming from Guyana, so there was no point in creating the impression that there was a rice shortage.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, the attitude taken by the hon. member for St. Joseph is merely a matter of personality and not a matter of principle. Nobody can ever compare this Government with Trinidad or any other Government in the area when it comes to rice. He would have to be a sleeping idiot. Barbados has been subsidising rice for over twenty-five years, so what is the point of anybody today raising a crisis issue about the shortage of rice in Guyana? He would have to be a thoroughbred idiot. We have an agreement to buy rice from Guyana, but we do not have any agreement to buy rice from Burma, or from Australia. He cannot understand that. When members of the Opposition cannot get the Minister of Trade or

somebody to do what they want; if they want a poultry licence, a duck licence, or a yard fowl licence and they do not get it, then they will come in here and curse the man morning, noon and night. That is what you will get.

Mr. FORDE rose

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, I do not know what my friends are worried about,..

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
The Chairman is on his feet, and I am asking the hon. member to sit. (Asides.)

Mr. WALCOTT:
Mr. Chairman, may I continue with my speech?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I am on my feet. 5.40 p.m

I am going to ask the hon. member for St. Michael West to withdraw the remarks complained of.

Mr. WALCOTT:
I am willing to withdraw the remarks complained of if I can hear what the remarks are.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Hon. members seem not to realise that we are in Parliament and not in the Lobby.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Yes, Mr. Chairman. What are the remarks complained of?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Improper remarks to the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. WALCOTT:
What are the remarks I made? I would like the hon. member to repeat the remarks I made and I am willing to withdraw them. If there are any offensive remarks, I am willing to withdraw them. He is a lawyer and I challenge him to get up.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
There will be no challenge in here.

Mr. WALCOTT:
I challenge him to say the offensive remarks I made. A lawyer who has to put in a submission like this must state it.

Mr. ADAMS:
On a point of order.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
There can be no point of order at this stage. I am having a matter clarified. The hon. member for St. Joseph has brought to my notice insulting remarks used by the hon. member for St. Michael West. I am going to ask the Clerk of the House to get the remarks complained of.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Mr. Chairman, I am asking the hon. member to repeat the remarks.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, there can be no debate once objection is taken.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
There can be no point of order or otherwise. I will ask the reporter for the words.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:
On a point of order....

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
There will be no point of order. I am asking the hon. member to take his seat until I get what I want.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:
I am only drawing to your attention that the Mace is dragging on the ground, which is more fundamental....

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I do not want to hear a word until this matter has been settled. The Sitting has not be suspended or adjourned.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Can I proceed, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Not until I have obtained the remarks complained of.

Mr. WALCOTT:
But nobody complained, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member has not complained yet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
He did.

Mr. WALCOTT:
He has not. He got up and made a quarrel.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, I can help the Committee. The hon. member said that when the hon. member applies for a poultry licence or a duck licence and does not get it, he comes in to curse the Minister.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I did not ask the hon. member to tell me that.

Mr. WALCOTT:
I never said that. Mr. BOLDEN You said that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
That is why I have asked for the reporter to give me the remarks. I am asking once again for order.

The words complained of are as follows: -

"When members of the Opposition cannot get the Minister of Trade or somebody to do what they want, if they want a poultry licence, a duck licence or a yard fowl licence and they cannot get it, they will come in here and curse the man morning, noon and night."

That is unparliamentary and imputing improper motives to the Opposition, and I am asking the hon. member to withdraw the remarks, and I will ask also that they be expunged from the record.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Mr. Chairman, I withdraw the remarks. When the hon. member is making charges against the

Minister of Trade, he always directs his charges against the Minister of Trade in a manner unrelated to something where the Minister has personal matters to deal with.

Mr. BOLDEN:
I object to that again. That imputes improper motives to me as if I had private matters between the Minister and myself. This is now a direct insult to me and I think it is contentious of the Chair. I ask that the hon. member withdraw them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I am also going to ask the hon. member to withdraw. When we are in Parliament....

Mr. WALCOTT:
Which remarks to withdraw?

Mr. CHAIRMAN. The remarks that when the hon. member is dealing with the Minister of Trade this becomes personal. I do not want any personalities in Parliament.

Mr. WALCOTT:
What they said about the Minister of Trade was personal.

Mr. CHAIRMAN There is no argument. I have just asked the hon. member to withdraw the remarks.

Mr. WALCOTT:
I withdraw the remarks. As I was saying from the beginning, the hon. member in making his speech said that the Minister does not know what he is doing. 5.50 p.m

Mr. CHAIRMAN I am also going to ask the hon. member again to withdraw.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Which remark should I withdraw?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
The entire remark.

Mr. WALCOTT:
What do you mean by "the entire remark"?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
The remark that when the hon. member is dealing with the Minister of Trade he becomes personal. I do not want anything personal in Parliament.

Mr. WALCOTT:
What they said about the Minister is personal.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
There is no argument, I just ask the hon. member to withdraw it.

Mr. WALCOTT:
I withdraw it. The hon. member in making his speech said that the Minister of Trade does not know what he is doing, that he went to a midnight school. His remarks were directed in a personal manner to the Minister, but I am not defending the Minister, what I want to say is that the whole gravamen of his argument was nothing to do with the question of bringing rice from Guyana but it was a personal attack on the Minister of Trade.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, I am objecting to the hon. member imputing that to me. I dealt with the Ministry of Trade, the collection of records and the like.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Ask me to withdraw those remarks now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I will know what to ask you to withdraw; you will continue your speech.

Mr. WALCOTT:
He made a personal attack on the Minister, and all I was going to say was that two weeks ago you would have thought that the same hon. member, when we were dealing with the budget and all of these matters would have been contained in the budget, would have exercised the parliamentary sagacity that you would expect from people to be in their places to deal with a serious matter, but you get the sort of parliamentary clowning behaviour and mockery that you could get not even a member of the Opposition.....

Mr. FORDE:
With respect, Sir, I must object to those remarks. The hon. member cannot call members of the Opposition clowns or accuse them of parliamentary clowning behaviour, he must be improper. This is so, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
My interpretation of what he has said is that he has not called any hon. member of this House a clown.

Mr. FORDE:
With respect, I will take your ruling, Sir. I was objecting to his saying you will get the parliamentary clownish behaviour of ! members of the Opposition.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I rule it is not unparliamentary because there are

Parliamentarians on both sides.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. CHAIRMAN, was that the clownish behaviour of the members on that side?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I do not know, there are no clowns in here.

Mr. BOLDEN:
That is all right so long as there is no clownish behaviour on this side but on that side.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
You will kindly take your seat.

Mr. ADAMS:
On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, am I correct in saying that the only Parliamentarian to whom he can refer without offence when he speaks of clownish behaviour is himself? If he accuses any of the others of it he must be unparliamentary, so he is the only person to whom he can refer without having to withdraw.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Absolutely no point of order.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Mr. Chairman, I am not going to deal with the hon. member, he is late and his party is in confusion and I can understand his behaviour and attitude at a moment like this. He has a crisis, I do not have any crisis. All I am talking about is the behaviour, you can have good behaviour and you can have bad behaviour. A man can behave like a clown and a man can behave in Parliament like a Parliamentarian, so his behaviour can be clownish. If you are going to come in Parliament and behave like a clown and then take objection when somebody mentions it that is a matter for you, but if you have the Deputy Leader making a speech - and this is going on record - that the only budget speech in Parliament in the whole wide world where we understand democracy is moved by the Leader who is making a speech and could not even get.....

Mr. FORDE:
On a point of order, Sir, the hon. member is being irrelevant and I draw Your Honour's attention to this. The resolution here deals with rice and a subsidy for it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. member is definitely irrelevant, but I have given a lot of latitude to all members.

Mr. WALCOTT:
The hon. member should never be afraid of his actions subsequently, he should stand up like a man to whatever he does. I really thought the hon. member was one of those men who would not vote with his party on a crucial matter as a matter of conscience.

Mr. FORDE:
On a point of order, Sir, again the hon. member is being irrelevant. I have never been afraid to stand up to the hon. member and I will never be afraid to stand up to him or to the Prime Minister like a lot of them who are afraid of him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Absolutely no point of order.

Mr. WALCOTT:
I know you stood up to me because you left me in the lurch at the eleventh hour.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Is that relevant to this Resolution?

Mr. FORDE:
The hon. member persists in making statements he knows are untrue, but he is getting old and senile.

Mr. WALCOTT:
After you were paid as my counsel you left me in the lurch at the eleventh hour, so I know you can stand up to me.

Mr. FORDE:
I object again, Sir, but he cannot help it. He does this all the time and expects to get away with it

Mr. CHAIRMAN rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Will both hon. members sit? It is my intention to call on all hon. members who are prepared to make contributions to this resolution for $862,500 to stick to this resolution. We will deal with the rice subsidy.

Mr. WALCOTT:
Mr. Chairman, rice is part of the poor people's diet, therefore I was making the point at the beginning that I am not worried about the attitude of the Opposition, all I am doing - if I may say so is reflecting on their attitude only hours ago when they left the boy on the burning deck to stand alone. All I am saying is that I am very surprised today to find that you get this wholesale debate on an issue where we are spending $862,500 to subsidise rice. Governments of Barbados of all political complexions have been subsidising rice over the last 25 years, so what issue are you making? There is a shortage in Guyana, and we cannot get the rice out of Guyana as a result, and what do you find? The Minister of Trade as a person is subjected to the most scurrilous attacks by the hon. member for St. Joseph in his own personal position as a man.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, I am objecting to that. At no time did I attack the Minister as a man. I said the Ministry of Trade was in confusion.

Mr. WALCOTT:
A Minister of Trade does not go to.....

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, I am not like him, I have no argument over $1 million in the Port. He has to attack the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Communications and Works. 6.00 p.m

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

I have already ruled; take your seat. I only want to hear something relevant to the Resolution for $862,500. No personal attack will be made on any Minister from either side. I do not want to hear about $1 million at the Port and about containerisation. I will take the necessary action, if there is any further interruption.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, I am trying to comply with your ruling, but it seems to me that the members on the other side want to provoke a quarrel. All I am saying is that, in starting the debate, the hon. member made reference to the Minister of Trade having the people in tights. When he said "in tights", I do not know whether he means that he was a dancer. He also said that the man went to school at night.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, he is misquoting me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Those were your remarks.

Mr. BOLDEN:

With all due respect to Mr. Chairman, I will repeat my words for the benefit of Hansard and the other side. When I began my speech during the Annual Estimates, I said Taitts got us in straights. I used a quotation, Sir. There is a place called Taitts in St. James.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

But not in the Ministry of Trade.

Mr. BOLDEN:

I never said that, Sir. Mr. CHAIRMAN; The hon. member will sit.

Mr. WALCOTT:

I know that the hon. member knows about the plantations in St. James. Maybe the plantations in St. James are so much on his mind that when he was talking about the Ministry he is thinking in terms of Taitts. He says that there is a plantation in St. James by the name of Taitts. If Taitts has us is straights, all I am saying is that he said that the Hon. Minister went to school at night and has not yet seen the light of day. If he makes that kind of remark, then he must not be thin-skinned when remarks are made about him and keep jumping up on a point of order. He must take it in good spirit. If the hon. member says that the Minister went to school at night and he went to school in the day and can see night when it comes.....

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, senility is a funny thing; it steps in unwittingly and suddenly, and the ability to retain something is a factor which disappears so quickly that you do not realise that old age has crept up upon you and has caught you. If the hon. member wants to quote me, Mr. Chairman, and he finds that his memory is failing him, he should utilise an instrument called a pen or pencil and then quote me correctly.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, have you seen how early it has crept up on him? He does not even have to wait until he gets old. We will forgive him, but in dealing with the debate I do not think it is fair to accuse the Minister of anything because this is not a matter that you can attribute to a person. For over twenty-five years we have been subsidising rice. Today we come here in a crisis for nearly $3/4% million. What do you find in a crisis? The price of rice is something like 15c, the selling price is 38c, and the Government is subsidising the item by more than one-half the total amount of the selling price of the article. What stupidness are you talking? Do you think a Government would have been so inept as to put itself in a position to spend $800,000 when the subsidy on the rice in Guyana is something like 1d per pound?

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. I have made a speech, and the hon. member does not understand the trend of my argument.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Sit down, please. The hon. member has refused to give way on a point of elucidation, so you will have to take your seat.

Mr. WALCOTT:

Mr. Chairman, I am not even making reference to a point he made. I am making my own statement, so he cannot elucidate my statement. I am saying that the Government is subsidising rice now at a price of 25c a pint and the selling price is 38c. In normal circumstances you could not expect a Government to be subsidising a commodity by a margin of more than one-half the selling price. Normally the Government is not called upon or expected to subsidise the price of rice from Guyana, so there is no point in arguing that we are paying more than 50% of the selling price. (Asides.) Mr. Chairman, you will have to subtract the interruptions from my time. There were about thirteen interruptions.

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member must realise that the taxpayers and everybody will have to pay for this, because in normal circumstances we would not have had to pay this extra sum for rice. The hon. member knows that we are committed to buying rice from Guyana. It must be realised that the Government is not the importer of rice, but the Government issues licences to the various importers of rice. Now, if we had the Government as a single importer of rice in this country, then you would hear another complaint. The Government has had experience in these things. The Government had the Marketing Corporation. On one occasion they had to order crates, and the man in charge ordered enough crates that he could sell crates to all the people in Brazil with a population of about ninety million. It is dangerous in a small community to divert the purchasing of everything into a single agency. It is not easy to do it.

In the circumstances, the Government allowed the distributors in the trade to continue importing rice. In a small community like Barbados you would be looking for trouble if you suddenly tried to take away the importation of rice from them and to put it into the hands of a single agency. You will have to be very careful in this matter; you have to know your own people, and you have to know something about, the trade with which you are dealing. I think that we should be more or less commiserating with the Government and the people in Barbados that the circumstances in Guyana force us. to pay $800,000 in order to subsidise the price of rice. I do not think anybody can accuse the Minister of putting us in this position. I close at that, Mr. Chairman, and I do not think it is fair to have these personal attacks. If you do not like a man you do not like him but your remarks should be directed to the principle of a particular matter.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, the more I listen to the hon. member for St. Michael West, the more amazed I get at the speeches he makes in this Chamber. For many years we have heard the member beating his chest and saying that we socialists do this and we believe in that. 6.10 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I will ask the hon. member not to interrupt.

Mr. MOTTLEY. That is the sort of thing I mean. He hits his chest and says he is a socialist, but when you look at the type of speech he makes, it is quite clear that he is anything but a socialist.

Now when the hon. member gets up and in short agrees to the present system of the importation of rice in Barbados, he is advocating a system of free enterprise that exists at the moment rather than having, as the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party sets out, a Government agency established to be the importer of essential foodstuffs into this country so that shortages not only of rice, but of onions and various other things could be avoided. (Interruptions).

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
I would like to caution hon. members on both sides that I am only prepared to hear one person at a time.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
We have had the disclosure in here today that there are four businesses in Barbados that rotate in the importation of rice DaCosta and Musson, Geddes Grant, Brydens and General Traders. We find ourselves in a situation where this country has to depend upon a private concern like Geddes Grant who from the statement made by the Minister of Home Affairs has led this country into the position in which it finds itself today. I am not saying that there was not a drought in Guyana.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:
On a point of order, under the agreement the firms do the purchasing as merchants for the period knowing that 2,000 bags are used per week, but the agreement is made between the Government of Barbados and the Government of Guyana. The Rice Agreement is not with private individuals. The Government makes the agreement but the arrangements for shipping and distribution to the various merchants are handled by these firms.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
This is really a classic example of the connection between this Government and big business in this country, and you will find that the Prime Minister is the first to say that somebody is connected with big business. The Minister has said that there is an agreement between this Government and the Guyana

Government, but we depend upon big business in this country to tell us what to import and how and when to import it. In other words, there must always be a shortage in this country.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, what I mentioned is from the point of distribution. There are so many merchants all over the place, and no single organisation operated by Government would ever have the chance of doing what has been going on since the 1930s, and if you had a situation other than this in Barbados, you would have greater problems with it. The ships are used as warehouses so that people can draw from alongside the wharf which reduces the price. If the rice had to be brought in by other ships and put in warehouses, the price would be higher than it is. Most of the rice is drawn by ships that come into the inner basin and the merchants and individuals draw from the ships in the Careenage. If you had to bring the rice into the Deep Water Harbour where you had to pay higher duty and it had to be hauled and put into warehouses and then drawn from there, the price would be far higher than it is and the Government would have to pay a greater subsidy.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, what the Minister is saying is that there is an agreement between the Barbados Government and the Guyana Government for the purchasing of rice, but as regards the distribution and the amount of rice to be ordered, the Barbados Government relies upon four businesses, who from time to time, take turns in telling the Government how much rice to import. Let the Minister deny that if it is not true.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

Mr. Chairman, I have said and I do not deny that this is something that has been going on from the days of my trading in the 1930s.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I do not care if it was initiated in the 1930s. If the Government still believes in the philosophy of the 1930s, let it continue, but you cannot ask the people in this country to depend on merchants like Musson and DaCosta, Geddes Grant, Brydens and General Traders to say how much rice should be imported into this country. (Asides.) I am not talking about the situation now.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On a point of interruption, the rice is not available- I do not care who is importing the rice whether it is Government, ten importers or one hundred, it is not available. You are fooling the people with nonsense.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The hon. member will take his seat. I am going to say for the last time that any further attempt at this type of behaviour in this Chamber will be dealt with according to the appropriate Standing Order.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, I believe you appreciate that I am not dealing specifically with this rice shortage. What I am dealing with is the system that operates in Barbados at the moment. I am dealing first of all with the system whereby this Government is at the mercy of four businesses in Bridgetown.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

On a point of order, the Government is not at the mercy of anybody. A Minister goes to Guyana and makes an agreement for the quantities of rice and the subsidies to be paid. All the rice is distributed from the Careenage to merchants whether they get five bags or fifty bags with the exception of what is stored for four to six weeks, and a greater storage is being kept during the hurricane season just as with milk and other commodities.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of explanation.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

On what?

Mr. BOLDEN:

On the statement which the Minister has just made. I am asking the Minister a question. He said earlier that they rely on a letter from Geddes Grant, so how can he now say they keep four to six weeks' supply when the letter from Geddes Grant will tell them something different?

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

Absolutely no point of elucidation.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, this is the point I have been trying to make. We are not saying that the shortage is not due to the drought in Guyana, but what we are complaining about on this side is that the Government's inability to deal adequately with the shortage is due to misinformation given to them by Geddes Grant and the other firms. It is a simple matter of economics. If there is a shortage of rice in this country, it means that Geddes Grant and the other importers are going to get more money. This is the law of supply and demand. The Government cannot get up and say they are depending on big business to tell them how much rice to import.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order, the rice importers do not tell the Ministry how much rice to import. There is an agreement whereby Guyana supplies 8,000 bags of rice monthly, and the four importers rotate on the importation every quarter and they see after the importing and distribution. Do you want the Government to put up big ware houses and employ people to see after that? These people would do it more efficiently than any Government agency.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I do not understand this sort of thing. The Deputy Prime Minister got up and said that these people would do it more efficiently than the Government. Where are we going? You get the member for St. Michael West and the member for St. Michael South Central talking about socialism and here is the Deputy Prime Minister preaching a system of private enterprise and saying it would operate better than a socialist scheme. 6.20 p.m.

That is what has happened in this country. Over the last ten years we saw a concentration of big business with DaCosta and Musson, Manning, Wilkinson and Challenor all coming together. No wonder the people of this country find themselves in the position they are today.

I go further. Why is it that the Minister a year ago spoke about the three tier system in Barbados and said he was investigating this matter - and I say here now he is like the gentleman referred to by Lord Cooke, a much talking man who is like an ill tuned cymbal - because the Minister said then that in 1972 Barbados had the most antiquated system of food distribution - a three-tier mark-up - which was shared between importer, wholesaler and retailer, and that is the same system the Deputy Prime Minister just said is a better system to operate than one which the Government was doing itself.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order, I never referred to any three-tier system, I merely said that it would be easier, better and more appropriate for the old policy whereby the Government enters into the agreement, but as far as the actual importation of the 8,000 bags monthly is concerned, they then import and look after the distribution. That is all I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
Point made.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, it seems as if members on that side are getting their brains confused and tangled at this stage. The Hon. Leader of the House said - and I wrote down his words - "These people can do it more efficiently than the Government".

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
No point of order.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
Mr. Chairman, this is the point I am making. The Minister in 1972 said that it was a three-tier system which was antiquated and is shared between the importer, the wholesaler and the retailer, which is the system that operates for rice in Barbados, except that the rice according to the agreement is made by the Government but is imported by Geddes Grant and the big businesses and-, is then distributed in the same three-tier system which the Minister said is antiquated. The Deputy Prime Minister then says it is the best system to operate.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
On a point of order, I did not refer to any system, I merely referred to the importation and distribution.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
But that is the importation and distribution in the three-tier system. Are you not even aware of that at this stage of your political career?

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, as the hon. member mentioned just now the amount of rice in the agreement is 8,000 bags per month, so there is a limited amount per month provided that it is ready in Guyana and that the Rice Marketing Board can supply it.

I will give the hon. member this information. The news to the Government that there would be a shortage of rice did not come from Geddes Grant or any of the importers, the Ministry was notified by the Rice Marketing Board which is the official shippers. The Rice Marketing Board of Guyana notified the Ministry on the 25th May about the shortage of rice, but they are continually saying that we are sitting down here waiting on private enterprise to notify the Government about a shortage.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I have just remarked that the members on that side are totally confused. The very Minister said earlier that on the 5th May the Ministry was informed about the shortage by private enterprise.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

No point of order. All hon. members who have already made their contribution will contain themselves and not try to make fraudulent speeches now. I am willing to hear the hon. member for the City.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

What the Minister said earlier was that when he was Acting Minister of Trade a few weeks ago he knew there was going to be a shortage of rice in the island, and this was on the 5th May, and he told the Minister of Trade not to let the people know there would be a shortage because the rich people would buy up. It is time that this Government stop fooling the people and stop telling lies. The Minister of Trade got on television the other night and said there was no shortage of rice, and the Leader of the House said today that the rice situation is in a critical condition. The Minister says now that when he was Acting Minister on 5th May he knew of the shortage, but that they did not want the people to panic, and now he is saying it was the 25th May. It is time to stop being dishonest with the people and. tell them the truth about what is happening in the country.

You know, Sir, they went around the country asking people how long is too long if it is good, and I asked a man that same question one day and the reply was "When you begin to feel it.", and that is what is happening in this country through bad financial management and planning. The people in this country are beginning to feel it and it is time that this Government wakes up and realises that sooner or later something drastic will happen in this country if it continues with this stupid planning in the stupid way it

is going at the moment. As the hon. member for St. Joseph said, a hungry man is a stupid man. The members in here and the top civil servants can buy theirs because they are doing their thing, but it is the man in the street who is in a very bad position today. I represent a constituency which can be considered as one of the poorest constituencies in the whole country, and I know what is the position. People are crying out because of the high cost of living.

Just let me give you an idea of what I am talking about. 6.30 p.m.

In the case of cod fish, in 1964 it was 54c a pound, and it is now being sold at 91c and a $1 a pound. Pig-tails were 75c, and they are now being sold at $1.20 and $1.25 a pound.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. We are not dealing with pig-tails and the things people cook with rice.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

I am the person to rule, and I am calling on the hon. member to deal with the Resolution and not with pig-tails or salted fish. Let us deal with the rice issue.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

With all due respect to you, Sir, the purpose of this Resolution is to deal with a food subsidy for rice. We are saying, for instance, that onions should be subsidised. You are importing onions into this country and people are asking for $1 a pound for them- This Item deals with subsidisation of foodstuffs, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

That is in the Estimates under the particular Head.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Look at Item 43, Sir. I am saying that the other items may be in need of subsidisation also, and that is why I have drawn them to the attention of the Committee at this stage. The Minister of Communications and Works would like to talk on certain things, but he does not want the people to hear the truth in this country. The Minister of Communications and Works and the Minister of Information do lot want

people to hear the truth.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:
I always tell the people the truth.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
Not even by accident can you tell them the truth.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:
I am not a professional politician like you.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
There is no point of order. The hon. member has three more minutes to speak.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
Mr. Chairman, as I was saying, the cost of pig-tails in 1966 was 65 cents and today the cost is between $1.20 and $1.35 a pound. In 1966 the cost of flat ribs was 65 cents and today the cost is between $1.20 and $1.30 - a 100% increase. All of this has been done by the Government of the people. Salted beef was 66 cents, and it is now sold at $1.30 and $1.60. Snout was 66 cents and it is now $1 and $1.35. Flour was 11 cents in 1966, and at the moment it is 30 cents and 34 cents a pound. Meal was sold at 13 cents, and it now sold at 19 cents and 20 cents a pound. Fresh pork was 75 cents, and it is now sold at $1.50 a pound. (Asides.) Corned beef is sold at $2.08 a pound in Barbados, while it is sold in Jamaica at $1.66 a pound based on the same dollar. These are the reasons why we say that the whole question of subsidisation should be reconsidered and that the food used by the small man, the man in the street, and the pensioner should be subsidised. I am speaking about the pensioners who get $8 a week. This is the type of food that we are asking the Government to subsidise,

I am asking the Government to realise that the antiquated three-tier system, which they praise so highly, is a bad system and should be removed immediately.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:
Mr. Chairman, for the information of the hon. member, if every commodity in this country came in

with merchants, distributors and sellers making the margin of profit that they make on rice, then too many supermarkets could not remain opened. I say that without any fear of contradiction. The profit mads on rice is practically negligible. It is one of the commodities that people sell more as a service than as a commodity for profit, if the hon. member wants to know.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

If you take out some of the intermediate people, or the people who make the profit before the consumer gets the rice, then more rice would be sold and at a cheaper rate. Too many people have to make a profit out of rice before it reaches the consumer.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Chairman, it is unfortunate that there has been so much cross-talk on this debate, because the seriousness of this debate is being undermined in some respect and wasted in the cross-talk that has gone on and the necessity for you to call on hon. members, from time to time, to withdraw statements which have been made. The implication of this is serious in the sense that it is a confession by the Government that they do not monitor the trade position even within the Caribbean adequately.

I do not think that the Government can hide behind bland phrases that do not reveal the true facts. It is a fact that the Government had a trade agreement with Guyana for Guyana guaranteeing a certain number of bags of rice per year. The Opposition know that. That agreement is public knowledge. What the Government are trying to say is that that means that they control the price being paid for rice and the effective number of bags of rice imported into this country. That is not true, because the importers can buy above the number of bags of rice. All the Guyana agreement does is to guarantee a certain level of bags of rice per year to come into this country, but you can buy above the number of bags of rice if there is a necessity in the economy for the extra number of bags of rice.

Now, what the Opposition have been saying all evening is that any Ministry of Trade that is efficiently run, is particularly well staff, with a Minister on top of the ball, would be able to forecast over a 12-month period the necessity for rice in his country, what is happening on the agricultural sector in Guyana, what expected shortfalls there are in essential foodstuffs such as rice and so on from his normal sources of supply, and he would have his finger on the press-button in order to find out where else he could tap alternative sources.

Now, I listened to the Hon. Leader of the House very carefully. He began by saying that in April there were only 450 bags of rice at one time in this country, and that we were in a criticial position. Now, 450 bags of rice at any time and in a criticial position could not be simply due to the fact that there had been

a drought in Guyana, because the drought could not have occurred overnight. There would have been a period of time when a proper forecasting Ministry, working properly, would have known that there was going to be a shortfall in Guyana and alternative sources would have been canvassed ever since, and, if necessary, Government would have gone into the economy instructing the Marketing Board to import the very rice and to distribute it cutting out the so-called little profit that we are now voting in this subsidy.

Let us make no mistake about it. We are voting a profit for the importers of this very rice under this Resolution. The Government must face up to facts. It is all right to run about the country telling the people that Henry Forde is a conservative, but if you examine reality and not campaigning, you will find that a conservative sits on that side.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order, Sir. I just want to have the record straight. I am being misquoted, probably, accidentally. I said that the average local weekly consumption of rice in Barbados is 2,000 bags exclusive of so and so, and from investigations carried out by the Ministry there were only 450 bags of rice in stock on the 8th June. I did not say April.

Mr. FORDE:

I accept the correction. I said it may be June and not April. On the 8th June 450 bags of rice were in the country, and you are having to depend on transportation that you are not even sure whether the rice is going to get here. There is no point in getting up and contradicting people who make statements that there is a shortage. Anybody who has been following trade matters will realise that in certain sectors "of foodstuff throughout the whole world there have been shortages and shortfalls, and that people have been looking for a long time for alternative sources of supply. 6.40 p.m.

All that has happened is that this Government is not on the ball because it is not even following trade statistics that you see in other parts of the world. It is not correlating the agricultural information with trade information that is available, so do not come in here and try to run us out by making all sorts of remarks. The position is that the Government now is not ticking and they must face those propects and tell the country so. Imagine coming to the House and saying you want a subsidy because we are in a crisis position.

No member of this Opposition, contrary to what the member for St. Michael South will think, will vote against subsidies. There are two reasons why we will not vote against subsidies, because the Barbados Labour Party has always recommended subsidies of foodstuffs, and the Minister of Finance in

the first Budget Speech in 1961 criticised that as bad budgeting; so they are now reversing their policy. Why don't you accept subsidising of foodstuff 100 per cent particularly on the low income policy? They criticised Dr. Cummins and said that he understood finance as well as their son Rudy understood finance when he was four, but at least the Barbados Labour Party had the conscience in 1961, regardless to what you talk, to recognise that there were certain basic needs in the community in which you taxed other people in higher income brackets and redistributed that way. That is basic. You can shout as you like from the housetops after now, but do not let me see any member from that side come to my constituency talking about people being conservative. Imagine a confession from the Government tonight that the private sector can do this job more efficiently than any Government body can. In other words, that private enterprise which they were so much against is more efficiently orgainsed that the Government can orgainse an agency in this country. I believe that the Government must be efficient. It is not enough to accept that. The Government must expose its people; but it has failed in its marketing policy; the Marketing Corporation is not performing.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

On a point of order, if the hon. member is talking about the inefficiency of Government, I would like to know what department would be competent to find out that there is a shortage of rice from Guyana, negotiate with the United States of America or the trade agencies of the world and make arrangements for shipping to get it in Barbados in time. I wonder if the hon. member thinks we are coming here for the subsidy then to get an agreement negotiated. The quality, brand, type and various samples of rice have come down already and it is only a matter of coming here today to get the money voted in the House of Assembly. All arrangements have already been made for the shipment of the rice. It is not now a matter of making negotiations about the rice. All arrangements as to prices, where it is coming from, how it is going to be shipped and the quantities have been made already, and we are voting this money so that by the time it comes the money would have been voted to make the subsidy at 25 cents per pound.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Chairman, on 8th June when there was a critical shortage of 450 bags, Parliament could have been called into being, if necessary, to have relieved that critical position so that you would not have had a merchant being given an opportunity to create the rush of which the Hon. Minister spoke. That is the whole point. There was what was called a conspiracy of silence. It is only at that critical moment that you found the Government acting. It does not take more than a few telephone calls if you are monitoring where your sources of supply are to know where rice is available. It would only take a couple of minutes in your Ministry if you are on the ball, because you can tell your Permanent Secretary what to do. So I am not going to be pushed off by saying that the Government is only now coming for the money.

Those who have been following West Indian affairs know that well over two months ago the Trinidad Parliament voted $3 million for subsidising rice, and if you had been following the debates in the Jamaican Parliament you will have seen that well over two months the Jamaican Parliament noted the shortage that was going to occur and had come to Parliament with a vote for the matter, and avoided

exactly what has happened here, that a few people have gone in and bought up and penalised the poor man who cannot get it. That is what I am talking about. I am not saying that this particular Minister when he went down and sat in for two weeks realised what was happening. Like a good mariner he reads the stars and he knows his charts a little better, but within the department there must be this inefficiency and he must accept it.

I am begging the Government because they won the election not to ignore some of the points given by the Opposition. In any society today, even in mixed economies such as ours, it is a recognised fact that the Government intervenes in the economy from time to time to straighten out certain situations. I believe that one of the reasons why we lost the election is because we were bold enough in our manifesto to say that we were going into importation on a competitive basis with the private sector. When that come out, the merchants of course rebandied themselves together around the Government bacause they said we were too left wing for them. Do not mind the propaganda you all were running by controlling C.B.C. and fooling people. You read the manifesto and you find that there was much more socialism than in yours. Read it now that you have time on reflection.

There is a fear in this country to intervene and teach your people at the same time how to participate actively in the economy. What is the difference, I ask you, between a few merchants who have got the same Bajans working for them and the Marketing Corporation or any other Government agency? Why can't it be done? You have to control sometimes and then you allow your private sector to have some sort of role to play, but not a dominating role, and it is with this type of situation that the Government must * be able to monitor information. I do not believe it is good enough for a Government to accept that sort of letter from Geddes Grant, with all due respect. You cannot rely on Geddes Grant to tell you accurately what is going to happen on trade statistics in the movement and shortage of things. That is not reliable enough. You should be on a Government to Government, Marketing Corporation to Marketing Corporation basis in Guyana and monitoring the position. This is one of the reasons why your external policy is wrong, because you should have your West Indian Ministry, instead of having luxuries in Venezuela, with your main trading stations and having active trade commissioners who are moving around and monitoring the trade statistics. It is tied in that way, but the Government has its priorities wrong. I don't think we should teach you all any more. Wait for the time; it has to come soon, then you will see policy. I do not think we should teach you any more because you do not realise the implications between external trade and internal policy and the effect it could have on the cost of living. It is obvious even for a blind man to see, but the Government has ceased to think. You have eighteen and you are happy. You manage to use all the media and you are riding high, but you are making all the mistakes and you would not get the chance again.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:
Mr. Chairman, before.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
The hon. member has spoken already.

Mr. HINDS:
Mr. Chairman, I believe that amongst the things that would seem to be wrong where Government is concerned is lack of expertise in buying, they lack expertise in marketing, and as we have learned from the mouth of the Minister here today, they lack expertise in the system of distribution. 6.50 p.m.

We cannot under any circumstances whatsoever accept the Government's reason, or rather the lack thereof, for coming here for this subsidy of $862,500 to subsidise this commodity. Their reason is a crisis reason, but we are saying it is the Ministry of Trade which created the crisis. Do not let the Leader of the House shake his head any more. I am telling the Leader of the House now to check to find out if a gentleman called Mr. Wells at Geddes Grant - get the information form the Ministry of Trade, today being the 19th June - and see if Mr. Wells did not call the Ministry exactly three months ago drawing it to the Ministry's attention that there was likely to be a shortage because Guyana could not supply. In other words, the Ministry had it within its possession that the situation could then have been what it is exactly today. Let all these Ministers who jump up every now and again, all these poppycocks from the other side, let them jump up and tell us what action the Government took between then and now.

I want to say this. When the Minister of Trade is reported in the Press as saying that there are a lot of people, and too many people in Barbados, who are prepared to make wild and irresponsible and sometimes downright untrue statements, the Minister of Trade was referring to himself and nobody else, I believe, in Barbados. He has proven himself in this issue and in other related issues as the most irresponsible and the most untruthful - and what bears this out in this latter respect is - I do not know if he knew then that two Ministers from his Government would have come here today to tell us that when it was drawn to their attention some time earlier this month that there would have been only 450 bags, that he was not then to tell the public the truth. In other words, are we to expect the listening public to pay any attention to what C.B.C, Rediffusion and the Press have to say? We are demoralising the community; that is what we are doing. We are taking the civil servants who have to put out these lying broadcasts, these untrue broadcasts, and making them tell all these lies. That is where we have landed ourselves today.

I do not want to touch on this question of the public debt, because we do not come to that under this Resolution, but nobody believes the figures that are published in that at all. Civil servants are running nervous in their jobs because they have just been placed in a position to serve a Government of untruth, and they just cannot function creditably in those spheres.

Mr. Chairman, on the question of this subsidy hon. members on this side of the House regard as finding money to pay the profits to the four importers - Bryden's, DaCosta & Musson, Geddes Grant and General Traders - but I do not see it in that light. I agree that if they are the people handling the trading of the rice or any commodity they must be given a reasonable mark-up on general turnover to compensate for their investment, but what we do feel is this, and I have told this House time and time again that there is no three-tier system of trade in Barbados, the Minister is an ignoramus when he gets on television and says so. You will find that rice is consigned to A. S. Bryden, General Traders or many of these other people, but the Government must find out if when a rice transaction goes on between R. L. Seale or any of the Roebuck Street merchants if it is carried out in the name of R. L. Seale or A. S. Bryden. You find out if there is not another agency in the same A. S. Bryden or somewhere else which is carrying out the second .amount of the trading where a commission is given, and by the time it gets to R. L. Seale you will have to carry out a lot of investigation to find out who is really making the profit before it gets down to the last retailer. The Minister has rightly said that the profits on trading in rice are negligible, but he means negligible when it comes down to the last trader, the supermarket man, he does not get the value of the bag because nobody worries today to buy the polythene or crocus bag the people are using now. You will understand then that a commodity such as rice is being handled because it is in popular demand, it is the staple diet of our people, and you must supply rice because the consumer is asking for it and you must have rice in order to get the other things, but we are now finding a situation where some of the supermarket people, the shopkeepers -- and particularly the other people over the counter -find that a person ..... and I am saying it is bad, but this is where we have to see exactly what our Prices Commission and our Price Control Inspectors are doing to protect the consumers.

I understand this same nuisance who is supposed to be a Minister is telling people they must be policemen and every sort of thing, but Mr. Chairman, you know as well as I do that we have, for instance, our fish market there on Bay Street. Government has gone and set up scales at the various markets where a customer can make his purchase and if he not satisfied with the weight he can put fish in the scale and have it checked, but Mr. Chairman, you and I know the day you get your weight checked it is the last purchase you will ever make in that market, the last day you will eat fish coming out of that market. Our contention then is that the Government must not expect the consumer to be a policeman in an exercise such as this, and when you talk about people hoarding rice, there is no rice to hoard. The Minister got on television and fooled everybody, made them believe Mr. Seale was lying about everything under the sun, and we have found now, Mr. Chairman, that the only liar in the whole world of food in Barbados is the Minister of Trade. This is a disgrace, we do not want our Government down to this, we do not want our Minister to be trading like this-7.00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, in the United States at the moment there is what is called the "Watergate Scandal". Right here in Barbados, if we follow up the activities of the Minister of Trade, it might lead us to the "Fresh Water Affair". It is not necessarily a scandal, but it might lead us to the "Freshwater Club Affair". I am serious when I say this. I am sorry that the Minister who employs the Minister of Trade is not now in his place, because I believe that I have every right in saying that the knowledge that is in my

possession is not in my possession alone with respect to this particular Minister.

However, Mr. Chairman, we are asking that the whole trading system be investigated. We must realise that the Guyana Rice Marketing Board is taking the rice from the farmers at that end and have entered into an agreement with Barbados, Trinidad, Jamaica and so on. We appreciate the fact that it would call for an organisation of considerable depth in business dealings to be able to handle this matter effectively; it would call for people who have been trained in commerce; it would call for people who are dedicated - the type of people that we do not see today. I believe that some of our supermarkets and other businesses are still keeping their doors open because you can find here and there a proprietor employing a member of his household or some of his relatives and, occasionally, he finds the type of worker in whom he can put some confidence, so that things do not go from bad to worse overnight.

However, what may be found is that there is no direct dealing, so to speak, between the Barbados Government and the Guyana Rice Marketing Board, but you will find that the Brydens, Geddes Grant, General Traders and others are the importers of rice and they do the actual trading with the Board. We appreciate all that is involved in the exercise: the shipping arrangements, documentation, invoicing and so on. All of this means something to an undertaking such as this, but we still believe that Government had sufficient in its grasp and should not have left the matter in the hands of others.

Sir, I will tell you that Mr. Wells did not get behind the Ministry of Trade for one day and stopped there. He went on and on.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order, Sir. I do not know whether or not the hon. member was in his place, but I read a letter from Geddes Grant (Barbados) Limited dated 4th April, 1973. I read at leat two paragraphs. It was addressed to the Ministry of Trade and Industry, etc., and it reads as follows

"Dear Sirs,

Attention Mr. Sealy

We confirm the writer's telephone conversation with your Mr. Sealy today concerning supplies of rice

from Guyana.

We confirm having advised that we have been in touch by telephone with both the Guyana Rice Marketing Board and Mr. John Fernandez Limited. The former advised that there is no shortage of rice, and the reason why we have not been receiving our orders is due to the lack of shipping.

Mr. John Fernandez advised that the M. V. MORUKA was in Guyana and was available to load rice immediately and that he had notified the Rice Marketing Board accordingly.

The writer again telephoned the Rice Marketing Board informing 1 them that the M. V. MORUKA was available and requesting that they ship at least 5,000 bags of rice by this opportunity. They told us that they would investigate the matter and either phone us or cable today, 4th April, to let us know what is being done."

This letter is signed by Mr. Wells to which the hon. member has referred.(Asides.) It was signed by W. A. B. Wells, and it says that there is rice; there is no shortage, and it is a question of shipping.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for all that he has tried to read. One thing the Minister cannot read out is what was said by way of telephone conversations between the Ministry and Mr. Wells on two occasions and not in the letter that the Minister has tried to read from time to time.

What we are saying is that Mr. Wells telephoned the Ministry drawing it to their attention .... (Asides.) Mr. Chairman, what the Minister is losing sight of is that three firms import rice on a quarterly basis. You will find that the rice shortage did not begin when A. S. Bryden's quarter began. We are saying that the Government had things well in their hands, so that when Mr. Wells telephoned the Government about a shortage of rice the Government should have been aware of it. We are saying that the Government ought to have been keeping a check on the stock. They should have been checking on the importers and all over the Island to know exactly what rice was in stock.

Sir, it is only on the 6th June, for the first time, that the Government were able to say that 450 bags were in the Island. You had 450 bags of rice; you consume something like 2,000 bags plus packages of

rice in a week, and you can still get a Minister to say that somebody was lying and there is no shortage of rice. We are told that his reason for that type of behaviour is that he did not want to scare people or allow the people who had money to purchase all of the rice.

I believe that there was no shortage of rice in the Minister's own storeroom, and there might never be a shortage, That is what the public is saying, and I believe it. We are saying that this is a matter which concerns the general public of Barbados, and some people rely very heavily on English potatoes. 7.10 p.m.

What is the position with English potatoes? All those commodities which would go to stretch it, as Bajans would say, until you could get rice, have fallen short as well. All we find now is that there is a vast irrigation scheme going on for the growing of pangola grass.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
This concludes the hon. member's time.

Mr. HINDS:
Yes, Mr. Chairman; I know you always look to get my time right.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:
All hon. members' time.

Mr. HINDS:
We will not be able to vote against this Resolution. What we are concerned with is the price at which we now have to buy it from the United States, and you should either dismiss the Minister of Trade or take all the salary he is supposed to get from now to the end of the year to subsidise this. It is unfair to the poor taxpayers to be paying a Minister to put the people in this kind of trouble and at the same time give him money. If the Minister had acted earlier or had paid attention and knew what was going on, we would have found ourselves, Mr. Chairman, being able to get supplies earlier. There is one thing we have got to warn about. In the past when the 180 pound bags that were coming to this Island were put on the scale, they weighed 170 1bs. and maybe 172 1bs. Seldom ever in a 2,000 bag shipment do you get two or three bags weighing 180 pounds, and we do not believe they were shipped short. We do not suspect the Guyana Marketing Board. We believe they were put on the scales in Guyana and weighed, and there is not a different scale that they are using from what we have here, but something is going on

somewhere, and that is where we have got to propose containerisation for the bringing of rice to Barbados, because the poor consumers have got to pay for each short weight in a bag.

Mr. Chairman, when a shopkeeper buys a bag of rice and it is ten pounds short, whenever his staff goes to weigh or measure rice by the pint pot, they have got to shake it level, and very often the hand may lean when they go to put it in a paperbag. They have got to do something to see to it that when the bag of rice is completed the retailer has not lost the whole 10 pounds or eight pounds of which the bag might have been short. I am sure the Government stands indicted. The Ministry of Trade above all stands indicted in a matter of this sort in having to saddle the taxpayers of this country, not with subsidisation because we stand for subsidisation, but to the tune of $862,500 at a time such as this.

My last point, Mr. Chairman, is that we are asked to vote money in a crisis because the situation with rice is critical. I wonder how critical the situation is with the money that has got to come out of the Stablisation Fund. I wonder if the money we are going to vote today is in the Stabilisation Fund.

The question that the Resolution for $862,500 do now pass, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this concludes Government Business for today's sitting.

In accordance with the assurance given to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and some of his colleagues, we will suspend the sitting at this stage for three quarters of an hour for supper and return so that they can carry on with their business.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended for three quarters of an hour.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:
I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 7.20 p.m

On resumption:-

Mr. SPEAKER:
The sitting is now resumed.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
Mr. Speaker, in accordance with the assurance given earlier today, the matter which the hon. member for the City wishes to move on the adjournment may now be dealt with. We have kept our promise and we are here now for the Leader of the Opposition to indicate which matters under Private Members' Business he wishes to deal with.

Mr. ADAMS:
Mr. Speaker, I move that Private Members' Business be now taken for half an hour.

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

Mr. ADAMS:

Before I move that Item 3 be taken I wish to make a comment on Items 1 and 2 under Private Members' Business. I cannot move that they formally be taken because they arc not for discussion, but as a matter of order they are now caught by the rule that if the Select Committee has not reported within three months - and the new Rules have been in force for more than three months - that the matter be recommitted to the House, and I would ask that the Clerk be directed, unless the House chooses otherwise, to recommit these two matters to the House. Both of them have passed second reading, I understand that both of them are generally acceptable, and the first of them should, and I very much hope, by now have been thoroughly analysed by the Law Officers. I do not know what the situation is on that, but they are caught by the three month rule, Sir. On 15th August, 1972 the Bill referred to at Item 1 was referred to a Select Committee and on 7th November, 1972 so was the second Bill.

If I could also make a comment on Items 5 and 6 - and I am sorry that the hon. member for St. Michael North West is not here because he gave the Committee great assistance - but there is a rule in the Standing Orders which says that you cannot amend an Act twice in the same Session, I do not think that this rule was before the Select Committee at the time when it made its report, because the hon. member to whom I have just referred did state that the Government was bringing down a Marriage Act amendment. Having dealt with this at second reading level on one occasion during this Session, as I conceive it, it cannot now be dealt with in another Act covering the same subject. That is only my conception, I would be glad if that whole matter could be referred to the Clerk perhaps to have the Law Officers' opinion because this would be a matter ultimately of the validity of a Statute as passed, whether a particular section of the Statute would be valid if it was passed in breach of the rules of the House of Assembly.

Having drawn those to Your Honour's attention, no doubt Your Honour will take the appropriate steps in due course and the Clerk will take note, I would like to move that Item 3 be the instant Order of the day.

Mr. SPEAKER:

We are moving a little fast. I first have to put the question that Private Members' Business be taken for half an hour.

Mr. ADAMS:

Has that not been put, Sir? Mr. SPEAKER No, it has not,

Mr. ADAMS:
I do beg Your Honour's pardon.

The question that Private Members' Business be taken for half an hour was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Hon. F. G. SMITH:
If Your Honour will just permit me, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition did say that the Select Committees had not reported within three months, and I think the rule says the House may recommit the Bills but he said he would tell the Clerk or something like this, and I want to get the procedure straight. The rule says "Where a Select Committee does not report to the House in the period set out in Standing Order No. 61(5) the House may commit the Bill to a Committee of the whole House and the powers of the Select Committee in relation to that Bill shall cease". It is not just a notice to the Clerk to put it on the Order Paper, it would have to be the House to do it. I do not want the Clerk to be in any invidious position nor do I want to take an advantage of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Please do not let us go off on that tangent, however interesting it is, let us deal with the Item of Private Members' Business with which the Leader of the Opposition wishes the House to deal. I think that the Officers of the House have taken due notice of what the Leader of the Opposition has said.

Mr. ADAMS:
In relation to the point which has been raised, Sir, I think it had better be put in the hands of the House. I move that Item 1 be the first Order of the Day.

Mr. CRAIG:
I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS:

I beg to move that the House recommit this Bill to a Committee of the whole House under Standing Order 62(6) which is to be found on page 79.

Mr. CRAIG:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS:

I beg to move that Item 2 be the next Order of the Day.

Mr. CRAIG:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS:

Of course this is the first time the rule is being dealt with and many brains are coming to bear on the problems, each one seeming to bring up a valid point. It has just been drawn to my attention that the instant Order of the Day is that the Bill be now amended, because having been recommitted to the House it now stands before the House, so hon. members will have now to dispose of the Minors Act one way or another. Having been recommitted to the House as Item 1 of Private Members' Business it is before the House for Committee stage.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I think the intention of the hon. member and the intention of the House must always be paramount, was this the intention, quite apart from the interpretation of it which is very important, of the hon. member?

Mr. ADAMS:

All that has to be done, I would imagine, is that further discussion be postponed on it. Either we put the Chairman in the Chair or we move that further discussion be postponed.

Mr. SPEAKER:

If that was not the original intention, we have arrived at this situation, unwittingly perhaps, and it can easily be withdrawn. What has been done can easily be undone.

Mr. ADAMS:

No, Sir, with great respect, what has been done can easily be undone but we have removed the powers of the Select Committee, so it is before the House. All that will have to happen now is that further consideration be postponed for another day. We do not need to discommit it in my view, I move that further consideration be postponed.

Mr. CRAIG:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS:

I now move that Item No. 2 be the next Order.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY:
Mr. Speaker, in accordance with Standing Order 62(6) I beg to move that this Bill be recommitted to a Committee of the whole House, and if I may also add, that further consideration be postponed.

Mr. CRAIG:
I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 8.20 p.m.

The question that Item No. 2 be committed to a Committee of the whole House and that further consideration of the said matter be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. ADAMS:
Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 3 be the naxt Order of the day. The position is that the hon. member for St. Michael West was speaking on the last occasion when the time for Private Members' Business expired, and he is not in his place at the moment.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The Rules make allowance for that.

Mr. ADAMS:
I do not know whether the hon. member for St. Lucy wishes to start his matter. He told me earlier that he wanted to deal with Item 7 next week.

I beg to move that Item 7 be the next Order of the Day.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I beg to second that.

Mr. GREAVES:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The point I should like to make is one which I think back benchers on this side must try to get established as a matter of right. I am not aware of the Rule under which the Leader of the Opposition can take it upon himself to determine which Order should follow next. I think that if a member has an item under Private Members' Business and he wishes to have it moved as soon as Private Members' Business is taken, I think that he has a right to do so. When I am ready to move my Resolution, I will see that I get the opportunity to do so.

Mr. ADAMS:

On a point of order, 'Mr. Speaker. All the hon. member has to do is to say when he wants to do it. All he has to say is that he is not ready to deal with it today. There is no disgrace in that. I am sure that no hon. member on that side can complain that I do not ask him when he wants his matters done.

The question that Item 7 be the instant Order of the day was put and resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:

NOES:

Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. F. G. SMITH; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. LOWE; Mr. GREAVES; Mr. HOPPIN, and Mr. WEEKES -10.

AYES:

Mr. ADAMS; Mr. CRAIG; Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS; Mr. BOLDEN, and Mr. FORDE - 6.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, Government Business having been completed, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 3rd July, 1973, at twelve noon.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

I beg to second that.

CARIBBEAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I believe you are in receipt of a letter dated 15th June indicating that I propose to raise certain matters on the adjournment. The first matter I propose to deal with is the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. Mr. Speaker, it would appear, indeed, strange that anyone on this side of the House is seeking to defend any actions on the part of anyone in the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. What we are seeking is not in defence of any particular individual, Sir, but it is something much wider than that. It is something fundamental to this country and the freedom that is guaranteed by the constitution of this country. I refer to the freedom of the Press and the freedom of speech.

I believe that this whole incident arises out of an interview with a Government Minister where certain members of the Caribbean Broadcasting News room Staff interviewed the Minister and, as I understand it, quoted the interview in a subsequent news broadcast. 8.30 p.m.

As a result of this, an emergency meeting was held to discuss the conduct of the members of the news room and the subsequent broadcast of the interview with the Minister. As I understand it, the members of the news room were told and called upon to apologise to the Cabinet of this country for the subject matter of what was carried in the interview. I believe the interview dealt with the question of whether the Minister of Trade was being moved from that Ministry to another Ministry, and the reply was that only the Prime Minister would know that answer. Probably it is indicative of the fact that the Prime Minister is the one who said that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Nevertheless, as a result of this, the members of the news room staff were called upon to apologise to the Cabinet or to the Minister, and were asked to make a written apology. Following this, a directive was issued at the request of the Government or the Cabinet that no Minister must be interviewed on the telephone and that if any member wanted to interview a Minister, he had to call the Minister's secretary, make an appointment to see the Minister, and even after seeing the Minister for a story who says that the news room staff may use it, this directive stated that the Minister must not, and the "not" was set out in capital letters, be used.

The directive also went on to state that if a Minister of Government asks a newsman to call him for a news story, the same procedure had to be gone through. I think this is an attempt, in a round-about manner, to bring in censorship of news items, because the directive went on to say that no rumour stories must be used, and that any Government connected story coming from a source such as Reuters, a Caribbean or other radio station or newspaper must first be checked out with the Government Information Service, if not the story must not be used. That is a direct attempt on the part of whoever issued these instructions, and the Minister of Information must accept responsibility for this, and on the part of the Board of C.B.C., to impose censorship on any story that is critical of the Government of this

country.

I go further. The directive went on to set out that the duty of the news room staff was to report the positive side of news. That is not all that has happened at C.B.C., because I challenge the Minister of Information to deny that when the recent increase in price of gasolene took place, a public opinion poll was taken to the reactions of Barbadian drivers and owners of motor cars, and having been broadcast at one o'clock and the opinion poll contained matter critical of the Government justified or otherwise, instructions came from a Minister of Government that the poll must not be aired on Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. That is not all, Sir. As regards the report of an incident in this House recently, directives were given to ensure that certain stories were carried which were supposed to be critical of the Leader of the Opposition. That is not all that has been happening at C.B.C.

Mr. SPEAKER:
You have two more minutes.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I know that and that is why I am going to rush through at this stage. On 9th February, 1972, a Memo from the C.B.C. General Manager was sent to the Director of News.....

Mr. SPEAKER:
That certainly is most improper. That has to do with the internal management of C.B.C.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
I gave you notice to deal with the general administration of C.B.C.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Which is a matter for the Board.

Mr. MOTTLEY:
You are not seriously suggesting, with all respect to you, that the administration of the Board and the conduct of a Statutory Corporation cannot be discussed in here.

I go further. On 28th December another directive was issued stating that all matters of news items, all scripts, production scripts, news extracts and anything that was critical and which contained direct criticism of the Government, C.B.C. or any national corporation and commercial interests must be referred to the Programme Director, the Assistant Programme Director (Radio and Television) before it could be broadcast on television. Is that not a direct attempt to bring about censorship in this country? When I gave a recent news item to the Press on this same matter telling them that I was raising the matter in relation to a directive which was issued on 11th June, censorship was put on that and C.B.C. only broadcast that the question of the administration of C.B.C. was being discussed without addding the special reference to the directive which was issued on 11th June.

I am glad to see that the Barbados Press Association has the guts and courage to stand up to the Government of this country and not be insulted by the Minister who calls them for an interview and then you get this English diplomacy with "Dear Robert, I am so sorry ....." and tries to fool people.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, Section 20 of the Constitution of Barbados under Article 3 guarantees freedom of expression in this country. I have on numerous occasion in speaking on the issue of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation raised the widest statements of the administration of that body in order to permit not only freedom in the reception of ideas and their propagation subject, of course, to the Libel Laws and other limitations contained under the Constitution, but also the widest dissemination of information on subjects of political interest and of other matters in this country. We have had it from a Minister of Government that they do not intend to allow political broadcasts and the Opposition will not have time to speak on these matters. This is symptomatic of what has now come to pass, because there is no doubt that although they are no laws restricting the freedom of the Press in Barbados, that pressure has been put from time to time on the news received at the Government controlled station and on the people who work there; some of them have had the fear instilled on them about their jobs, Ministers' wives have been known to telephone and interfere with them in the performance of their duties, Ministers themselves have been known to telephone and give directives about news briefing, and the Board itself conducts its affairs in such a way that by and large there is a blanket on any views that are critical of anything that they consider critical of the Government. 8.40 p.m

It is fantastic that in an age like this, in 1973, in a country like Britain where the Hon. Minister comes from you have a greater degree of freedom of speech than is allowed on the Government controlled radio in this nation. Not once would it be suggested at the B.B.C. that any member of Parliament would have the guts to issue the sort of statement that we see coming from the Minister. He would be assailed by the World Press and by public opinion, but you find in this country that on the other hand Barbadians are prepared to accept this. This is one of the most serious aspects of it, that public opinion cannot force the Minister to recognise where he is going wrong.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, the taxpayers of this country have foot the Bill to the sum of $2,100,000 in order to have the benefit of C.B.C. The Accounts and Statement for June, 1971 show that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation had a loan of that sum which the taxpayers paid, and any time a Minister tampers with the freedom of Barbadians it is a fraud upon the community and he stands indicted for what is going to happen in this country. He has deliberately frustrated the livelihood of black Barbadians in this country, and may God have mercy on your soul.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I do not like the terms in which you are speaking. Frankly I deplore the terms in which you are speaking.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, this is hardly parliamentary.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, if C.B.C. is going to issue instructions that if a Minister tells them something but does not want his name to be called they must not carry the story that puts at issue the integrity of the entire Government. If a Permanent Secretary tells you something and does not want his name to be called, carry it. The integrity of the whole Government stands at issue tonight, and that deception is led by the English Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I would ask the hon. member to withdraw the word "deception".

Mr. BOLDEN:

I withdraw the word "deception".

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On a point of order, Sir, I am further objecting. The Hon. Minister was elected by constituents in this country. He is no English Minister, this is no English Parliament. (Hon. P. G. MORGAN With a greater

majority than all of them put together).

Mr. BOLDEN:
Blame the ignorance of my black brothers.

Mr. SPEAKER:
I would remind the hon. member that he has one more minute.

Mr. BOLDEN:
Mr. Speaker, the entire staff of C.B.C. labours under the impression that unless they follow certain party lines and certain ministerial instructions they cannot get promotion up there, but when the time comes, as the Prime Minister said in here today, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, but if you tamper with people the wrath of the people will be exercised upon you and then the Lord will take you. I think, Mr. Speaker, it is but right that we defend the people at C.B.C. They have not been helpful to us, the public outside has been saying that the Opposition is not performing, but the public outside does not know that C.B.C. and the news media have not been carrying what goes on in here because they were under strict censorship, and I challenge the Minister to deny that.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Would the hon. member for St. Peter exercise his privilege to speak on this?

Mr. HINDS:
At a later stage, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The Minister has the right to reply.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:
Mr. Speaker, not only the right, but the delight. After all the hot talk that has gone on I am so pleased to have the opportunity to put things right. I never thought that I would have the opportunity in this House to say thank you to the hon. member for the City because I do not have very much to thank him for, but I will thank him tonight for the opportunity to clear up a few of the misunderstandings,

misapprehensions, misinformation that they have got hold of.

I would like first to begin to completely deny the last three statements that the hon. member for the City stated, something about taking off a public opinion poll on the gasolene prices. I have never heard of that personally and I deny that. That was number one. Number two, there were directives given that certain stories critical of the Leader of the Opposition would be broadcast, and I know nothing of that and have never known of it.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, constitutionally this country has got what is called Ministerial Government. Under the constitution the Minister is responsible for things charged under him but the Minister's reply seeks to say that once he does not know about it there is nothing in it.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is no point of order.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, I am going to ignore that kind of ignorance as a point of order. I would like to deny the third thing the hon. member for the City said, something about on the 28th December that all news items, production scripts must be referred to the News Director. I know nothing of that, and if you knew something of that, why did you not tell me before? If you had told me I might have been able to do something about it, but now let me tell you about the facts of this matter, if you want to know, which I doubt very much, but you may as well hear.

I have issued two directives in the last two weeks to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. One concerns the fact that people who are with the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation are not to call Ministers of Government and. Parliamentary Secretaries in their homes to ask questions which could ordinarily be dealt with in office hours. That is the first one, and I think that if any of you by any remote chance should ever become Ministers or Parliamentary Secretaries - and I address myself to both parties in the Opposition at the moment -

Mr. FORDE:

I object to that, there are no two parties in the Opposition. We must get the record straight. There are no two parties in the Opposition Party, that is the sort of remark that is uncalled for, infradig, not even

British.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Really, that is no point of order.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:
Anyway, they have given us some more misinformation if that is the case, because this is the information that we get from some of them, when they are privately with us, instead of amongst themselves. 8.50 p.m.

Now, the second thing that I would like to say is that the other instruction I have, given is that rumours should not be disseminated as rumours on C.B.C. It has been my instruction more than a year ago to C.B.C.that, as far as news reporting is concerned, C.B.C. should be much more like the Times and the Telegraph and not like the Mirror and the News of the World. I think hon. members will understand what I mean when I say that. We do not want rumours disseminated on our television station, I will give you the very example that the hon. member for the City talked about, Can you imagine anything more irresposible, as far as journalism is concerned, than a reporter, having completed an interview on a subject completely separate and distinct, then going to the Minister of Trade to ask him if he knows anything about a matter concerning possible Cabinet changes, etc., etc., concerning Ministerial responsibility?

Mr. SPEAKER:
The Hon. Minster has one more minute in which to reply.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:
Mr. Speaker, those were the only instructions sent to C.B.C. I understand that a directive was sent out by a staff member of C.B.C., and if the people to whom that instruction was sent wish to talk to the staff, the Manager, and subsequently to the Board, they are welcome to do so. However they have taken a very aggressive, unfortunate attitude issuing Government with ultimatums about 48 hours and all of this kind of thing. I can only say that it would be most regrettable and I hope it will never happen, but if we had to do without the company of Mr. Barnabas Collins for a little while I do not think the world would come to an end. If we had to listen to the forthcoming test matches by tuning in our transistors to Radio Trinidad, then I do not think that would hurt either. I hope it would not come to that, but at the same time, I do not think that these people who are supposed to be in the communications business, have been badly advised and it would be better for them to deal with things through the normal channels to try to rectify whatever it may be that they think is wrong.

Mr. SPEAKER:

This particular matter is now closed, I am afraid that the hon. member for St. Peter has forfeited his right to speak.

Mr. HINDS:

On what grounds, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER:

On the grounds that I specifically asked the hon. member if he would exercise his right to speak. (Asides.) Now that the Minister has replied, I am not going to allow the hon. member to speak at this stage.

Mr. HINDS:

There is no motion before the House, Mr. Speaker, that is critical of the Government, and that is what we were particularly trapping the Chair with. We have to get these things right. I am sure that if you were to re-examine the situation, you would find that it is within my right for me to speak now.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I would say that my interpretation of the word "reply" in Standing Order 30 means a reply. The Minister having replied, then you have forfeited your right to speak.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot reply to the Chair by sitting in my chair. I must rise to address the Chair.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am very sorry; you have forfeited your right to speak.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, it is not fair to me.

Mr. SPEAKER:
You have forfeited your right to speak.

Mr. HINDS:
Mr. Speaker, it is all right because you are in the Chair now and can say that I have forfeited my right to speak. It is not fair to me, and I am asking you to re-examine the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER:
Please take your seat.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member has slept on his rights.

Mr. SPEAKER:
There is no point of order.

Mr. CRAIG:
Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Leader of the House moved a motion for the adjournment of the House. As I understand it, the member for the City wanted to discuss a matter which he considered to be of urgent, public importance. The only Minister, I believe, who would have the final reply would be the Minister who moved the motion for the adjournment and he would be the Leader of the House. Any member on that side as a Minister can get up and reply. The Minister of Information, or the Minister of Health, or the Minister of Education has the right to get up and speak on the adjournment. Sir, I am not challenging your ruling, but I am trying to assist. At this stage, I would ask you to seek the advice of your Clerk, Sir.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:
On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I want to assist, Sir. The hon. member said that any Minister can get up and reply. The Ministerial System is not run on that basis. This is a matter dealing with information and the appropriate Minister replies.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let the hon. member take his seat. I am very sorry. The hon. member has forfeited his right to speak on this matter. 9 p.m.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, the matter I propose to deal with at this stage is the question of the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board and the question of the non-removal of the refuse from the streets of this country. We on this side of the House support the sanitation workers in their struggle to obtain better working conditions, to obtain their backpay which is due to them, and we feel strongly that the time had to come when these workers had to strike for their money, because it is indicative of the discriminatory society in which we live that politicians, top paid civil servants and everybody else got their backpay and yet these people from the lower walk of life had to wait and to struggle.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On a point of order, that is not true.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is no point of order.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I object to those remarks. The hon. member got up and accused me of telling lies.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I did not take it in that light.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

If the hon. member got up and said that what I am saying is not true, what is it?

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let the hon. member maintain silence. Obviously from a point of view of commonsense it does not

mean that you are a liar. It may mean that you information is just not correct.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

No, Sir, with all respect to you. Let me make this point again. What I am saying is that in this discriminatory society, politicians and top civil servants got their interim pay while sanitation workers had to wait for theirs and had to go on strike in order to get their money, and the Minister got up and said it was not true.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I do not consider that to be an innuendo to the hon. member.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

On a point of order, to say that Ministers got their backpay long before the sanitation workers is not true. We only got our backpay yesterday.

Mr. SPEAKER:

What is the point of order there?

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Members of Parliament got their backpay long before that and civil servants got their backpay before; so do not come with this nonsense that Ministers only got theirs yesterday. You mean you had so much to get that the Treasury did not have money to pay you.

As I was saying, Sir, we support the sanitation workers in their struggle to get better terms and conditions of employment, and we feel that if they had a grouse against the Sanitation and Cemetries Board at the moment, every effort should be made...

Mr. SPEAKER:

There is too much noise in the Lobby. Let there be silence. I will ask the Marshal to maintain silence.

Mr. MOTTLEY We feel that every effort should be made to lesolve this impasse between the sanitation Workers and the Sanitation and Cemeteries Bord, because the only people who would suffer as a result of this is the public at large. I went through my constituency in Bridgetown and as Saturday's paper would show, there had been right throughout the city refuse which had not been collected for weeks from Chapman Lane, Lightfoot Lane and various other parts pf the city. Even outside my constituency in Peterkins Road, a car could hardly get through the gaps because of the stuff that was there for weeks, and on the Harbour Road, there was garbage for weeks.

The Ministry of Health and the Minister himself would know that this would pose a health hazard to the people of this country, especially when you think of leptospirosis and such things. In the interest of the public, should the Government not see that this impasse which existed between the sanitation workers and the Board be speedily resolved if they cared about the welfare of the people?

There is one other aspect I would like to raise, and it is that I understand on the windward side of the Foundation School, a dump has been opened and the burning and smell of this dump is affecting both Foundation Schools. I gather that representation has been made by the Headmaster of the school to the Ministry and nothing has been done about it. I ask the Minister at this stage to investigate the matter and I also ask the hon. member for Christ Church South Central whose constituency it is to investigate the matter and beg the Sanitation Board to stop dumping the stuff there which would effect the school children. There is the burning and there are flies, and I understand that the school children are prepared to march in protest of the conditions that now exist outside the schools. I ask the Minister to investigate these things in the interest of the health of the community as a whole.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the scavengers and workers of the Sanitation Department in their struggle as part of the policy of the Barbados Labour Party, but Sir, I must admit that part of the problem that is now engaging the attention of the Government affects each and everyone of us, because we are all Barbadians and we all are suffering as a result of what is obtaining throughout the Island now, because despite the fact that we see garbage trucks moving up and down, there seems to be no planning and they have no system for carrying out this type of work and it is left undone. We are fortunate that we do not have some epidemic

as a result of all that has gone on during the past few weeks. It is regretted that the Negotiations Committee of the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board which met the Barbados Workers' Union allowed itself to be caught napping by the Union and the Union made a mockery of the Negotiations Committee in agreeing that the 40 hour week should end on a Friday. That is nonsense. We find that the scavengers are now putting in a forty hour week ending on Friday, and they are demanding in turn that these same scavengers be employed on Saturdays at time and a half and double time on Sundays. All this is

definitely bad business and something has got to be done very quickly,

We believe that there should be some rotation system where, if there are 200 or 400 scavengers, the forty hour week should stretch over the period, but that you would find some workers working on Saturdays, and those who work on Saturday would be off some other Saturdays during the month. I can say now that there are in the Ministry which looks after markets some cleaners who have not had a single Sunday at home in more than a year. Something has got to be done in respect of these people, and I am asking in the same way you penalise one set of people, why are you doing this in respect of the scavengers. I would say that the Scavenging Department in itself needs being scavenged; something has got to be done. We cannot allow the situation to go on as it has been, because throughout the Island before this situation crept up, in some districts there had been no scavening work done for sometimes three and four and maybe five months. 9.10 p.m.

During the past five months a scavenging truck has not gone into some areas at all, and you can imagine, Sir, the pile of refuse that has been spread over the place by the dogs and you know what this means to pedestrians who go barefooted and also what it does to the tyres of motor vehicles, and we are urging the Government to do something in this respect.

Mr. BOLDEN; Mr. Speaker, I rise to point out the difficulty which this country is going to face when on one side we hear about the Government's action to provide a laboratory in order to control leptospirosis in this country. I am sorry for the Minister of Health because he knows very well what the implications are when you have stuff piling up with the rats moving out of the cane fields now the canes have been cut into the rubbish and are now breeding to repopulate the whole country by a position which is caused by the inability of this Government to provide money to pay the scavengers. The scavengers went on strike and remained out for five days, and now they have come back there is this pile of rubbish and they are only doing one day's work per day in a 40-hour week. They are finding difficulty even in cleaning the streets. When they had been prepared to work they were told by the Board that they could not work overtime because there was no money to pay them, and we are running into a crisis because if they are only entitled to work for 40 hours on a flat pay, you have not got the money to pay them although the men are prepared to work day and night to salvage the situation and we are at the moment breeding rats and mice to create more cases of leptospirosis, brucellosis with rats moving from the stuff into the feed transferring it to the animals and this is where the crisis is going to begin. This is a sad state of affairs and I cannot expect the Hon. Minister to do more. He has the hospital on his hand, the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board behind him on the other hand, and I hope he does not get up and do like the Hon. Minister of Information and says he does not know, because it means that the Boards are running themselves, and that the Minister who says he does not know is drawing money under false pretences.

The Board must act, and if the Board fails to act the Minister appointed who directs the Board is responsible for its non-functioning, and if the Board must act it must have money to pay the people. If at this stage the people are willing to cooperate with Government, in 1973 do not ask them to work for love because everybody wants money for what he is doing. The Minister wants his pay, the argument advanced in here was that if the Minister is responsible for $3 million and $4 million a year, he is entitled to a decent wage of $2,800 a month, but one Minister so far in less than two months has told us he does not know what is going on, so I say now this is Government by default. I want the Hon. Minister to make sure that there is money, come to the House with a Resolution to increase the money to pay the people to clean the streets in Bridgetown. I heard them say that when the BLP was in power rats went into the hospital and bit a child's foot, and that is what is going to happen now.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I will adopt an entirely different approach. There is no doubt that the streets of Bridgetown are dirtier now than I have seen them in the last five years, and I say now bluntly that if any worker can go on strike for back pay something is colossally wrong in this country, especially when the Government has agreed to pay. Only yesterday and today we are paying backpay at M.C.W., and I would like to pay a tribute to them for their responsibility in not going to strike because they did not get their backpay. To go on strike for back pay is the height of irresponsibility and there can be no justification for so doing. The Government has agreed to pay it, it is a commitment to be fulfilled, they will have to get it, but to go on strike and hold up the whole country to ransom is the height of irresponsibility and should never be condoned.

Let us follow another aspect of street cleaning. The people in this country are equally responsible for keeping Barbados dirty. I have seen areas in which respectable people make no attempt to get containers to put the stuff in, other people wait until the truck passes at 6 o'clock and then dump the stuff after the truck has passed. Other people have bins, but they will go there and throw the stuff outside, so do not let us start blaming the Government alone, let us tell the people that health is vital to them and that they themselves must take an interest in their own health and welfare. You only have to pass through certain areas and see the careless, slovenly, insanitary manner in which the people of this country deposit the garbage they have. Middle class, upper class, all sorts of classes pay no attention to the proper disposal, making allowances for the fact that it is not being collected as frequently as possible, and the people must show an interest in their own health and welfare in order to improve it. The Sanitation Department with all its faults cannot do it, and I think anybody who has driven around and seen the concrete bins put for the disposal of garbage will see the bins empty and a million tons of garbage around it. They bring old motor cars, old prams and old trees which should not be disposed of in that type of way and dump them around the bins. A fellow will repair his house and bring all the old shingles and put them by the side of the road for the nails to damage people's cars, so do not let us just blame one department for the insanitary condition, it is the people themselves, you and I who do not tell our people that health is important to them and that they must not be spoon fed all their lives but they have got to take an interest in themselves. The Board can be blamed, the supervisors do not turn up to inspect, they go to work when they like, they just follow the vans and go and park somewhere and then get paid for 40 hours in a week. The Union is to be blamed, the Government to a large extent is to be blamed because this 40-hour week

as the hon. member for St. Peter has said is absolute nonsense, the Board is to be blamed, and the entire community is to be blamed because we do not pay it the attention we ought to. Let us put the blame squarely where it belongs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. FORDE rose.

Mr. ADAMS:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, have all these hon. members given notice of their intention to speak on this matter?

Mr. SPEAKER:

No they have not.

Mr. ADAMS:

I wanted to speak on the other matter and in obedience to Your Honour's direction that the only person who was entitled to speak was the hon. Member for St. Peter, I sat down and kept quiet.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That has not arisen. Standing Order 30(4)(c) states that any other member may speak for 3 minutes, so it does seem that there is the additional privilege of other members apart from those who gave notice of their intention to speak.

Mr. ADAMS:

All that means is that another member who wants to speak does not have to write in a letter four days before, he can come and tell you, but Your Honour has just told me that nobody has given Your Honour any notice of intention to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am most indebted to the hon. member. I am sorry but the hon. member has not given notice and therefore it is not for the hon. member to speak.

Mr. MORRISON:
Excuse me, Sir, if you would allow me, I just want to rebut a statement made...

Mr. SPEAKER:
The hon. member is out of order because notice was not given by you that you wanted to speak.

Mr. GREAVES:
On a point of order, Sir, we have run into a difficult situation here. I was observing the Standing Orders, and I know I did not give you any notice and I did not intend to speak, but I know also that the Minister of Communications did not give you any notice and he was allowed to speak and I am insisting that I must speak on this motion.

Mr. SPEAKER:
No, you cannot insist, please do not say so. He was inadvertently allowed to speak, and until it 'was drawn to my attention by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition I did not realise that in fact members had to give notice of their intention to speak to be so allowed. That was entirely my fault and his good fortune, but it will not be used by other hon. members. The hon. member for Christ Church West may speak. 9.20 p.m.

Mr. ADAMS:
I am suggesting that the whole speech of the Minister of Communications and Works be struck from the record.

Mr. SPEAKER:
I will not strike it from the record;

Mr. FORDE:
Mr. Speaker, I would not like it to be gone down in the permanent records of this House that a sanitation worker who goes on strike for backpay that has been due to him for a long time is doing a disservice to this country. That is contrary to the best principles of trade unionism. If it had been done in private enterprise, I would have observed a lot of fuss being made about it. It would be wrong for us in this House to make the sanitation workers believe that they are not entitled to the backpay. They should have been paid ever since and if they adopt strike action they are exercising their democratic right. I

want that clearly understood.

With regard to the issue on sanitation, I am deeply concerned that for five years - the Minister says for five years, but I think it was from the time of the abolition of the Local Government and from the time of the removal of the hon. member for St. George North who made some efforts - we are getting no direction particularly from the Sanitation Board. Some effort is being made, but it does not seem as though sufficient effort is being made. There is a storage of vans which are necessary. Mr. Speaker, it is true to say

that the streets of Barbados are worse attended to.

Now, the Hon. Minister raised the question that the people are setting a bad standard. Occasionally you will get this sort of thing, but where are some people to take the refuse they have other than to put it in the streets? If there has been an increase in the volume of refuse, then the Government must take steps to order its priorities. I am saying that you are not finding enough money coming forth in the priority areas of the country, but you are finding money being spent on buying plantations and houses that are not being used. Government cannot have it both ways. The other thing is that you are putting square pegs in round holes. Some of the people who are appointed to the Boards do not have a clue to what is going on or what is to be done, and they are not performing their function and giving any directions.

It would be unfortunate if you lay the blame at the feet of the workers involved in this area, or the trade union for that matter. It seems to me that the blame must be placed squarely on the Government and the politically appointed Board. The Government should try not to appoint political people in these positions so that the Boards can function properly.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The Minister may reply for 7 minutes.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:
Mr. Speaker, I am indeed grateful for the information which hon. members have brought to my attention. I would like to tell them that in my constituency the situation is no better and, if anything it may be a lot worst. I have visited all over this Island, and I am completely dissatisfied with the state of affairs. I would like to point out, however, that short of going and cleaning the streets myself, and that may be an eminent proposal of mine, the matter of collection and disposal of refuse was vested in the

Cemeteries and Sanitation Board by an Act of Parliament. There are Health Regulations pertaining to the collection and disposal of refuse, and also Health Regulations pertaining to offensive matter which are there for the assistance of the Board in containing this matter.

I would have to agree that the Board, judging from the results, have proved inadequate to deal with the problem. It is not easy for me, at this stage, to state why this is so, but it will have to be looked into very carefully. I can tell the hon. members of this House, that I am already looking into the matter and already getting proposals to deal with the collection and disposal of refuse in this country on a more efficient basis.

There are a few inaccuracies which have been made, but I do not consider them very great. I would point out that the current problem with the Sanitation Board as related to me is due to the fact that the Board have not paid workers for the days on which they were on strike. They have pointed out that to do so would be setting a very dangerous precedent.

As regards the matter pertaining to the Foundation School, I have issued my instructions to my Permanent Secretary to be relayed to the Board. I have gone further than that and requested the Chief Public Health Engineer to visit the site and submit a report, and I must admit that I am not satisfied with the conditions as reported by the Chief Public Health Engineer. Again, I have given adequate instructions regarding this matter. As you all know, I can give instructions, but I do not carry them out personally. I would like to assure you that I have the best intentions towards the people of Barbados with regard to health, and given adequate co-operation on all sides, I will do my utmost to see that the conditions pertaining to the collection and disposal of refuse are better than they have been in the past.

Mr. SPEAKER:
The time has now expired.

ADJOURNMENT

The question that the House do now adjourn until 3rd July, 1973, at twelve noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 9.30 p.m.