

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1971 - 76

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FIRST SESSION OF 1971-76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

(Tuesday, 26 November, 1974.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12. 1. 0 p. m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour N. G. A. MAXWELL, LLB., (Sjpeal:

Hon. C. E. TALMA, C. B. E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, (Minister without Portfolio); Mr. R. St. C. WEEKES, J. P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J. P., (Chairman of Committees); His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, (Deputy Speaker); Mr. J. B. SPRINGER; 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; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Health and Welfare); and Hon. L. E.

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

Prayers were read.,

Mr. BOLDEN entered the Chamber and took his seat.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am pleased to announce the presence in the distinguished visitors Gallery Mrs. Shirley Chisholm, who as you all know is a U. S. Congress woman and a daughter of the soil, and also her husband, Mr. Chisholm.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Minutes of this Honourable Chamber, for Tuesday, 19th November, 1974, are before you for confirmation. If there are no alterations or amendments these Minutes will be confirmed. The Minutes are hereby confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning I am commanded to lay the Fifth Annual Report and Financial Statement of the Barbados

Development Bank at 31st March, \$54.

On my own behalf I am commanded to lay the. Prison Rules, 1074, and on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology the Chairman's Report of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation for the Financial Year July 1971. - June 1972.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C E. TALMA:

On behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$1, 435, out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1974-75 Part I -Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1974-75, No. 13, which form the Schedule to this Resolution.

Also on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend certain enactments to revise the fees, fines and penalties thereunder.

On behalf of the Minister of Housing Lands, Labour and National Insurance, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Sugar Workers' (Provident Fund) Act, 1968.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to incorporate the Barbarees Church of Christ.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

Mr. HOPPIN:

Mr. Speaker, I am asking permission to give notice of this question on behalf of the hon. member for St. Andrew.

Mr. SPEAKER:

If there is no objection leave will be granted. There being no objection, leave is granted.

Mr. HOPPIN:

To enquire of the appropriate Minister

Is the Minister aware that:

1. there is a world wide food crisis;
2. the Government has a lot of land which is either under cultivated or not cultivated at all;
3. this land can be used for the production of food and the growing of sugar cane which is very lucrative in the World Market;
4. the 1974-75 Estimates provide an amount of \$65, 000 for food for prisoners;
5. there are several acres of land at Codrington Plantation which were recently planted in yams and sweet potatoes, and that the workers from Pine Plantation had to be taken from the Pine and brought to Codrington to cultivate the land there;

6. in some countries, for example, Guyana, no money is provided in estimates for food for prisoners and they have got to provide their own food in lands in Guyana;

7. for many years the prisoners were employed at Codrington cutting soft stones, which is a more laborious task than cultivating land for food crop production;

8. some form of physical exercise would be a good source of occupational therapy for the said prisoners?

In the light of the above, would the Minister give serious consideration to having the prisoners employed on lands owned by the Crown for the production of food and sugar cane, so that the provision currently made in the Estimates for prisoners be reduced and the foreign earnings from sugar be increased?

2. And further that technical advice be given to the prisoners from qualified persons in the Ministry of Agriculture?

Mr. HINDS entered the Chamber and took his seat,

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr, Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend certain enactments to revise the fees, fines and penalties thereunder be now read a first time.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Sugar Workers' (Provident Fund) Act, 1968, be now read a first time.

Hoh. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Mr. FORDE entered the Chamber and took Ms seat.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill to incorporate the Barbarees Church of Christ be now read a first time.

Mr. FORDE:

I beg to second that.

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology I beg to give notice that Oral Replies to Parliamentary Questions No. 128, asked by the hon. member for St. Lucy, No. 148, asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph, No. 150, asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph, No. 196, asked by the same hon. member, No. 198, asked by the same hon. member and No. 230, asked by the same hon. member are ready. 12. 20 p. m.

Hon. C E. TALMA; Now I will try to reply to all of these if we have the time. There are quite a few more. If there is any understanding -although there is not much understanding in here. As I have said, I intend to deal with these six today; and I will hold over the balance for the next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. C E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 4 which stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology, and which is to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Order entitled the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1974, be the first order of the day,

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, this is the usual Order which is brought down every year and which has been continuing since 1956 in connection with sugar levies with which I think most members are conversant.

The Resolution is to approve the Order entitled the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1974, made by the Minister responsible for Agriculture on the 21st of November, 1974, under the provisions of Sections 3(1) (d), 3(1) (e), 3(3), 4(4) and 4(5) of the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Act, 1947 (1947-13) as set out in the

Schedule hereto, be approved.

Now, the Addendum sets out that this Resolution seeks approval of the order I have just referred to made by the Minister of Agriculture on the 21st November, 1974. The Addendum shows that by an agreement made in 1956, the levies on sugar and fancy molasses manufactured in the island authorised under the Act were allocated between the Rehabilitation Reserve Fund, the Price Stabilization Reserve Fund and the Labour Welfare Fund.

The basic levy in respect of all sugars and fancy molasses manufactured in the island was fixed at \$13. 20 per ton of sugar and per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses up to 1973.

The basic levy on til sugar and fancy molasses manufactured in 1974 has been fixed at \$40. 00 per ion of sugar and per 290 wine gallons of fancy molasses.

This is as a result of the budgetary proposals of the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning on the 5th April, 1974 when the Minister said that "it has been the policy of this Government to utilise portions of the levies on sugars to finance expenditures on social programmes that will benefit the board mass of the people. Housing is a notable example of this policy. In the light of the substantial increase in the price being received for sugar, I therefore propose to increase the levies on sugar from \$13. 20 to \$40. 00 per ton. As in the past, the revenues so derived will be used to finance Government's social programmes, particularly Housing. "

So, Sir, it is as a result of the budgetary proposals made in April this year that the levy has been increased from \$13. 20 to \$40. 00 per ton. The levy allocated to the Crown will be for the benefit of the Labour Welfare Fund \$12. 00 per ton and for the Provident Fund \$13. 40 per ton. The total production of sugar and fancy molasses for the 1974 crop is 108, 560. 416 tons and- the levies to be collected are in respect of this tonnage.

So, the order which I had the privilege of signing on the 21st November reads: -

"1. This order may be cited as the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1974.

2 There shall be raised -

- (a) on all sugar manufactured in Barbados during the year 1974 a levy at the rate of \$40. 00 per ton;
- (b) on all fancy molasses manufactured in Barbados during the year 1974 a levy at the rate of \$40. 00 per 290 wine gallons.

3. All sums due in respect of any levy imposed by paragraph 2 shall be paid to the Sugar Production and Export Control Board by the 30th November, 1974.

4. All monies received by the Sugar Production and Export Control Board by way of levies under paragraph 2 on all produce manufactured in Barbados during the year 1974 shall be paid by the said Board to the Sugar Industry Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Board, the Sugar Industry Price Stabilization Reserve Board and the Crown in the following proportions -

(a) to the Sugar Industry Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Board at the rate of -

- (i) \$12. 00 per ton in respect of sugar,
- (ii) \$12. 00 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses;

(b) to the Sugar Industry Price Stabilization Reserve Board at the rate of -

- (i) \$2. 60 per ton in respect of sugar, and
- (ii) \$2. 60 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses;

(c) to the Crown at the rate of -

- (i) \$25. 40 per ton in respect of sugar, and
- (ii) \$25. 40 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses. " 12. 30 p. m.

The Order is signed 21st November, 1974. It is the final decision of the Cabinet, and this is the Order we are dealing with and not the one which was circulated last week which has been withdrawn. So let there be no misunderstanding. I will be willing to answer any questions which may be asked, but I want to remind hon. members that if they have the interest of the cane growers at heart as they profess to have or the interest of the poor working classes at heart as they claim to have, they will see that this Resolution is passed, because the cane growers are awaiting their money and this is the final Order increasing the rate to \$25. 40 per ton in respect of sugar and \$25. 40 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses from which we can build more houses and do more to assist the working classes and the

ones in the lower income groups. So that increasing the price from \$13. 20 to \$25. 40 in respect of sugar is a very timely move and was very well thought out by our Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that,

Mr. BOLD EN:

Mr, Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the House says that if we have any interest in the cane growers of this country we would allow this Resolution to pass. What he means is that if we have any interest in the Government collecting more from a commodity which they did not want to see in this country, we should let it pass quickly, because the statement about not seeing another cane blade in Barbados stands out vividly in the minds of those cane growers who are crying today for a clear-cut policy on agriculture in this country.

Mr. Speaker, it is not for me to deal too much with the question of the position of cane growers in this country especially now that the price of sugar has risen tremendously worldwide. The Leader of the Opposition, I suppose, will deal with that this evening, but I must say now that the Leader of the House should have spoken to the Prime Minister last week when he delivered the Emergency Budget. Instead of exempting fertilisers from the 5% Sales Tax which has been levied on most commodities in this country, the Prime Minister should have removed the \$20 per ton which was imposed on fertilisers earlier in the year, because it stands to reason that with the high price of sugar which is now being paid, the position that Barbados has not been able to meet its quota over the last three or four years, the position that the weather pattern is again changing which is making it very favourable for cane growers in Barbados and the Caribbean, I would have thought that that \$20 per ton on fertilisers would have been reasoned so that the cane growers would have been able to fully fertilise the fields which have been inadequately fertilised earlier this year, and therefore raise the level of production which is expected in the coming year.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the time is ripe now that the Government should come out with a clear-cut policy on agriculture and further than that, once again I am calling for the Government to declare a land use policy in this country. If we are going to look at this stage to sugar as a means of bringing in the necessary foreign exchange, and there is no doubt that they had banked on the question of tourism overtaking sugar, the world economic position is such that tourists will not be coming to these shores in the same numbers as before, and even if we match the numbers we are not going to match the dollars which are left on these shores, because the people who are coming will come on a package deal. They will spend as little as possible and will enjoy the four "Ss"

Which Barbados is now famous for introducing to tourists, the sun, the sand, the sea, and somebody can add the other one if he cares.

Mr. Speaker, sugar is now an important commodity in this community. As I see, it is going to be an important commodity over the next three or four years, and that is as far as the experts can forecast that the high price of sugar will remain, but if what is being said is correct, that is, that the Chinese are now beginning to appreciate that sugar is sweet, if we can only get every Chinese to take one spoonful of sugar, you can see the heavy impact it will be on the sugar producing countries. For instance, in a place like Antigua the price was \$1. 25 a pound up to last week-end. It means not only in the outside world is there going to be a high market for sugar, but even in the Carifta countries you will find we have a ready¹ market for sugar. This is something which I believe the Government should pay careful attention to, but in doing this, Mr. Speaker, one has got to take another serious look at sugar production in this country.

The first thing I am going to do is invite the Government to call for an immediate investigation into the operation of Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. This has come about through the amalgamation of all the factories in Barbados, When I first raised this question in here, the first plan was to pay these shareholders of Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. a dollar a ton more than they paid other persons. It is after raising it in here that I understood that plan was abandoned. Now the next thing which is Worrying not only the shareholders of Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. but I am saying now it is affecting the small cane farmers, is that they have now set about on a policy of telling people where they must send their canes. My view is that that cannot be justified. The people in St. James are being told that they must send their canes to Vaucluse. With the increased price of gasoline and no provision having been made to offset freight in the sugar industry, you can see what is going to happen to the cane farmers. This is something the Government should immediately investigate.

Another point is that with the present operation of Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. they can manipulate money from factory to factory and people who go there are given a different preference money which ends up with a different price for sugar cane. We had the spectacle last year where canes sent to Andrews, when Andrews broke down, were taken to Guinea with a result that Guinea paid a higher price than Andrews, and up to now I have not been able to find out whether the suppliers of canes to Andrews got the benefit of the increased price or whether the increased price was paid into the coffers of Andrews factory. This is something which Government must take a careful look into now. I know that in St. Philip you cannot take canes from another factory where you are supposed to get a higher price; they say you should send them to a particular factory. If you want to give everybody a fair share of the money, you must now force Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. into the position of buying canes either by its sucrose content or paying everybody a basic price regardless of where you come from. I suggest this is

something which needs immediate attention, because many people are dissatisfied; even the shareholders are dissatisfied with the operation of Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. I am saying openly that there is such an operation going on between the Sugar Producers' Association, the Sugar Manufacturers Association and Barbados Sugar Factories- Ltd. that even the members themselves cannot get the whole net untangled, and it is time if Government is going to look at sugar in this country, to step right in now and hold an investigation into what is happening with sugar in this country, because it is the only commodity which Barbados can safely rely on even in a period of drought 12. 40 p. m.

The next thing, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with is the question of training in agriculture generally. Earlier this year the Sugar Producers' Association had a training session I think somewhere in Bridgetown where statements were made about the production of sugar etc. Nobody will admit that in the sugar industry today the average age of the worker is 55 years, but what the big problem in agriculture is, is that nobody is prepared to offer comprehensive training to people who are coming into agriculture. Agriculture cannot be said to be infra dig if you offer people the training and skills to utilise mechanical instruments because the days of hoes and forks have gone. If you are going to take a man of 50 years and put him on a tractor and expect him to work as good as a man who has been trained you will be sadly disappointed. It is time that somebody looks at the training of operators in the agricultural sector. As I said, nobody wants to go back into the fields in a three-pea hole or a one-pea hole, and this is where I believe an investigation into the sugar industry can work marvellously. I believe this is what is necessary, and it is time that somebody takes an interest in it and not the sort of interest which is taken by the Government that when the price is right for sugar you come and say that the Prime Minister is such a wonderful man that he had the foresight to know about it, when three years ago the very Prime Minister was saying he would like to see the day when he could drive around Barbados and not see a cane blade. I believe what the Prime Minister really meant was that he would like to see the physical development of the sugar cane reach such a point that you do not see the cane blade. (Asides).

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member always wants to make a noise.

Mr. SPEAKER:

If you are speaking on the Resolution cut out personalities.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, let us look once again at the question of the Provident Fund. Many workers have toiled in sugar all these years, the Provident Fund has been set up and the payments only came in the bye-election of 1970. Nobody benefited from the Provident Fund until 1970, thanks to Sir Herbert Grantley Adams who had the foresight to resign then, a bye-election came about and the Government exerted itself into paying out money from the Provident Fund. Thereafter the problems which have arisen, the agonies and the long tedious walks and waits which the sugar workers had to go through are such that

many of them have died without being paid. I know you live in an agricultural community, Mr. Speaker, and other members who live in agricultural communities can tell you of the number of people who turn up at their residences on Sundays to talk about the difficulty the workers have gone through. I have been told that there is no money in the funds and the Board is not meeting until the end of January. (Hon. F. G. SMITH Who told you so, the Minister?).

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let the hon. member who is sitting maintain silence.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

This is not a Sunday School, did the Minister tell you so?

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, one should really be deaf to certain asides.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have ears, you have no ears.

Mr. BOLDEN:

If it is not true, why is it that the Board has not met? Why is it that people who had been drawing money are not now drawing money? If you are going to increase the levy and you have increased the old age pension, you have put a 5% surtax on commodities, except food, I would suggest that the Government see to it that people who are in need of it should be regularly paid. People should not have to be walking around asking him why they have not got their money.

Another thing is this, Mr. Speaker: I raised the question in here before of certification of a person who has worked in agriculture for many years. That has also been another bug bear in this operation. Many managers at plantations find that they have only recently been appointed and cannot certify that these persons were working for so many years. Some people worked from the time they were 10 or 11 years of age and have worked at two or three plantations, but the overseer does not know them and he does not sign any certificates. I think it should be done easier than this so as to enable those persons who benefit from the Provident Fund. It is coming from sugar and they should be able to benefit. Many people have waited for years because somebody refused to certify a document stating that they worked in the sugar industry.

Last week I raised the question of the Comfith production. The Leader of the House said they were hoping that Comfith would be tried in the 1975 cane reaping season but he has not given a report on the relationship between the Comfith people and the Government and Barbados Sugar Factories Limited, because I can say there are raging disputes between the Sugar Producers' Association, the Barbados Sugar Factories Limited and the operation at Uplands which is supposed to produce the Comfith for the Island. This is something many people want to know about. It is part of the sugar industry and it is no good the hon. member saying he is reading part of the report and not the other part. It is time that they come to Parliament and make a disclosure as to what is happening in Comfith. After I raised the matter I read in the newspaper that there is some consultant body dealing with Comfith. I am worried about its competence because when the Prime Minister introduced the Resolution in this House he said that not even he knew what the technicalities were. This is something which will cause serious concern to those who are involved in sugar in this country, and now that we know from the newspapers that the Canadian side of Comfith has withdrawn its support from the scheme, I would like to hear the Leader of the House tell us what the position is in respect of Comfith. We have put a lot of money into this operation and would be sad if there is another stalemate of an operation which dies in a substandard state. The Leader says it will come into production next year. 12, 50 p. m.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, there is one other point that I would like to raise. For some time now many small farmers have been crying out for the Ministry of Agriculture to assist in the cultivation of their plots. I heard a former Minister of Agriculture in this Chamber saying that we were going into an agrarian policy of having five acre lots and four acre lots.

I can say that with the increased price of sugar, cultivation has now become a major point for small holdings - people holding three to ten acres. I have called for many years and I believe that I have asked questions in this House about the number of tractors and the availability of cultivation equipment owned by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Here again we talk about having a socialist policy, and in this particular instance I will say that every plantation in Barbados has cultivated land which was out of cultivation for a considerable number of years, and if you take a driver up - by Warrens you will notice that two spots where old iron was (of several years have now been cultivated. Look at grasslands which were non-productive and you will see that people are still trying to cultivate canes because they can afford the added expense to bring these into cultivation.

Large plantations which have machinery can now utilise that machinery, but if we are to spread this increased price of sugar over the whole community, I believe that the small holder with two, three or

four acres should come in for the 1975-76 crop season.

On this question of cultivation, it shows once again that even the Agricultural Department is not aware of what is happening around the world. They are not even equipped at this stage to offer assistance in cultivation. This is something that the Government should pay careful attention to. We have asked on several occasions that the Agricultural Department should do something. We have the spectacle of our Agricultural Development Corporation having to duplicate equipment held by the Agricultural Department at Graeme Hall lying down. We have a running fight between the members of the Sugar Producers Association and a member of the Agricultural Department, a high ranking officer, who is demanding that certain equipment be brought back although they are experimenting with the planting of canes.

It is time that the Government holds an investigation into the Department of Agriculture. I will call for a debate in here and call the names of at least two senior officers of the Department of Agriculture who should be removed from their posts because they are a total and complete hindrance to the development of agriculture in this country. One gentleman wrote an annual report that took up a foolscap page on one side and half on the other side. (ASIDE: Name him) I cannot name him because Mr. Speaker will ask me to withdraw it. However, it is time that something be done about the Agricultural Department.

With those few remarks, I hope that the Government will take a firm hand in agriculture and create a policy which will give to those who are trying some sort of assurance. I heard a statement today by an ex Minister of Agriculture telling us about unused lands of Government; That, I believe, is an indication that even he is worried about agriculture by the Government or the new Minister of Agriculture if he can get over the problems that he has with some of his technical advisors.

Mr. HOPPIN:

Mr. Speaker, the Shadow Minister of Agriculture made the point that the Provident Fund cannot pay. I cannot agree with him because as a member from the rural area, and an agricultural one, I can say that whenever the Provident Fund sends out their cheques, there are many people in that area who can have them serviced.

I know that the hon. member loves agriculture, but I do not want him to stain the name of the Government by saying the Provident Fund is not paying. He made some valid points, but members of the Opposition always try to carry it a little too far. This cane blade talk has come up again. I think that that has been drawn out of its perspective.

The Government has come here recently with a big agricultural programme for over \$7 million. I am sure that the member made a beautiful contribution on that, and he knows that the Government has an agricultural policy, but it takes time. The Minister is not in the island. He has gone abroad to gather information so as to put this policy on a sound footing; -but, as would be expected, they will always try to flog something, and the only point they can make is this cane blade question.

We are getting more for our sugar than before. I heard the hon. member say on the last occasion that we should pay more for green canes from which we will get more sugar. Sugar is in great demand. We have built up our economy on sugar, and I think that the Government has decided to use this \$7 million to push this agricultural policy, and I am asking members of the Opposition - because I made a note that he is asking the Government about their policy - I am asking them to desist from going around talking about the cane blade policy, and encourage people to plant more canes.

This is our country. If you go away from it you will have to come back. Do not run it down. I am appealing to the Opposition because I know that my Government is working towards that; and so I hope that I will not hear this talk about cane blades anymore.

Now, the hon. member made some very useful points about sugar factories. As a small holder myself I find difficulty in getting canes reaped and some of us are told where we have to send them. I feel that every means possible should be used to help cane farmers, and also that cane farmers should come together and have a viable association whereby they can go to the Government and ask for help.

There are many places in my constituency and places throughout the country where there are lots of land not being used. I feel that these agricultural stations should come to the help of some of these poor people, I have been thinking of it myself, and I feel that the Government could assist some of these poor people in the cultivation of their land because you must have mechanical cultivation.

We are finding it difficult to get people to work with hoes and forks, but the Government could help these people to cultivate their lands and plant crops so that we could in due course cut down the balance of payments which is already so high. I am appealing to members of the Opposition that they can also assist - especially the Shadow Minister - with this programme. 1. 00 p. m.

I doubt very much they would ever be successful in winning this Government, at least not with this policy with which we are going forward, but they should not detract from the ideas of the people who

are interested in building up this industry which has been so helpful in expanding the economy of Barbados.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr, Speaker, it is not often that one listens to a speech from the hon. member for St. George North and I should like to congratulate him for having spoken.

Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I have to differ from him in his reproach of the Opposition. I think what has really happened to the Government is that all of a sudden the Government has caught hold of the catch phrase the Opposition runs the country down, and I think if there is one aspect of policy on which the Government should not use that catch phrase, it is in relation to the agricultural policy and the policy of sugar. If there is one thing the Opposition has been consistent on in this House and indeed to the country, it has been on the necessity to maintain a strong development in agriculture, since we always recognise that no matter what progress a country makes in its manufacture or tourism or service sectors agriculture was and does remain the bulwark on which its progress eventually depends, and I think not only did we make this clear in our manifesto, but we have made it abundantly clear over the last three years in this House of Assembly, and if ever there was a member of the House who has consistently defended the necessity for progressive policies in agriculture, it has been the Hon. Shadow Minister for Agriculture, the hon. member for St. Joseph.

I want to say that whenever we come to this House to discuss a measure which made the agriculture and particularly the sugar industry proved its dependability of this country, the Opposition is glad to commend any such signs of the dependability, and instead of lacking in patriotism, we have been more patriotic in this respect, and I think it is, if I may say so, rather ungracious for the hon. member who is usually known for his graceful and thoughtful way of looking at political dissention to really on this occasion take us to task on such a measure

Mr. Speaker, for me, however, this Resolution raises the international implications of sugar, because were it not for the high world market prices prevailing then in this year of rapid growing inflation, we would not at all have been able to meet part of the short fall not, only on our balance of payments, but of our foreign reserves, and the strain on the internal economy would have been much greater.

I said, Mr. Speaker, in another debate that the sugar producing section of this community must be strongly commended and I believe that we all should echo on the occasion on which they demand it congratulations to the planters of this country, both large or small; for coming to the rescue of Barbados as they have so often done. I do not need to carry their brief. I think the facts speak for themselves, but

the political development of the country has been such that we are rather tardy in congratulating people who render proper service particularly if we suspect that there is a danger of it being used against us on the hustings whenever those may be. I am not scared of the hustings. If I believe that Jack deserves his jacket, I am going to give it to him, and I want it recorded that I think that regardless of what is the political past and the social contribution of the plantocracy of this country, that historical events are now forcing them to recognise that they are as much a part of this community as any of us, and certainly we should not as legislators deride them on this instance, but really congratulate them. As I say, the implications of the international scene although immediately favourable are not in the long term as hopeful as we would want, and I do not anticipate that these high prices will continue beyond possibly one and maybe two years. There are certain signs which lead me to this conclusion, Mr. Speaker. One is of course the fact that in the short term the United Kingdom has at long last persuaded her Common Market partners to give a guarantee for the amount of tonnage of sugar it will import into the Common Market from the countries including the Caribbean, but what it has failed to do" is to persuade its partners in the Common Market to look at any sensible price which must be paid primary producers such as ourselves so that we could have the beneficial effects of producing sugar percolating through our economy. I want to know what measures the Government has been taking to emphasise very strongly the necessity for price stabilisation at a much more sensible and rational level than has obtained so far.

From time to time I see we are represented at these talks by our Ambassador in London and sometimes by the Minister of Trade, but all of the information which members of this House get on this either comes from the friends in other Commonwealth countries or from reports given to the Press, but never from the Government reporting to its Parliament on this aspect of the people's business. This is a tremendous blot on the Government's relationship with its own Parliament and the implications of Government policy and Government's actions for its own people.

There is a third sign why I say that the international aspect of sugar is not as helpful for the long term as it is for the short term, and it relates to the fact that the United States President has recently signed an Order raising the quota of sugar stocks. One may think this is a sign of magnanimity on the part of the United States Government, but I beg to suggest it is not. It is the short term realisation of course by that Government that it wants to preserve what stocks it has and possibly to gather in for the short term for its own refineries as much as it can at this moment. But we in the Caribbean cannot forget and must not forget that the same United States only a couple of years ago was penalising the Caribbean countries because we had a short fall due to bad weather; and the international diplomacy of the United States Government is such that small countries like our own rank for little graciousness or consideration in big time politics.

I want to throw out a challenge to the Canadian and United States Governments. If they are serious about their commitment to helping underdeveloped nations, then they should give a long term guarantee to the Caribbean for rational prices in this sphere so that we will have much more money to spend on social projects in the area. We are not begging the United States for aid as such, but we want them to

recognise that the price of producing commodities such as ours must be higher on the long term and can not only be judged on their short term interest, and that is why I say we must move to the fourth stage of the international aspects of sugar for us, and it is simply this: that the prices on the world market, although high at present and high for the foreseeable future, will not remain high unless the producers themselves manage to establish stronger contact in the world Council on sugar and if necessary stronger regional cooperation in relation to the use of sugar. 1. 10 p. m.

This is where I believe Cuba counts. It has always struck me, as a Caribbean man, as peculiar that we produce sugar and only to a limited extent I believe in Trinidad refine sugar, and so we export to buy again and to bring in inflation when buying refined sugar, refined in countries which do not have the primary commodities. I want to know what long term policy this Government has in the sphere of developing the industrial side of sugar for maintaining high prices so that we can have high levies to compensate the people in the sugar industry. I want to know whether the Government is big enough yet to grasp our Cuban brothers in order to learn from them technology in refining the sugar or whether the Government must still be scared of the bogey of communism. That is the question that is posed here because when it suits the United States, or indeed when it suits the United Kingdom, they will follow or co-operate in the economic field with the Devil far less with Cuba or Communist China. I am very serious about this, because you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that one of my first speeches in this House on foreign policy was urging the Government to open diplomatic relations with Cuba, and I am happy to see that it did not fall on deaf ears and that is why I seriously suggesting that they go further than mere window dressing at this stage and try to have technical co-operation on a stronger level since we use the same barometer by which industrialised countries judge their foreign relations. That is rather vital self-interest in this respect.

My plea on this Resolution is for a long term policy in the international sphere so that we can maintain equitable prices and if necessary prices that reflect the true value of our labour, a policy which will help us to set up our refineries within the Caribbean region so that we will not be buying our own products refined abroad costing our own people employment and costing our consumers a higher price with added inflation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like as a person who represents a constituency which I like to call a mixed constituency - we have all colours, religions, all types and all sorts of workers in our constituency, and we do have sugar workers in Christ Church West, believe it or not - and my experience has been that there has been tremendous delay in the paying of these Provident Fund bonuses. It is only recently that the hon. member for St. George has corrected me and said that they have resumed the payments. The hon. member for St. Joseph was correct when he said that several months passed without any money being paid, but I believe that subsequently money has been paid. The people who depend on these small pittances, if they miss a month, it upsets their whole planning for their meagre budget, and I think the Government either on the administrative level or on the financial level should ensure that there is some continuity in the payments for such persons.

May I add my voice to that of the hon. member for St. Joseph on the question of education in agriculture. I believe the Opposition's plea in this respect has been heard by the Minister of Education at long last, and I am glad to see that the Opposition has got through to the Government even if we have not yet got through to the people, because the hon. member for St. Joseph has consistently been stressing the necessity to revive at the primary level much wider courses in agriculture and to move on from there, as the Minister now intends to do in the future, at the tertiary level to teach agricultural science not only at the Community College but also in the country at large. Perhaps if we bring to our people the importance of agriculture in the educational life of the country we might bring new impetus to the role of agriculture in this country.

As I always do, I end on this note. History I believe will prove that the former senior member for Christ Church, Senator St. John, was a consistent advocate of new techniques and technology in agriculture, and that most of his words for which he was rejected have been proved right. I think we must recognise the contribution which such a person has made during his stay in this House, and I trust that in future his correct diagnoses of the country's ills will be commended even although had his prescriptions been taken at the time. the country would not now be as sick as it is.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I believe I am right in saying that from all that has gone on before we are somewhat partly satisfied that the future of sugar will be secured in all the countries which now engage in its production. We believe however, Mr. Speaker, that sugar hoarding which is now being engaged in by the countries at governmental level or to the knowledge of Government, and by the multi-national corporations, all this will make good for sugar producing countries whether in the Caribbean area or elsewhere, because as soon as hoarding is engaged in to the extent which we see, it must and will maybe for another three or four years or so create the demand by which all of the sugar producing countries must benefit. But, Mr. Speaker, our concern is this, that we earn money from exporting our sugar, we make our levies, but one of the avenues for which the levy is made, that of labour welfare, the benefit of the labour which produces the sugar, I want to say that the Government cannot come forward and say that they have a policy that appears to be honest or reasonable when we take into consideration the fact that much of the money for labour welfare is to be spent on providing housing for the working class people. If I were to look at my own constituency I am sure the Government would have to hide its head in shame for the neglect that has been occasioned to the workers in my constituency. 1. 20 p. m.

It must be borne in mind, Mr. Speaker, that workers wherever they are, engaged in sugar, have got to produce a type of back breaking work and it means that the Government should be broad minded, whether it is the Government of Barbados or the Government of any other territory to see that all workers benefit from the intake of these levies.

You will find in Barbados that there are housing projects which need to be put up by the Government where working class people can be housed under one roof with the services they must have, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that in the constituency of St. Peter since 1956 when these levies were arranged the Government cannot point to anything having been done for the hard working masses and electors in my constituency. What is wrong? It is not the workers themselves who have not sought in their own interest to bring their needs to the attention of Government. It is not because of the lack of my efforts in bringing it to the attention of the Government time and time again that we need a housing project in St. Peter to accomodate the working class people who cannot help themselves and who are subjected to these landlords and property owners who extract whatever they can from them, especially now that we have this property tax.

We are appealing to the Government not to come down here and try to fool people in the parish of St. Peter that they will get a housing scheme. The member who left his office and went down there had a right to know that the site that he was going to examine was in the water zone and that no housing scheme could be developed on that particular site. You get this type of nonsense. You get a Minister setting out from his office armed with photographers, to fool the people of St. Peter. They are not prepared to stand for this kind of nonsense any longer. St. Peter is strictly an agricultural community, and we are asking that the same consideration be given to those people who live there.

Their hopes and aspirations must be listened to in the same way as those of the people who live in districts where you have housing schemes. We have no complaint about the people who are being served in this way, but we want to see the Government act as a responsible Government for the benefit of all workers alike.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are several aspects of this Resolution which come to mind. I wish to throw in my lot with the members of this side who made reference to the Sugar Workers Provident Fund. I do not wish to say that I laughed the hon. Member for St. George to scorn when he tried to rise in defence of the Government or the Board which is now dispensing \$3. 60 from the time the scheme came into being; I still represent that the Minister who introduced the Bill on that particular occasion gave the House the undertaking that within a year's time they would have carried out a review to see if there is a possibility of increasing that amount from \$3. 60, Mr. Speaker, year after year has gone by and there has been no review.

I have raised questions in this Hon. House asking the Government to increase the allowance to these retired workers- The hon. Member for St. George has failed to remember that the Provident Fund has

come from the sweat and tears of people of this country, but they find themselves having to wait sometimes for as long as four months to get their allowances and the member for St. George says that he is not aware of this. What is the Government's policy? None whatsoever.

Now, there are numerous peasant farmers in our midst. Several of them have gone to the agricultural stations and have paid money for the use of the tractor scheme. They have been waiting for so long, that at one particular stage they said that perhaps the roads could not be found.

That is the kind of thing that goes to show the kind of disregard that certain of these Government agencies hold for agriculture as a whole. When peasant farmers pay in their money the scheme should be so adjusted that some order should be instituted so that a tractor can shift from north to south every two or three weeks. That is not the case.

It is a case where an opportunity is given to run and cultivate the land for your friends. This is one aspect why peasant farmers are not catered to by the operation of these tractors. I believe that if the Government really and truly had an agricultural policy as they want us to believe, they would try to find out why workers who refuse to cut canes here will still go and cut them in Florida under worse conditions than at home.

Mr. Speaker, one of the terms under which these workers are employed abroad is that there is a compulsory saving from which they benefit when they finish their contract. They return home and receive their compulsory savings. I think that the Government should give consideration to having a similar scheme instituted at home whereby the worker could draw this compulsory saving in a lump sum.

We know that presently the take home pay of workers is very bad and that money does not have the purchasing power that it used to have; and we must do everything that is possible to get our workers to harvest the canes. 1. 30 p. m.

It is no fun, Mr. Speaker, our having to import workers from St. Vincent and then they are the people who are taking out the bulk of the earnings that the industry has produced. It is no good to us here, and we must set about to do something to encourage our people to feel as happy cutting canes at home as they feel cutting them elsewhere, but hon. members on the other side certainly do not like to hear this. It is the attitude of this Government and the Head of this Government, his entire attitude to agriculture and

the careless talk that has come from his lips that turned people's mind from agriculture and prevented them from cutting canes, and even his latest demonstration of going and taking a Collins and with his Minister of Agriculture and others going into the fields as if they are labourers themselves has not penetrated the working class people of this country. I believe that if the Prime Minister could be bold enough to tell the workers that he made a clear error when he talked about not seeing another cane blade grow it would do more than going into any cane field and be eaten up and bitten by the cane prickles and whatever else you find there. I am urging on the Government to adhere to the plea of the hon. member for St. Joseph. (Asides) He will be Minister in due course. I remember the Prime Minister telling some hon. members on his side of the House that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. They have Ministries over there; the Lord did not give them; I can't say money gave them, but they can be taken away. However, our feeling is that Government must carry out a thorough investigation, not for us to have a report like the Farley Report and some others that are pigeon-holed, with a lot of cross-talk, double talk and undermining going on as went on when Dr. Farley and others carried out an investigation into the sugar industry. We want honest, down-to-earth people who are themselves aware of the situation obtaining amongst us, and who themselves must of necessity know of the things that would have a bearing on the working class people and on the peasant farmers as a whole, because, Mr. Speaker, with all these levies that are made, we see that no attempt is made to subsidise the high freight charges that the peasants have got to pay. Something has got to be done, Mr. Speaker, to encourage each and every one to turn to agriculture.

We have asked the Minister of Education to use the Alleyne School as a nucleus for an agricultural college. He can do it as if overnight and see what result will come about. I imagine seeing the young people rushing to get into the agricultural college, and it is for the Government to so adapt itself to prove to people that they mean not what the Prime Minister talked, but what we hear from time to time from the lips of the Leader of the House and from the Minister of Agriculture himself.

Mr. SPRINGER:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I must sympathise with the member for St. Peter and his constituents for not having a housing area in St. Peter. Unfortunately for him, when the party to which he now belongs had two seats in that constituency, the party did not see the need for a Government Housing Area, and this one which does, not have any representative in that constituency would not see the need.

There is one other thing I would like to touch on and it is this: there is a fallacy about Barbadians going to Florida to cut canes and they would not cut canes in Barbados. A great number of the people who go to Florida to cut canes do cut canes in Barbados, but some would not cut canes in Barbados and when they go to Florida, it is not the money they are going to get at the end of the season which entices them to go to Florida. They go to Florida like many West Indians with the hope of running, breaking the contract and getting married and remaining in the United States of America. That is the basic inducement of most West Indians, cane cutters or not who go to America to cut canes. Whether they go to Canada and land in Montreal on a ship and run, or whether it is Florida, the basic thing is that they see

an opportunity between Florida and Toronto that is greater than the opportunity they see between Silver Sands and Pie Corner in St. Lucy. That is the basic reason Barbadians leave these shores, and if I am allowed to side-track for a short while, even the panic which the Advocate is trying to create by denying the ninety-four Barbadians leaving Barbados yesterday because of some racial pressure to go down under, that is no real reason. The real reason is that most of them have not been able to adjust to the fact that blacks are getting qualified and are taking up the jobs in Banks and Commission agencies in this country that they can no longer get by a birth passport of colour. They are losing that privileged opportunity because -the people with money in this country are not going to subsidise colour and inefficiency with hard earned cash. That is the reason they are leaving. I will say that I do not think that Barbados 'will be worse off for their leaving than Barbados was in the 1950s when some of our best trained black artisans left these shores and went to Europe and North America. So much for that part of it, Mr. Speaker. I have no grouse with them leaving; may they go and do well. There is room made for 94 other Barbadians that would not have been there had they remained. I wish them a safe voyage on a disaster ridden ship.

Mr. Speaker, from time to time on the floor of this House we have heard that the Government has no policy on agriculture. The problem in Barbados with agriculture is mainly social, but we refuse to accept it. It is one of the few areas in this country where you can draw a line straight down the centre between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', the whites and the blacks, the employer and the employee. It is the field in which the people who work hardest get less. 1. 40 p. m.

It is the field in which the people who were harnessed get the best, the ones who work nearest the cane are further from the sugar. The ones who plant do not get as much as the ones who sell, and it is not social in the context of colour only, the land owners of this country are basically white for the most part, and even the black ones when they had a child which showed any modicum of intelligence, if he was really brilliant he had to be a doctor, a lawyer or a solicitor. If he could barely pass he became a priest, if he could not pass at all he became a salesman, and if he was thrown out of school he became a planter. Of the people in Barbados who owned the land this was the policy they adopted because it was accepted that it was back breaking and for the most part unrewarding labour, and I make no apology for this. It is regrettable that succeeding Governments have been unable to replace sugar cane planting by some other form of money earning development, whether it is making computers, I do not care what it is, because if you go through Barbados during the crop season as a son of Barbadian soil you see a woman who has been employed during the day loading burnt canes, or you can take the hand of a cane cutter and see the callouses and corns. Any self-respecting Barbadian will know that that is undignified, unrewarding, hard work, and there is no excuse to be made if this Government or any Government should replace sugar with an equally rewarding revenue earning enterprise.

I, Mr. Speaker, make absolutely no apology for saying that this country will be a better place if that can be done. Until it can be done it is one of the evils in this country with which we have to live, but we have to set our sights on the fact that it is entirely unsuitable for our women to be loading burnt canes.

You cannot recognise them, sons pass their mothers on the street with their faces smeared in smut. Can you really think that that is the type of enterprise to subject Barbadian people for all time? It must be replaced, and until that is done we have to live with it. It is all right for people to talk about the end product and the money, money is a wonderful thing, but until we can replace sugar we have to live with it.

Unfortunately for Barbados it is as bad as this because we do not have a really large peasantry. We have several peasants owning three acres, half acres, but you do not describe them with the real term of peasants and farmers; they are plot holders. If we were like Holland talking about peasants and farmers owning 200 acres it would be a different thing, but most of the people who own half acres are renting from the cane farmers.

Mr. Speaker, until the leaders of this country - not only the political leaders - see the real problem in this country as far as agriculture is concerned and set out to change the system that separates the people at the bottom from the people at the top physically, where the people who own the land will take a son and send him to a university and let him take a degree in agriculture and not in medicine or law, until the people themselves who own the land prove to the people who work the land that agriculture is dignified by putting the best for their children to work it, until then and only then agriculture in Barbados will remain in the doldrums.

(Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.)

What is happening in Barbados with sugar happened in America in the cotton fields. The negro left the cotton fields and the cotton fields went to pieces, and when the negro went north they felt he was going north because he was getting more money but he went north because he was getting an opportunity to go in bars and sit down near the white people to have a drink. He went north because there were semblances of human dignity unknown to him in the south, and the cotton fields went in ruin. If the leaders in Barbados do not accept that, unless they really promote agriculture in Barbados the cane fields in Barbados will go to ruin too. It is as simple as that. No one can fool himself that he can force a child to go into agriculture when he sees that his brother has left St. George or St. John to come to Bridgetown and wearing a lot of terylene pants and fancy shoes and smelling sweet with Brut and he is knocking about a cane field with trash and ash, he is not going to remain. When he has to draw up under a horse or a cow and milk the cow and his brother is sitting down in the Empire Theatre he is not going to like it. People of a social or academic level are leaving the cane fields and going into the hotel industry because it opens the door to dignified labour that can be seen physically. That is unknown to him in the cane fields, and until the leaders, political, religious and otherwise, get together and find a solution to that basic social problem let us look for an alternative to sugar.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think a reply is strictly necessary because only last week when we voted over \$7 million for the Agricultural Development Corporation and for research purposes, that was clear proof that a policy on diversification is on the move.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the House said when he voted \$7 million it was for diversification and other things, but we voted money to write off the deficit of the Agricultural Development Corporation.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

It was a vote to enable the Agricultural Development Corporation to continue existing and to be refinanced, but the fact is that we had a vote for the ADC for \$4 million and \$3 million for research. 1. 50 p. m.

That is what I would like the hon. member to realise and remember. Every now and then when he sees anything about sugar or about land he jumps up and talks about the Government having no agricultural policy. The Government has an agricultural policy, but the policy is based on diversification, and it is for that reason that we are voting this \$7 million because the ADC has a fairly good staff which is undertaking research work, with the assistance and cooperation of the experts in the Ministry of Agriculture, in various vegetables and root crops.

The hon. member knows that, because he himself is an outstanding farmer apart from being an Attorney-at-Law. He knows that we have a pretty good livestock and dairy industry. He knows what is happening like any of us, although I was the Minister who established it. He also knows that the cotton industry is being resuscitated and revitalized.

I would not worry to waste time to recite all of these things but every Tuesday the hon. member comes back with the same sort of thing. I do not think that I will waste any more time because we have so much work to do.

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

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT)
REGULATIONS, 1974**

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to move that Order No. 9, standing in the name of the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works, to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, 1974 be the next Order of the Day.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Resolution is a non-controversial one. It seeks to ask the Hon. House to approve the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations which gave increases to taxi drivers some time ago. As I said then, the figures set out in the Regulations were arrived at after deep consultations with the various tourist organisations.

You will appreciate, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in laying down fare rates for taxi cabs you will never get complete unanimity. There are a lot of opinions to canvass, and each taxi driver and each organisation has his own idea of how much you should charge; but the Ministry after discussions with them finally got their approval to the Regulations which were made.

The only thing I would say further is that it is appreciated by my Ministry that these figures were made when the price of gasoline was \$1. 50 per gallon. I therefore beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:

I beg to second that.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Minister says that this is non-controversial. (Aside) The House automatically rises at 2 o'clock today, my friend and I will keep you until 2 o'clock.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Is the hon. member addressing the Chair? Order please.

Mr. BOLDEN:

The Minister is saying that the taxi drivers agreed to these figures. There is no doubt about it, as the Minister said, that he is going to make a new Order quickly; but then it is going to affect the Tourist Industry again. He said that these figures were agreed upon when the price of gasoline was not \$2.00 a gallon. (Asides)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order. The Hon. Minister has the right of reply.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Already this is causing a dispute at Seawell, but it is not the biggest dispute at Seawell. I am dealing with taxis now. The biggest dispute with the taxis is the operation of certain buses of a particular company with certain interests which the taxi drivers are very worried about.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has been a meeting held between the taxi drivers and a certain Minister in this House. I have referred already to a supposed meeting at which the Minister of Tourism told the taxi drivers not to take notes; and they are very worried. The taxi drivers are worried that they are being pushed out of the airport gradually for certain companies to bring in small buses. The Hon. Minister is going to grin and laugh, but ask him if he did not have an application to approve the bringing in of certain buses in Barbados and he would not sign it. He said not him. He was not signing it. He said go to the Minister of Trade and let the Minister give you permission to bring in the buses. When they come in, I will decide then whether to give permission to register them and run them.

That is what is worrying the taxi people. They are worried about the increase in the price of gasoline. There is no doubt about it, as the Minister said, that he is going to have to make a new Order quickly, but then that is going to affect the Tourist Industry.

That is why I say that there should be certain exemptions if we want to increase our output and our intake in money. Also on that, I would like the Minister carefully to think when he is making his new order of what is going to happen in respect of these buses which they want to move in at Seawall to the exclusion of the taxi drivers; because I will tell you something, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a lot of taxi drivers in Barbados and they are men who depend on this for a living.

I personally do not agree with this talk going around Barbados, as the Minister of Information said in here, that you will get more people coming to Barbados to hold conferences and so on if you put on buses to move them around. If people are going to come in Barbados, they will come even if they ride on a motor cycle from the Hilton down to Broad Street. The idea is when you come into Barbados that you leave North America when it is cold and you come here to get a little sunshine, some sea bathing, some cheap alcohol and some of the four aces, as the Minister of Health should very well know what is happening.

When you introduce buses and coaches, as I say, you talk about a social society, but we are concentrating all the work in the hands of a small company and leaving the taxi drivers who have invested in their motor vehicles at the perils and mercy of these buses and the tour operators and route movements.

So, then, you are going to create further unemployment, because if the taxi driver has to pay for his motor vehicle, and he has to pay his road tax and his insurance and he cannot get a reasonable number of trips in a year to compensate for these expenses and give him a reasonable living, he must descend upon the Minister of Communications and Works for a higher rate base for his services.

We have had the situation already, which the Minister fully well knows, of people with buses telling me that you only allow us to carry six, and we should carry more. If you bring more buses into Barbados now, you will further reduce the volume of work which the taxis which are already established can carry.

I am saying to the Minister of Communications and Works to be very, very careful how he issues permits to anybody to bring buses into Barbados in the future. You have to look out for those who are in it already. You cannot tell them that you are going to increase the buses and throw them out. You cannot tell them that because the Minister says that you will get more passengers coming to Barbados or more tourists that I must bring in more buses. 2. 00 p. m.

You have already brought your provision for registering minibuses; you have provisions for registering taxis, and I think you have to pay careful attention. I have said in this House before that a hungry man is a dangerous man, and the taxi drivers at Seawell are already very annoyed and up in arms and the first bus that lands there I guarantee you will have a riot at Seawell, and I would like to see the Minister of Information point his nose up there at the time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to hear from the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works if and when he replies how soon he expects to bring down the new Order, because a jump from \$1. 60 to \$2. 00 for gas is no small step, and therefore the rates which one will have to charge will have to be increased proportionately. The 5% tax has not been added to motor vehicle spares, but that does not mean that the gas which is being used does not merit a proportionate rise in taxi fares. As I said, we are going through a serious crisis.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I see the clock on the wall says 2 o'clock. This sitting now stands suspended until 2. 45 p. m.

On Resumption:

QUESTION TIME

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

It is now Question Time.

Parliamentary Question No. 128 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy who is not now in his seat.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in view of the fact that the hon. member is not in his place, and in view of the circumstances in which he is absent from the House today, and thirdly in view of the importance of this question, I wonder if the Chamber would grant me permission to read this question for the hon. member.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I am awaiting the Hon. Leader of the House.

Mr. BOLDEN:

In the meantime, I have asked permission in view of the circumstances. In view of the fact that the hon. member is absent since there is a conference of Leaders of Union Colleges at the College today, and in view of the importance of the question, I am asking whether the Chamber would grant me permission to read it for him.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

As I see it there will be no objection.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I am objecting to his asking the question in those circumstances.

Mr. BOLDEN:

He cannot, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is the person who is going to reply, not the hon. member. He is not Leader of the House. He has not yet been accorded that privilege.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for St. Lucy is not in his place and the answer to Parliamentary Question No. 128 will be laid.

QUESTION RE DIESEL FUEL

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Parliamentary Question No. 148 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would very much like to read the question, but it is not on the Order Paper. There were certain questions which were brought to the Chamber, the Chamber did not deal with them and I drew to the attention of Mr. Speaker that they should be replaced on the Order Paper. However, I have just been handed a copy.

The question reads as follows: -

To enquire of the appropriate Minister: (a) Is the Minister aware that diesel fuel is likely to be in short supply during the next 2-3 months? (b) That any such shortage will seriously affect the fishing industry of the island? Will the Minister state What steps are being taken to ensure that fishing boat owners will be able to obtain their fuel supply of diesel over the next six months?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply is as follows

"(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise. "

Mr. BOLDEN:

Is the Minister stating that the question did not arise on the 6th November, 1973?

Hon. G. E. TALMA:

This question was asked by the hon. member on 6th November, 1973. It was referred to the Ministry of Trade Industry and Commerce, and they said on the basis of the information available it seemed likely that for the next six months the supply of fuel would be no less than at present. That is the answer.

Mr. FORDE:

Will the Minister state whether the Ministry of Trade was so bogged down with work that it took the Ministry one year to give such a simple answer to this question?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I am not aware of what goes on in the Ministry of Trade. I have my own work to do and I am not necessarily a pimp for any Ministry.

Mr. FORDE:

Will the Hon. Minister as Leader of the House, without being a pimp for any Ministry, having regard to the fact that he is answering the question, undertake to find out whether the Ministry is so bogged down with work that it cannot give answers promptly?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I will assure the hon. member in his gentlemanly manner that I will do my utmost to cooperate with him and find out and give the necessary answer.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Will the Minister state what is the quantity of diesel fuel being held in stock in this country as of this date?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

That is not a proper supplementary.

QUESTION RE VETERINARY OFFICERS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Parliamentary Question No. 150 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr: BOLDEN Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question reads as follows

To enquire of the appropriate Minister: In view of the number of dairy cattle imported into the country during the past five years 1. Would the Minister state what steps are being taken to increase the number of Veterinary Officers attached to the Ministry of Agriculture? 2. Would the Minister consider the employment on a part time basis of those Veterinary Surgeons residing in the country who are willing to assist farmers in veterinary work? 3. 00 p. m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 150, asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph, is as follows

"Efforts are being made to fill the vacant post of Veterinary Officer on the staff of the Ministry. In addition it is proposed to launch later this year an animal and human health programme with the aid of the UNDP which will provide two veterinarians for a period of four years. An assessment of the Ministry's additional requirements for veterinarians is also being carried out. "

In addition to that, Sir, I give the assurance that the Government of the Republic of China is assisting us with a Veterinary Officer very soon.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Is the Minister aware that there are now two veterinarians who are operating in Barbados and that they are already complaining that they are given no assistance whatsoever from the senior veterinary officer?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

It is the policy of this Ministry wherever possible to include veterinary services to help ensure the orderly development of the livestock industry, and for this purpose and towards this end there are a number of measures which are in train to ensure that a supply of veterinary services is increased. The Ministry currently has on the staff only one qualified veterinarian, and a vacant post, and efforts are being made to recruit someone to fill this post. A veterinary pathologist provided by CIDA has been attached to the veterinary diagnostic clinic, but since his departure in June, 1973, the scope of the work at this clinic has been seriously handicapped.

Applications for additional staff by the Ministry in so far as veterinary surgeons and experts are concerned have been submitted to the appropriate Establishments Division and a post of a veterinary pathologist is being considered, but up to now it has not yet been created. In the meantime requests for technical assistance in this field have been submitted to CIDA and to CDA, and the Ministry is awaiting the outcome of these requests. It is not that the Ministry is doing nothing, certain steps have been taken in this connection.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Is the Minister aware that the two Veterinary Officers now in this Island are being deprived of the use of the Government veterinary equipment which is absolutely necessary for their performance in this Island? If so, what steps are being taken to change this attitude of the senior veterinary officers?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my capacity as Acting Minister of Agriculture, up to yesterday, I am not

aware.

QUESTION RE NUMBER OF COWS ACQUIRED BY MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Question No. 196 standing in the name of the same hon. member. The hon. member need not read the question according to Standing Order 16(1).

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have a feeling to read this question, Sir.

To enquire of the appropriate Minister: Would the Minister state (a) the number of cows acquired by the Ministry of Agriculture, Science and Technology under the Canadian Dairy Development Scheme from the inception of the said scheme to date which have been sold to the Agricultural Development Corporation? (b) the total selling price of the cows from the Ministry of Agriculture to the Agricultural Development Corporation? (c) what are the terms of repayment between the Government and the Agricultural Development Corporation? (d) what sums in respect of repayment have been received by the Ministry of Agriculture to date giving the dates of receipt and the amount paid on each date? (e) Does the Ministry of Agriculture keep records of the production of these cows? If the answer is in the affirmative would the Minister state the total poundage of milk, the number of calves and cows sold from the imported cows?

Hon. C E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply is as follows -

"(1) 239.

(2) \$372, 710. 28; \$111, 814. 42 of which was in respect of freight paid by the Agricultural Development Corporation.

(3) The decision that the Agricultural Development Corporation should acquire these cows formed part of the Government's Dairy Development Project, and for this reason, it is the intention that the terms of repayment between the Government and the Agricultural Development Corporation should be

similar to those existing between the Governments of Barbados and Canada, that is, to be repaid within a period of fifty years with a ten-year moratorium.

(4) In view of (3) does not arise.

(5) 71. 42 died and 126 were sold at 50 cents per lb. on the hoof for slaughter.

(6) During the period 1967 to 1974, the Agricultural Development Corporation produced some 4, 491, 140 lbs. of milk valued at \$703, 330. 78.

(7) The total value of cows, calves and milk sold during the period 1967 to 1974 is \$793, 128. 31.

(8) Yes, Sir. " 3. 10 p. m.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Is the Minister aware that the terms under which the ADC has acquired these cows offer unjust competition to other dairy farmers in this island whose term of repayment is five years?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I am not aware of that. That is probably the subject matter of a substantive question. If the hon. member wants this information he should ask substantive questions.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Will the Minister give an undertaking that since the ADC which works on a commercial basis and has 50 years to repay, that dairy farmers should have the same facilities under the said scheme? -

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I think that the hon. member has made a good point, and I will draw it to the attention of the Minister

of Agriculture.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Question No. 198 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN:

To enquire of the appropriate Minister Will the Minister state (a) the number of motor tractors with necessary equipment owned by the Ministry of Agriculture, which are available for land cultivation of plots owned by small farmers; (b) how many tractors are allocated to each Agricultural District Station; (c) does the Ministry of Agriculture still maintain a list of applicants for work to be done by these tractors; (d) how many applications were received by the Ministry between the period June, 1972 - October 1973 inclusive; (e) how many acres were involved in the applications; (f) how many applicants have been serviced; (g) how many applicants have not been serviced and why? Will the Minister forthwith increase the number of tractors with equipment available under this scheme?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply is as follows -

"(a) Eight.

(b) Four tractors are allocated to each of the two District Stations out of which the scheme operates, namely Groves and Bullens.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) 1737

(e) 1885. 20 acres

(f) 1633

(g) 104 applicants were not serviced due to-

(1) breakdown of tractors and implements,

(2) unfavourable weather conditions delaying operations; and

(3) unsuitable conditions such as -

the slope of the land or presence of stones, tree mounds and other obstacles.

Additional tractors and equipment have already been ordered. "

Mr. BOLDEN:

Will the Minister state how many additional tractors have been ordered, and whether or not these have been received?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

That would be a question for the appropriate Minister.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Is the Minister aware that numerous farmers in St. Philip and Christ Church where the land is very flat cannot obtain the services of the tractors?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I am aware of this complaint and this matter will be considered for the benefit of the small farmers.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Will the Minister give an undertaking that tractors will be placed at the Home Agricultural Station in St. Philip and at Sayes Court in Christ Church to alleviate the hardships of the small farmers in those two areas?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Everything that lies in my power will be done.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, will the Minister assure us, if he has sufficient powers left that he will do something for the Home in St. Philip as well as for Sayes Court in Christ Church?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I shall endeavour so to do.

Mr. HINDS:

Will the Minister give the assurance that he will place a D6 tractor in the St. Joseph and St. Andrew areas to serve the small farmers in those areas.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

The Minister said that he will be back tomorrow.

Mr. HINDS:

Will the Minister be bringing tractors when he comes tomorrow?

Mr. BOLDEN:

I wonder if you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will hold over that particular question until the Minister comes back.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

That is no part of this.

Mr. HINDS:

Is the Minister saying that the Minister of Apiculture will bring back these things from Taiwan?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Question No. 230 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker to enquire of the appropriate Minister In view of the critical situation existing in the sugar industry in this country and annual drop in sugar output would the Minister state (a) What steps will be taken to reduce the number of cane fires this year? (b) Will permits be granted, to persons to burn canes before harvesting? 3. 20p. m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

"(a) Early in 1974 an appeal was made to the nation in an effort to reduce the number of cane fires occasioned by indiscriminate burning. There has been a reduction in the number of such fires and the

situation is being kept under constant review to determine what further measures are necessary.

(b) Permits were granted for the controlled burning of sugar cane this year, and it is intended to have a systematic phasing out of the grant of such permits. "

Mr. HINDS:

Will the Minister give consideration to the immediate withdrawal of all such permits as have been granted in view of the effect the burning has had on our sugar yield in past years? Will he give us the assurance that he will seek a withdrawal of these permits?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I agree almost entirely with the question the hon. member has posed, and I will use any energy that I may have in that direction, having had the experience in the Ministry of Agriculture on three occasions and knowing fully well that the burning of canes is one of the worst things that ever came to Barbados. It destroys the soil.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

That brings us to the end of Question Time.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of privilege, I still have another question to ask.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Are you still on Question No. 230?

Mr. BOLDEN:

Yes.

Would the Minister state how many acres of canes were burnt during the 1974 reaping season?

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of privilege arising out of Question Time, I wonder what guidance could be given to hon. members in relation to getting information from the Government on time, because although we are in a very relaxed mood today, it seems to me that the whole basis of Question

Time is really being undermined as seriously by the failure of the particular Ministries to answer the questions in time and as a matter of privilege I would like to draw to your attention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the privilege granted to us in Question Time is being undermined by the slowness in which the various Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Trade, are reacting to answering these questions. I in particular have desisted from putting down any further questions until I can get some answers to some I have had. One for instance has been on the Order Paper (Question No. 186) since 11th December, 1973 and I can have no answer. I have another that was disposed of only shortly that at the time the answers were given, the whole effect of the question was completely frittered away and there was no point in even hearing the answer; and rather than wasting hon. members' time, I wish we could get some answers in a hurry. It seems to me that we must ask about this privilege. I am very concerned about it, otherwise let us change the Standing Orders and abolish this system of waiting for all this time for Question Time.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On this question of privilege, I share the hon. member's anxiety and disgust that questions take so long to be answered. It is true that, in fairness to the general system, certain questions asked by hon. members do require some research and the collection of statistics, but it is the Government's policy and the Prime Minister himself has always insisted that these questions should be answered promptly. Sometimes he tells the Cabinet Secretary to get the Civil Servants, because the Minister does not answer them; the Minister approves the answers; but the collection of the statistics and the facts are matters for the Civil Service, and I agree with the hon. member. But since the Civil Service as the hon. member for St. Michael South West said are like asbestos, they are fire-proof, this is the sort of thing you get, where a year after hon. members ask questions, you get answers.

You will notice that M. C. W. has not got any to speak of on the Order Paper because I am one Minister who does not stand for any nonsense when it comes to Parliamentary business and answering questions. I know that the Ministers themselves are keen that these questions should be answered. We have nothing to hide, but there is this Civil Service-machinery which takes so long to get ticking, and they cannot see the urgency of it as long as the Government finds the money when the end of the month comes. I share the hon. member's anxiety. I will raise this matter again with the Government and the Prime Minister that the House is dissatisfied, and the Leader I know will do it, that this lateness in answering questions should not be condoned by this Honourable House, and if there is something that can be done to the Civil Servants to get them getting the facts earlier so that the Ministers can approve the Parliamentary Replies and Cabinet, then something will have to be done. If you are going to have a Question Time, there is no sense answering a question about diesel oil asked in 1973 a year after in 1974, and similarly with one or two we have answered today. It is a complete waste of time and it is only the question of questions. It is a question you get coming to the House, an annual report of an organisation or Government Department for accounts for 1971 in 1974. What is the point in bringing it to the House when the law says that the financial year ends on such and such a date, and constantly you will find that we have got to bring in reports two and three years after when the financial year is closed or a report must be submitted within two or three months after the close? I share their view too and it is time that this slackness in answering Parliamentary Questions late is stopped. I can exonerate my colleagues, but it is the Civil Service machinery over which we have no control that does not see the

urgency of treating Parliament with the respect which Parliament deserves. It is most unsatisfactory to say the least. We have prodded them, the Prime Minister has issued directives, and this is the sort of nonsense you get; but what can you do? You can't fire them., you can't transfer them, you cannot discipline them, and what have you. I am as fed up as hon. members are that a question should be answered a year after - a question like diesel.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, most of the questions which have been answered today came from me. I have also not asked any questions in here for a long time because I take the view that when a question is put down for answering, it is put down in order to draw Government's attention to something which is affecting the community at large.

Now if you look at the Order Paper you will notice that Question No. 76 which deals specifically with a very important factor in the life and livelihood of this community is still standing on the Order Paper. It was asked since 6th February, 1973. That question was asked at a time when those of us who were deeply involved in and monitoring the agricultural situation realised what was happening to poultry and pigs in this country, with the result that the price of pork is being quoted at \$4. 00 a pound, and there is no answer to Question No. 76. I agree with the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

If the hon. member would give way, I have had so many Oral Replies dealing with the Ministry of Agriculture that I only gave a part. With all due respect, I have a Reply handy and if Your Honour will permit me, instead of the hon. member launching a full scale attack, I can probably give that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I am afraid that Question Time has come to an end. 3. 30 p. m.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Order No. 5 standing in my name be the instant Order of the Day.

Mr. FORDE:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I certainly cannot support this Resolution because I have been in this House a long time and I have had an opportunity to listen to allegations made against members and only recently I had an opportunity of watching a performance on television. I certainly cannot support piping those sorts of allegations and cross charges and rumours and gossipings to people's homes. If the standard of debate in this Chamber had reached oratorical heights either in content or in the interest of the particular measure I would support that the people could be informed, but from time to time all of us without exception either in the heat of debate or for political advantage hurl accusations against each other either in asides or in some other form, and if these broadcasts get into people's houses in a society which is predominantly a gossip society - you know this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because if I say you are a gentleman, nobody will repeat it, but if I say that you are not a gentleman and call you names it will be in St. Andrew before I sit down, but if you have a small community in which the predilection and the predisposition to the spreading of rumour and allegations, I certainly cannot at this point for the following reasons which I will succinctly mention support it

1. The debates in the House of Assembly are not of the oratorical strength or purity which would enlighten;

(2) the accusations made in this House from time to time against members can lead to character assassination rather than to enlightenment;

(3) we are working and operating in a society which is basically gossip mongering and therefore can lead to character assassination; and

(4) my personal experience of the last broadcast on the Constitutional debate in this House does not lead me to think that people should be exposed to this Tuesday after Tuesday.

For those reasons and until we in this House can refrain from making allegations against the character of each other, until we can conduct ourselves with that decorum which is not easy in a parliamentary situation where you need cut and thrust political advantage in a small community, until we can clean our own house and take a pledge and promise that we will conduct ourselves in such a way that our proceedings can be broadcast to the people, I certainly cannot support this Resolution. This does not mean, or must not be construed to mean, that I am against the enlightenment of people or the involvement of people because I believe in politics by participation. I am all for letting the people know how the people they elected to represent them conduct themselves, what they see and how they walk and talk and allow them from their utterances and behaviour to judge for themselves. My experience in the last three years in this House does not convince me that I should subject the people of this country either through Rediffusion, TV or Radio Barbados to a barrage of hours of what I consider in many cases unfit for human ears, and so I cannot support this Resolution.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I happen to be in Opposition at this time. The hon. member who has just sat down, the Minister of Communications and Works, was an Opposition member at one time in this Hon. House, and that hon. member cannot forget the kind of onslaught that he and his Party members in Opposition led in this Hon. House seeking to have exactly what this Resolution is now all about. They fought for it, they saw the necessity to have it put into effect, but they were then in Opposition. He is now in the Government and has passed the winning bell, but I well remember that if one were to check every speech by this hon. member, the Minister for Communications and Works, you must find the words, either "I have nothing to hide" or "we have nothing to hide". Every time he rises he says this. Today when the Hon. Speaker was in the Chair I also heard him remark that this is no Sunday School. In the light of this, he has nothing to hide and he admits that the atmosphere in this Hon. Chamber must not be expected to be a Sunday School atmosphere, what is he talking about now? The Hon. Minister talks about the allegations made in this Hon. House. What must worry the hon. member is that allegations might not be heard of him directly, but he knows his Cabinet. He knows his other members and he is still content to sit in office with them. He knows what allegations can be heard at times.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are the elected representatives of the people in this Hon. House. As the Hon. Minister just said, the people who voted for us know us better at times than we know ourselves, what is it then as soon as we are here we feel we have to hide? I well remember, if he were here between 1966 and 1971, debates that have gone on in this place were acid and fiery, so what is he talking about? This is Barbados, what is wrong with the entire country seeing an hon. member and how he conducts himself in Parliament? What we did not know was that the Government was putting it to the test. 3. 40 p. m.

That was the acid test so to speak, because since then we have discovered that with the disgusting behaviour of the Government, it is true that some people would not really want to seek or hear that type

of behaviour; but it is they who have themselves to blame.

We have come to the stage where the Prime Minister no longer feels that he deserves being seen by the people who voted him into office even on a special debate like the emergency budget. So this shows us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what is the Government's attitude to the broadcasting and telecasting of the debates of this House.

I believe, and I am sure that if the debates of this House were broadcast and televised live - it would be a costly exercise we know - but nevertheless we are sure that by doing so hon. members would have an opportunity of being nearer and dearer to their constituents. (Laughter).

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that there are some hon. members of this Chamber who are not known to their constituents; but I support our school children having identifying uniforms, if I may put it that way, because when a child is wearing a uniform of a school that uniform is so to speak expected to carry that child safely to and from his home and school without unseemly behaviour by the wearer of the uniform.

If, say, the Minister of Communications and Works knew that his contributions to debates in this Hon. Chamber were being watched by the community at large, I am saying that as long as he has any sort of self respect, which we believe that he does have, that would in itself bring the Minister around to making it abundantly clear that his constituents, if none others, would see him and hear him only at his best.

It would have the same effect on all other members, and I venture to suggest that there are some hon. members who never try to make any kind of contribution whatsoever apart from lending their votes. This would bring them to their feet and let the public see that there is not every member who will sleep all the time.

I feel, Sir, that the invitation to set up an all party committee to give serious consideration to the terms of this Resolution could hardly find disapproval among the members of the Government. I want to say that the Minister of Communications and Works must be regarded as an extraordinary person on this particular occasion. It is true that whether he was a handsome looking figure at election time or not, the people voted for him. What greater satisfaction could he bring to his constituents than to have them seeing him as he is in Parliament?

I do not know, Sir, if the Hon. Minister feels that he will at some time become a victim of character assassination. I do not know this. I do not see any reason why he has got to fear, or that whenever he rises he seems to let everybody know that he is a lawyer. Is there anything wrong in his constituents seeing him and hearing this as often as he likes to repeat it?

Apart from this, when it comes to the question of the standard of debate, like any hon. member, the televising or the broadcasting of the debates would in itself enhance or have a tendency to enhance the standard of debate, the standard of talk and what not; and with you in the chair at times. Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So the point I want to make is that the Resolution seeks to have a particular type of committee established to give consideration to certain things. I believe that the best that can be done to show that the hon. member really and truly mean to let the public realise that this Hon. Chamber is not a Sunday School, there can be no harm done in having a Committee set up to give consideration to what is enunciated in the Resolution itself.

I therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would almost entreat the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works not to let it go on record that he voted against this Resolution. Do not let it go on record that he has nothing to hide and when the time comes to prove it, he hides behind his own privilege and what not. 3. 50 p. m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all we are asking for is an opportunity to see what a Committee set up to go into this matter would come up with. Do not try to stifle debate. That is all this Resolution is seeking. Let us see the final recommendations which would be made on the matter, and I believe that any hon. member who really has nothing to hide would welcome the setting up of such a Committee.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to advert to the Resolution here which says

"To move the passing of a Resolution that the House appoint an all party Committee to make recommendations on the broadcast of Debates in the House of Assembly and Party Political Broadcast in general. "

I believe that the operative section of this Resolution is the "all Party Committee to make recommendations on broadcast", and I think from what I have heard so far we are making really heavy weather of this matter. We seem to be prejudging what such a Committee would say. It may very well be that the Committee may come out and say there should be no broadcasts whatsoever. I do not think it is fair at this stage to enter into a debate on what a particular Committee should or should not say. The

merits of the Resolution to have a Committee may very well be that if a Committee is appointed it may be in a position to explore all the avenues and related matters to broadcasting. It may very well be in a position to look at the quality of the debates taking place in the House of Assembly, and it may also be in a position to look at the various abilities of the individual speakers, but it would also be in a position to look at the question of the time of the day that these debates take place, also at the finances of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, whether they should be compensated when broadcasts of this kind are brought over, or whether they should be party to any broadcasts, because one has to look very carefully at the finances of this Corporation, realising that in the past a lot of criticisms have been levelled at them for not being able to run their finances properly and now they have been able to achieve some advance out of the financial transactions, one has to wonder if broadcasting of this nature taking up so much time which could be given maybe to other types of broadcasting which could bring in revenue should be entered into.

While many of the arguments put forward seem to be indicating one way or another that the Committee is going to make a solid recommendation for broadcasting, I think that if this trend continues and even if one wants to get the feeling that you would want to support the setting up of such a Committee, you find that these debates would tend in advance to be tying the hands of the Committee, telling it indirectly that the type of recommendation that is expected would be to come out and say that the debates of the House of Assembly should be broadcast. I do not know what it would say in relation to political broadcasts in general, because no one so far has adverted to that, but that is the general impression one would get. But looking especially at the operative part of the Resolution, one would get the impression that apparently it is an innocent Resolution, it is a Resolution calling for the setting up of a Committee which will make recommendations and as I said they would be able to look into all avenues and all related aspects, finance, social, educational and otherwise, on the subject of broadcast of the debates of the House of Assembly and political broadcasts in general.

I personally do not like Committees because when one looks at the behaviour and the fate of some of the Committees around here, one gets the impression that it is an exercise in futility. They do not meet, they take very long to produce their results, there is a lot of frustration, there is a lot of hemming and hawing, and very often the type of exercise which you expect the Committee to indulge in is dismissed and we very often get something which does not do credit to the Committee or to the House of Assembly. Personally that would be my type of reservation about having any type of Committee at all, but I would like to repeat at this stage that it is a bit too early to start a debate on the grounds that we have made a decision on political broadcasting, and you only want a Committee to endorse that. If the idea is to call for a Committee, I feel we should look at the question clearly and what a Committee is apt to do or can do in this matter, and await the recommendations of the Committee, bearing in mind that the recommendations of the Committee could very well be that no broadcast of any debate in the House of Assembly should be done.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Resolution seeks to set up a Committee to make recommendations on broadcast of debates in the House of Assembly and party political broadcasts in general, but it goes a little further than saying that at this time we have only got to set up a Committee. I think the reasons for advancing the grounds on which such a Committee should be set up can be justified in laying the foundation so that the House in general can consider the wisdom or the folly of accepting or rejecting such a Resolution as they may decide. Now if such a Committee were set up here in the House, I believe the Committee would want to have before it some knowledge as to what the Mover of such a Resolution would want it to consider. Now we have the spectacle of last Thursday, the Emergency Budget, which was something unique in the history of Barbados, and as I have been told, on previous occasions the media made the television cameras available to the House, but at the very last minute it was decided that the speech should "be carried live but not on television.

Now there are certain implications and certain things which go with decisions of this nature. In the first place, many people are able to judge from seeing persons on television their reactions and the sincerity with which they are putting forward their arguments. It is very well known that one of the specialist occupations in the United States today is for people to watch the President of the United States or persons in very high position to see how they deliver a speech or how they react, and to comment on it afterwards, and this is not only true in this field. We have the particular instance of the trial of Angela Davis in which many side characters sit on the sidelines advising or nodding to counsel as to whom they should put on the jury and whom they should reject, because they are able to read a person's intention for his manner at a given time. 4. 00 p. m.

Another thing which I believe a Committee would want to bear in mind is that many times the attendance in Parliament is such, as it is today, members are not absent out of the island, they are not granted leave from Parliament, but they are not just in the House, and with television cameras in the House the general public can see the performance of their Parliament, whether it be Government or Opposition. The people at large are able to judge whether the persons they elect to Parliament are competent enough to run the business of the day or whether they are elected just to form a number for voting. These are factors which a Committee would want to consider, and I believe these are the considerations which have activated such a Resolution being brought before this House today.

Another, point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the behaviour of members in Parliament would certainly improve if they were consciously aware that the television cameras or radio microphones were present in Parliament to relay their antics which are not reported in Hansard and which are not carried in the news. For instance, when you get up to make a valuable point and to have the Minister of Communications and Works telling you to sit down that he has heard that already, these are the things which the public outside will be able to judge us by. It is a method of improving the debating skill and the debating quality of Parliament. Therefore I would say if for nothing else we should strive to have our debates broadcast. We have the spectacle of the Minister of Information when being attacked for certain inefficiencies sticking his finger in his ear. Whether he does it because he has an earache or because of

the volume of the microphone or whether he does it because he does not want to hear, these are things the people would see and would be able to judge. When I sit down and put my foot on the desk the public will be able to judge whether or not I am a fit and proper person to sit in Parliament. These are things I would most honestly urge on members to consider, because whenever we are through it is our Parliament and we are here because the people outside have sent us here, and I believe it is our duty to let them see how we behave after we come in here. The people outside do not know what goes on in Parliament.

Since instructions went to CBC only to report the positive side of things a few weeks ago we had the spectacle of CBC and the Advocate-News with a headline "Government given green light to borrow \$1 million. " At the bottom of the article they said that Opposition voted against it. Since Hansard is published nine months and sometimes two years afterward the people will no longer suffer from obtaining second hand news if the Debates are broadcast. Despite the many times the Opposition takes objection to things despite the many times the

Government quarrels, despite the many times each of us said that a name has not been mentioned at some time or other, we can still be thankful to my good friend Mr. Joseph Nathaniel Brome for his parliamentary report on Rediffusion to tell us what happened, although it might be biased on the side of the Government. Though this might have been we have all criticised him at times saying that the report was biased but whether or not it was so it still gives the lead to broadcasting parliamentary debates. It shows what can happen and what should be done. It shows that at least there is imagination on somebody's part to keep the people of Barbados up to date as to what is going on in Parliament. Practically 80% of the people in this country draw their ears to Rediffusion on Wednesday nights to hear the proceedings in Parliament as given by Joe Brome.

We have all had our quarrels that it was not as we would have liked it to be, but the gentleman has seen it in the eyes of a journalist like I would see my case in the eyes of a lawyer. If I am for the defence I am going to see it on the side of the defence and if I am for the prosecution I will see it on the side of the prosecution. Even so, as I said, it is a lead in the right direction. I believe it would save the Reporters of the Advocate-News, it would save the spectacle of having CBC brought into Parliament to answer charges before the Bar on a breach of privilege, it would save Rediffusion being brought before the Bar, because it would be a legalised broadcast of the proceedings of Parliament. We would be informing the public at large of what is happening in their Parliament. The Government must remember this, that it is not their Parliament, they may think it is theirs as of now, but as has been said earlier, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. People's minds change. There are what are called the silent voters and we do not know what they are doing at this time and it may happen that by some freak of chance they may be here in lesser numbers than we are today and they may find themselves in the same position, wanting to put their views to the public.

I remember in 1962 Mr. Thomson who runs the Advocate Press today, between 1961 and 1962 the Daily Mirror had an article "Watch for the Mirror's predictions" and the Mirror started its two-front newspaper then, headlines on the front and the back, and he came out then in favour of the Labour Party. The newspaper under Thomson has always sided with the Government in power, and as soon as he feels the time is right and he is not getting what he is entitled to he . switches to the other side. If the Government has nothing to fear that should stand, but I always hear them get up in here and say that the vote can be taken at any time. Only yesterday I got in my office a copy of Hansard for a year ago when the Leader of the Opposition moved a Resolution of no confidence in the Government, and the Prime Minister's statement was "we do not have to debate it, let us vote now. " If they are so sure of their position, if they have the answers to everything they should be only too willing and proud to appoint a committee and since they always say you put it in relation to the numbers in the House they should instruct their committee to go to the meeting and say they will broadcast the debates because they have the answers. They have everything and therefore there should be no fear. 4. 10 p. m.

In this light, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that since as members of the Opposition we represent at least 40 per cent of the electors of this country, and we have had in this Parliament to take part in a debate on a Resolution which voted over \$2 million to pull CBC-TV and Radio Barbados out of financial difficulty - and this is a public corporation - I believe that the public should be able to hear and to see what Parliament is all about.

About two weeks ago I was coming through Holetown and I heard Vic Brewster on the radio with his 1-1 o'clock programme which, I think is called "Dial a Question". He phoned a young girl and asked her who is the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Health and she did not know, despite the fact that the Ministry of Health was being featured in the newspaper day after day; but I will bet you something. Ask her who is James Brown and she will be able to tell you. Ask her who is on TV in Peyton Place and she can tell you everyone of them.

This is not something strange. It has been discovered throughout the world that vision and sound have contributed tremendously over the last 10 to 15 years to the learning of people at large. When we consider the political college that the Democratic Labour Party is talking about, this should be the ideal answer. We have broadcast programmes at the schools today. We have in the USA what they call "University of the Air" where you beam programmes at specific times. This is part of the educational system. I have heard the Minister of Education say that he would like CBC to be like the BBC or the "New York Times". I have lived in Britain for eight and a half years, and I have seen political debates in which members of the Conservative Party, the Labour Party and the Liberal Party took part. You had open debates. Members of the Labour

Party and the Conservative Party came together. The politicians of this country should realise that that is the only way to break down pettiness. That is the only way that we can have a broadening of our ideas. It is time that politics in this country moved away from those who present themselves on political platforms to get into Parliament. It is time that the country should be able to judge the performances of these people and see if they are W9ith a second term or if they are not so worthy. The only way that we can do it is by enlightening the general public of their responsibility and the responsibilities of those whom they have elected to this Parliament.

We have been arguing over the publication of Hansard. You, Mr. Deputy Speaker, know full well that when Hansard is published, it is with rum shop licences, transfers of licences promotions and disciplinary actions against Civil Servants and so on, but the proceedings of Parliament come at some future date. There are some vital debates which have taken place in this House which have not yet been published.

The Prime Minister brought down his Emergency Budget last Thursday and already businessmen have been calling everyone of us asking if we know the specific items on which the Sales Tax will be put. I guarantee that it will not be published until six months from now. Hansard, when published, should carry any Bill read a first time to give the public advanced notice of what the legislation is all about and what it is likely to be so that the public will know how it will affect him in his daily life.

Everyone knows that we receive Hansard as of right because of our membership of this institution; but you will know that when Hansard comes out with a draft Bill it has already been passed through Parliament and become law.

These are things which I believe the broadcasting of the proceedings of Parliament would remedy. I, like the Prime Minister, believe that we are not getting a fair day's work for a fair day's pay even from some members of Parliament because some of us only come here and put our foot up and say "aye" or "no" and some of us vote against our consciences. Many members in the back benches over there do not know what they are voting for. They vote because of the party whip, and I believe that in a changing world such as this the electorate should be able to judge if a member voted according to his conscience or because of the party whip and how it affects him and the country.

There is one beautiful thing about the American system that if a member decides that he is not in favour of any Bill that comes before Congress, he is entitled to vote against it.

I am not saying that we have to stick to a particular procedure all the years of our life. The Government institutes any change that is suitable for them. I believe that when we have to change we should change for the benefit of the community and not for any one particular section of the community.

I think the answer to all this is the broadcasting of party political debates and/or the debates of Parliament to let the people choose between those who set themselves up on platforms and say that they have the interest of the people at heart and those who get elected just to say "aye" or "no".

I believe that the Government should join with us and let a committee be involved. Let the committee make its recommendations. If they are so minded, I would go further and entreat them not to take the committee's findings and do as they did with the rules of the House - take it before the Cabinet and amend it. The Standing Orders of the House were amended by a committee of this Parliament and then were taken before Cabinet and changed.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. That is entirely incorrect.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Hansard will prove that amendments were moved by the Government to the Standing Orders, the draft rules of the Committee. Amendments were moved by the Government to have them changed. Hansard will prove that after the committee reported, amendments were made by members on that side and the Leader of the House said that the Government had agreed to the amendments.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

The hon. member seems to be unaware of the procedure of the House even though he is so knowledgeable. 4. 20 p. m.

The hon. member seems to misunderstand that even when a Committee reports, the House as a whole can amend it still.

Mr. BOLDEN:

You appointed a Committee from both sides, the Committee decided on certain factors and then you took it out of their hands and went back to Cabinet to amend the rules. Does that not show lack of faith? Is it not that the Cabinet has made the rules and not the

Committee? The hon. member was an attorney and he should know how to reason cogently.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the sort of thing that the broadcasting of the debates would show, because the public outside would be able to judge the sincerity of members in here, and I have no fear. It is those who fear what the public would think of us who will vote against this Resolution. Those of us who fear what the public will know of us in our true colours will vote against this Resolution, because those of us who have something to offer, those of us who represent our people will not be afraid to vote for such a Resolution and support a Committee in finding that there be broadcasts. Then again, the question of party political broadcasts is such that the Opposition never gets a chance to put its side. It cannot be fair, but as I say again, it is those who fear what the public will think of us who will vote against this Resolution.

Mr. WEEKES:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have served over half of my life in politics, and I must say that the hon. member for St. Joseph who feels that because one gets up in the House and make a big noise that that can give him a seat in the House of Assembly. I am saying, Sir, that - and when I speak I am speaking from experience - when you are elected to this House, you are expected to do your utmost for your constituents, and if you fail to satisfy your constituents, out goes you. When you come here to the House of Assembly, you just come here to carry out the work which is done weekly or bi-weekly or monthly, but it is your everyday life which helps you to retain your seat in the House of Assembly. And therefore I have come to the conclusion that the hon. member for St. Joseph has made a misleading statement; he is fooling himself when he thinks that to come in here and keep as much noise as he likes can impress the electors. If we were to allow this motion to be passed, it means that everybody would find it possible to speak, consequently no business would be done. When you belong to a party and certain members of your party have spoken on a particular subject, why should you waste the time of the House by carrying on in the same manner in which your colleague has carried on? It would be wasting the time of this House, and therefore I see no reason why I should support this Resolution. We have been sent here to do the Government's business. The Government has Ministers who put over the case for the Government, so why should we who are Parliamentary Secretaries and backbenchers or whatever you call them, get up and continue to debate only to satisfy the hon. member for St. Joseph who feels that by doing so you will be given a seat in the House of Assembly? I have not got to get up in here and blow any trumpet to get to the House of Assembly, and as long as I want to stay in the House of Assembly and my health does not deteriorate, I will stay in here, and I can tell the hon. member for St. Joseph that he can bring the Pressure Group from Jerusalem, I am going to eat them up and they will never get the seat which I at present hold. You should therefore take this as a warning, that no person gets a seat by the speeches he

makes in here.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Resolution before us calls for a Committee to consider two separate and distinct things. One is the question of the broadcast of debates in Parliament, and the second is the question of party political broadcasts. Most of the discussion which has taken place so far is concerned with the debates of Parliament, and I really have been seeking a since way to - believe that the hon. members on the opposite side mean what they say. I find it incredible to think that they wish to inflict upon the general public of this country about seven hours of debate a day. Today for example, we started at 12 noon and perhaps we shall finish about 7. 00 p. m., and there should be no news, there should be no music, there should be no sports or weather forecasts, but you the general public will listen to us or else; so the general public will tune in to Radio Trinidad or some other station nearby. That is exactly what would happen. There are other things that would happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but let us consider what happens at the time of the annual Estimates. The general public of Barbados for five days would have to listen to us and nobody else. But the general public will not listen; they will turn to other radio stations. Furthermore, let us look at the cost. In the, first instance, there would be the losses of revenue to C. B. G. -Not only would it be impossible for anybody to sponsor these broadcasts, but in addition the money which would have been used for sponsoring or advertising on radio and television during that particular time would be lost to C. B. C. Hon. members on the other side equally with ourselves have expressed concern about C. B. C. 's finances, and yet they propose that C. B. C. should be deprived of all this money.

I have even looked at the possibility to see what the cost would be to establish another channel if this could be proved worthwhile, and it would cost somewhere in the region of \$300, 000 to establish another channel, quite apart from the annual operating costs and the fact of course that it would earn no money whatever because it would not attract any advertisements. 4. 30 p. m.

I cannot believe that they are serious, that they really want to inflict upon the public all these hours of debate on any one day to the exclusion of anything else. They must think that they are wonderful speakers and beautiful people to listen to and to look at. They must be so conceited as to think people will honestly take them seriously.

Mr. FORDE:

On a point of order, if the hon. member will give way, the horn member has said that we are conceited, but I think the hon. member's statement is based on the wrong premise. No hon. member has asked for seven hours of debate, and certainly if this is the point the hon. member is making he could save himself the breath because we are asking for debate as happens in other places like Trinidad.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Point made.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

I was not here when the hon. member spoke, unfortunately, some six, eight or nine months ago. It was a long time ago since they gave us an opportunity to speak on this subject, but supposing then there were to be excerpts from the debates of the House of Assembly, in a small community like ours who is going to take the responsibility of doing those excerpts? The very first thing that would happen is that the Leader of the Opposition, as he frequently does, would come in here and accuse us of telling CBC who they should put on and who they should not put on. Which hon. member in this House is going to be content that his neighbour's speech is to be reported and his speech should not be reported? Which person in this community is going to be brave enough to be arbiter of which speech should be reported and which should not, and to measure out in certain terms and some kind of way as to how much there should be of the Opposition speeches and as to how much there should be of the Government speeches? Even a brief summary, and not a summary as to the content of the speeches, but a summary of reporting which is done by our good friend who was referred to earlier, even then he gets accused from time to time of being biased either in favour of the Government or in favour of the Opposition, even as a mild commentary as he gives once a week on Rediffusion.

The only other third possibility is a summary briefly stating what happened, that certain Bills and Resolutions were agreed to or not agreed to and that such and such persons spoke. That would be just about as antiseptic as the weekly Minutes which are sent to us with a list of Ayes and Noes and a list of Resolutions which were passed and those which were not. Also included is a list of those persons who spoke and it would be as dull as ditch water. We shall continue therefore to broadcast the principal things such as the budget and such as the reply and such as the Government's final reply, and these will continue as before. Of course it goes without saying that this will be done also at election time.

Now with regard to the question of party political broadcasts. I would like to state at this time, because it is the first thing which was said by the hon. member for the City in introducing this, neither one of the two existing parties at the moment is entitled to party political broadcasting, and when there is a second, a third, a fourth and a fifth party and however many more there will be, they will not be entitled to party political broadcasts either. I am not going to get into the old discussion of whether Ministers broadcasting on Telling the Nation are party political broadcasts, I cannot see how if the Minister of Communications and Works gets on television and ask people to conserve water that could be considered as a party political broadcast or the Minister of Health asking people to cooperate in the matter of garbage. How could that possibly be party political broadcasting?

Mr. FORDE:

If the hon. member will give way, is the hon. member aware that the Ministers have used the opportunity of Telling it to the Nation to attack the Opposition without our having any right of reply? Can the hon. member as an Englishman honestly say that he subscribes to the view that there should be no public discussion on the public media in this country? As an Englishman who believes in free speech?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

No point of order.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

The hon. member always asks me to give way and then he seems to get ahead of me. Furthermore I am no longer an Englishman. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say sincerely I am not aware of broadcasts by Ministers on Telling the Nation attacking members of the Opposition. If you can give me an instance I would be surprised, but if the Minister of Health asks people to do things about garbage surely that cannot be considered as party political broadcasting. That is a different thing entirely. Panels are acceptable in exactly the way the member for St. Joseph outlined, provided of course that the Government has someone there to represent its view equally with the Opposition. There has never been any objection to this and CBC can tell you it has always been my policy that they may have panels of any kind discussing these subjects, but the whole question of political broadcasting comes down to the feet that we would all agree that the people have a right to be informed about any subjects of country-wide interest and certainly every means should be used if necessary, as and when necessary but not when you decide, as you are now proposing to decide, to thrust it down people's throats whether they want it or not. That cannot be justified if other means of communication are there, and the question therefore hinges upon whether there is presently adequate communication between the political parties and the electorate, and between the elected members of this Assembly and their constituents.

As far as the parties and the electorate are Concerned, this is a small country and the Pressure Group themselves will prove that even a group which is not supposed to be a political party can bring their case to the people any time they want. Any political party which wishes to bring a case to the people about any issue has to hold no more than three or four meetings in this country and they can gather everybody who is interested. Everybody who is interested can get to Belleplaine, Oistin, Speightstown or Bridgetown, and there are very few people who could not get to one of those sites if they were interested to hear a political party's point of view. We have a daily newspaper which has island wide circulation, we also have several weekly newspapers - with the Opposition having two; -,,, they have the advantage of the Government which is temporarily embarrassed in that particular sphere of activity. The communications therefore between parties and the general public, the electorate, is not difficult, it is very easily done and it has been proven by the Pressure Group themselves. On the other hand, the question of the communication between the individual member of Parliament and his constituents is

another thing. I surerest that there is no problem of communication in a small country like ours between the individual member and his constituents. I would like to refer to this matter of broadcasting briefly before that. Reference was made to the United Kingdom, but I think we can take example much better from other countries in this hemisphere, 4.40 p. m.

None of the independent Caribbean countries has any form of party political broadcasting. The only Commonwealth country in the hemisphere which does it is Canada, but it if five minutes a week. This time is available to be shared between the Government and the

Opposition and the various parties that may happen to be in the Canadian Parliament. It is only when the House is sitting, and the subjects are chosen by the Canadian Broadcasting Company and are strictly under their control. Now, Sir, that is in a country which is 4, 000 miles wide. We are 21 X 14. There are 3, 800, 000 square miles of country in Canada. We have 166 and yet they are rigid with their broadcasting.

In a small country like ours we talk about the need for broadcasting. There is no lack of communication. Look at the difference there is between Canadian and US representatives as compared with ourselves. The Canadian or American representative may have days to travel to get to his constituency. There is not one of us who cannot reach his constituency from home or office within half an hour. I doubt that there is.

Now, Sir, we find that in Britain,; for example, a member of Parliament represents approximately 68, 000 constituents and in Canada approximately 75, 000 constituents. In the USA Mr. Chisholm who was here today will tell you that the average representation of Congress men or Congress women represent 250, 000 people or a quarter million constituents. In Barbados we represent 5, 000.

We live close to our constituencies. The hon. member for the City and the hon. member for Christ Church West who seconded the motion, myself and other members of this Hon. House cannot help but being in their constituencies every day because we live so close to our constituents.

What happens, Sir? You cannot help your constituents seeing you and shouting at you and saying "one word" and you stop and you talk to them. This is the level at which we haw communication with our people. Hon. members will know that if you have a meeting or you have to meet someone at the airport, you often avoid travelling through your constituency because you know you are going to get stopped.

Someone will hollo at you, and you stop the car and talk to him, and then somebody else comes up and says "a word with you skipper, when you done". Half an hour is gone and you missed your appointment.

That is the level of communication which members of Parliament in Barbados have with their constituents. We have none of us, very far to travel to have a constituency branch meeting. Can you imagine that happening in Canada, the USA or somewhere like that? We have to travel to Roebuck Street, to St. Matthias or possibly to Water Street or somewhere like that.

In our small country there is no lack of communication, in the first place between members of Parliament and their constituents and in the second place between political parties and the electorate they have to go to from time to time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is one point more which I want to refer to, because it was referred to, I believe, by the hon. member for St. Joseph, the fact that last week television was not here in this Chamber. The explanation is a very simple one in spite of what the newspaper people may want to make it out to be as some deep or insidious plot of some kind or another.

It is quite simple, the Prime Minister perspires. That is no crime, That is nothing detrimental. The Prime Minister perspires greatly. I wonder how many of the hon. members present have ever stood in front of the lights for two hours (Asides).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER, Order please.

Hon. P. M. MORGAN:

I wonder how many hon. members have stood in front of the television lights which are glaring at you, which are hot, give you a headache and make you lose concentration. It is as simple as that.

Furthermore, which of us could sit and look even at the most beautiful lady on the screen for two hours? It is a boring thing. It is obvious, I think, that the Prime Minister felt that it would be more comfortable without the television lights, and I am quite sure that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition would appreciate it very much today that he does not have to be blinded by television lights, and that he does not have to perspire for an hour and half or two hours.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Deputy Speaker.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

The time being now 4. 45.....

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I have had a word with the Leader of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I have not had any word with him.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I move that we have Question Time for five minutes.

Mr. FORDE:

I beg to second that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

That is out of order because the hon. member rose when I said that it was 4. 45 and that automatically brings us to the end of Private Members' Business. Is the hon. member aware that the Standing Orders have not been suspended?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as far as I am concerned, the hon. member did speak to me and I consented, provided that it could be done briefly. It is true that the Standing Orders have not been suspended, so that the final ruling lies with Your Honour. You have a discretion, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

I have already ruled that it is 4. 45 and that brings us to the end of Private Members' Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move - no, it is automatic that Government Business is the next order of the day.

Mr, DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Government Business is the instant order of the day.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not expect to find myself speaking on the matter of the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations today. However, the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works has been kind enough to ask me to explain one particular aspect of the matter which has been referred to before Government Business, that is the question of coaches for Seawell Airport. It was referred to by the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some fifteen to sixteen months ago the Government recognised the fact that the time had come for the introduction of coach transportation for visitors from Seawell Airport, and possibly on tours of the island. The necessity arose out of the fact that different kinds of aeroplanes are coming today - the 747's in particular and the VC10 also which ICA is presently using. It is a very large aircraft, bring 350 people at one time, and the whole mode of transportation in travel and tourism these days is changing.

People travelling in groups and in bulk need to be transported quickly from the airport to their hotels. The question was and still is that if the number of visitors coming to the island every year is increasing and increasing as we hope it will, then surely this does not have to mean that we have to increase the number of taxis year after year.

As hon. members will remember, in the Budget of April the Prime Minister said that there would be

no more taxi licences in the foreseeable future. Now in addition to that, bus transportation obviously makes it easier from the point of view of using less gasloene; and it comes also to the question of what visitors can afford. People have less disposable money in their pockets these days, and one has to move with the times. One cannot stand forever saying that people will do it our way or not at all. 430 p. m.

There is in addition to that the question of language, with many foreign visitors coming and the question of interpreters for groups of people who travel together. Having recognised this, the Government also decided that with the concession or the permission to operate bus transportation for visitors coaches is we prefer to call them to make a difference - opportunity should be given to those companies, associations, cooperatives and what have you which were already in the business of transporting visitors, and a letter was sent to all those companies, associations and cooperatives. Replies were received from some, and the Government decided that it would prefer if possible to see the three principal groups which represent the most taxi drivers, and particularly the small taxi owners, try and come together to operate this business. They therefore had a meeting convened in September, 1973, at which four Cabinet Ministers were present with these three groups and one other company which had tried so far unsuccessfully to operate tours of the Island in bus transportation. The groups were given the indication from Government that they would like them to try and find ways and means of working together so that it might be to the benefit of all of them, and they could jointly operate this type of transportation.

The Registrar of Cooperatives was given the job by the four Government Ministers of trying to bring the groups together and organise them in that way. A series of meetings were held for over one year and the Registrar of Cooperatives reported in August that he had been unsuccessful in bringing them together. Each one of the groups had expressed confidence in the fact that they recognised that coach transportation for visitors was a necessary thing, they would each perhaps have liked to operate it, but at the same time they could not agree on a formula where each one would be represented together in a group, company, cooperative or what have you, and therefore the matter came back to the Cabinet which then decided that one of these groups would have to be given the opportunity to operate this type of transportation.

Contrary to what the hon. member for St. Joseph said about a small taxi company being allowed permission to operate buses, the Government because it supports cooperatives gave the concession to operate these buses from Seawell Airport to various destinations and hotels to the Barbados Transport Cooperative Society Ltd. which is one of the two franchise holders at Seawell Airport. The other one being Dear's Garage. The Transport Cooperative is by far the bigger of the two concessionaires at Seawell and they have been given the opportunity to transport people by coach from Seawell Airport to various destinations as and when they deem it necessary. They are the ones who will decide. Anybody who is in that business can join the cooperative. There is nothing to stop any taxi driver in this country from participating in that Cooperative and from sharing in the benefits of the bus transportation as and when they come. It was said that the taxi drivers at Seawell are up in arms. They are the very ones who

are going to be operating the coach transportation; so I do not think they can have much to be up in arms about; they are the ones who have been given the right to do this.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr; SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member knows the rules.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of information then. I would like the Minister.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

There can be no point of information. You have not spoken. The hon. member knows the rules.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of explanation.....

Mr. SPEAKER:

Have you spoken? Mr, BOLDEN Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let me be advised. Mr. Clerk....

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, are you saying that I am lying to the House? You asked me if I had spoken and I said

"yes". If you have to check with die Clerk, it means that you doubt my honesty, and you have reduced me to a man in the street.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am very sorry.

Mr. BOLDEN:

You are questioning my honesty.

Mr. SPEAKER:

No! I must be apprised. Let the hon. member continue.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, you asked me if I had spoken and I said "yes"; so you are questioning my honesty and I regret your attitude in questioning my honesty.

Mr. SPEAKER:

What is the point of explanation or elucidation?

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, under the circumstances, I refuse to say anything. I will deal with it on a public platform because if the Speaker of the House is questioning my honesty in this House, it means you have reduced me further than a member in the Chamber when you have to check with Mr. Clerk whether I have spoken or not. I would not stand for it.

Mr. SPEAKER:

It is unnecessary. Let the hon. member continue.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, I have given the explanation that I thought was necessary with regard to what is happening with the introduction of coach transportation from Seawell, and there is nothing much more I can say.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I shall not be very long. I just want to make one or two points very clear. The Minister of Communications and Works.....

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, before the Hon. Minister winds up, I do not think every opportunity was given to hon. members. I know that the hon. member for St. Peter intended to speak on this matter, and I thought the Hon. Minister of Information was merely giving a point of explanation on some point.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I do not understand what is going on. I got up to wind up the debate for the Government and I actually started to address you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Hon. Minister has given way. I recognise the right of the hon. member for Christ Church West to speak now, unless he has given up that right forever in this debate.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, the point we are going to make on this Resolution once again demonstrates the ability of the administrative wheel of Government to let events overtake them. One is surprised that it has taken the Ministry of Communications and Works such a long time to bring before this House a Resolution sanctioning legally an increase in fares for taxi drivers which has been warranted by the unprecedented rise in the price of petroleum products, and certainly it is a very simple Resolution. It should not have taken this amount of time, and I am surprised that the only excuse with which this House is frequently being saddled is that the Civil Servants are not performing their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, with the best will in the world I cannot accept that as a strong and valid reason for the simple reason that Ministers must well be aware that within the Public Service Regulations there are provisions for dealing with Civil Servants who do not perform properly and I am well aware that there have been very few, if any, complaints at all made to the Public Service Commission from the Ministries dealing with omissions of this nature oft the part of Civil Servants. In any event, Mr. Speaker, the concept of collective responsibility must warrant these Ministers taking their responsibility on this point.

Now this Resolution is a Resolution in frustration almost, if I may call it so, because it must be obvious to any casual observer that the increase in petroleum products brought about by the Emergency Budget must now be passed on by the taxi drivers to the consuming public, and that within a short time we will be asked to approve further measures dealing with this matter. Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Minister should this time try and get things moving a bit more quickly. There is already a clamour on behalf of taxi operators both the small operators and the bigger for an increase in price because of the steep increase from the Emergency Budget measures, and I hope that this House will not have to wait a considerable number of months.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Leader of the House may want to make a motion.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, before the motion is made, I want to get one point clarified. When this matter came before the House I was speaking, and I would like to know what is the position with regards to the finishing of my speech. 5. 00 p. m.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, before that is done may I give way to the Hon. Leader of the House and preserve my right to speak?

Mr. SPEAKER:

I was not presiding when this debate was started and perhaps this has been the source of a misunderstanding. The hon. member for St. Joseph knows the rule that when the debate is completed and he is not in his place he loses his right to speak.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, it is now 5 o'clock. I beg to move that further consideration of this Resolution be postponed.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

In accordance with our proposal the reply to the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance's budgetary proposals will be given by the Leader of the Opposition and the time has now arrived.

**OPPOSITION'S REPLY TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGETARY PROPOSALS
BY MR. J. M. G. M. ADAMS**

Mr. Speaker, Sir,

Earlier today notice was given of a Resolution standing in my name relating to these Budgetary Proposals, and I now propose to move it.

History was made last Thursday when, to repeat a phrase the Prime Minister hit the panic button and produced an Emergency Budget. But before I explain myself and justify the description of the whole of Thursday's performance as an exercise either in panic or in deception, let me say a word about the absence of the television cameras. Many persons, most but by no means all of my own political persuasion, have in greater or lesser degrees of glee made remarks to me along the lines "He is frightened for the TV" or "He doesn't like the cameras" and some have contrasted the Prime Minister's attitude now with his attitude towards televised debate in the period immediately before the 1971 Election. Let me say here and now that I am not joining in these criticisms; television is a most merciless medium; exposing insincerity in a speaker, revealing any lack of confidence he may show, and letting the strain and all the ills the flesh is heir to be seen, and if the Prime Minister feels that he cannot give of his best in front of the cameras, it is his privilege to run from them. We do not have government by television performance and I would not wish to be judged, or my Party's policy to be weighed, according to how many times the Prime Minister wipes his forehead in a House of Assembly debate. I myself am always ready to be seen as well as heard, since I am in any case a believer in the greatest possible exposure of the proceedings of Parliament, but I would not want the public to think that any of us in the Opposition view this House as a stage and think that what is important is to look or sound good in a television debate. What is important is to present a reasoned and reasonable analysis of the problems being dealt with, to put forward views based on sincerity and an attachment to the public good, founded in whatever power of thought and political experience the speaker may have.

And so to the measures that bring us here to this debate, Mr. Speaker, and to the many questions that have to be answered before we even begin to look at the new taxation and its effect. First of all we must ask how far has the economic situation in Barbados deteriorated since April of this year or how far has the emergency been caused by really long-term failures in Government planning and management over an extended period. I see that the daily press says that I am entitled to indulge in a bit of "I told you so" but nobody really likes a Cassandra; and I will therefore refrain from repeating the long list of warnings that Opposition speakers have given the Government and people of Barbados, warnings that have turned out to be justified. Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, there are one or two things that have to be said now and later in my speech, since the Government's response to them, when they were originally put forward demonstrates quite clearly the lack of ordinary foresight and competence in the Minister of Finance in the period under consideration. In the middle of 1972 in a platform speech at Eagle Hall, I put forward the view that Barbados was entering its gravest political and economic crisis since 1937. My views then were based on the fact that the cost of living index had begun to rise as much in one month as it had previously risen in four or five: that there were ominous signs of inflation, and the failure of Prices and Incomes policies overseas; that the giveaway Election Budget of 1971 had been followed by abundant new taxation in 1972 and that the public, expecting the millennium after giving the Skipper 18 seats, were restless and dissatisfied that in less than a year things were not looking so rosy. The Prime Minister's response, in an interview on television, was that the Opposition Leader was an alarmist and exaggerating things. I wish I had been exaggerating! Subsequent to that, the CARICOM exercise was plunged into with a misguided fervour that presumably made light of the effect it would have on the cost of living. In the House of Assembly the Opposition were abused, and the Government pushed further along its collision course with common sense when the Prime Minister apparently did not take advantage of the phasing provisions of the Caribbean Community Treaty, that could have allowed Barbados more time in which to harmonise its tariffs with the agreed Community levels and thus to cushion the shock of adjustment to new levels of import duties on whatever range of goods were embraced by the never-published list of concessionary items referred to, but not set out in the Treaty. In 1973 the writing was easier to read on the wall and it did not need a Daniel to interpret the meaning of the local Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin as it appeared on the wall of economic distress rising rapidly around us. But even with a severe Budget our local Belshazzar failed to stem the tide and, as foreseen by my colleague the Hon. Member for St. James in last year's reply to the debate, he actually made it worse by imposing taxes on food so that the cost of living index rose 15 points (a then unprecedented amount) in May and June 1973. It was to go up another 20 by the end of the year and eventually give rise to some very ugly statistical juggling in April of this year in an attempt to conceal the economic realities of the Barbados of 1972 and 1973. I am reminded when I see the Prime Minister floundering in a morass of his own mis-making of what he said about the late Dr. Cummins.

"In 1960-61 there was not only a state of rest in the economy, it had actually begun to move backwards and the national income of Barbados had receded to a figure well under \$100 million and below what it had been the previous year.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, the placid, unquestionably harmless and financially innocent predecessor in

my office as Premier had the candour to confess on the floor of this House that Government's reserves had been depleted and that by the end of March, 1962, there would be no, repeat no, money in the Treasury. "

That was what the Prime Minister said in the first Independence Budget, delivered in this House on the 30th June, 1967. As it happens, much of it was demonstrably false; the National income of Barbados, according to the Gross Domestic Product figures in the Economic Survey presented to the House by the Prime Minister on the same day was not under \$100m at all. It was \$119. 8m in 1960 and rose to \$128. 7m in 1961, a rate of increase seldom achieved under the Democratic Labour Party and when it is taken into account that the cost of living was then stationary, so that the whole of the increase was passed on as a benefit to the public, it was a remarkable achievement. In fact, the national income of Barbados fell for the first time in recent years in 1964, under the Democratic Labour Party. But the past and the dead must be left to rest and I have no wish to provoke the Prime Minister into an outburst against his predecessor, who turns out to be not so financially innocent after all, judging by results. As for there being no money in the Treasury, if Dr. Cummins ever used those words at all, such a situation is the case now, under the economic giant since this is what the emergency Budget is all about.

What then are the components of the emergency? The first is quite clearly inflation and falling standards of living in Barbados. To all intents and purposes Barbados has stood still, if not receded (as we will find out at the end of the financial year) since 1971, three years that the locusts have eaten. The cost of living index has risen over 80% since 1971, with a few months still to go in the figures for this year, and a 5% sales tax and 25% increase in gasoline to help it along. For the Prime Minister blandly to say, as he did on Thursday, that this is a rate of increase of proportions "formerly associated only with Latin American economies" is to admit a ghastly failure of control, especially since the Latin American countries are largely experiencing the inflation to which he referred but without the slump for which he admitted that Barbados was also suffering. Inflation on this scale is more than an increase in price. It is an economic disease attacking the very basis of personal budgeting since in circumstances such as now face Barbados, it is actually dangerous to save money. What I mean is this: \$1, 000 put in the Bank at fixed deposit in January could have bought you so much rice, so many gramophone records, so many shoes or pairs of trousers and so on. When you come to take it out in December, with even 8% interest added, you have \$1, 080, but to buy the same things you could have bought at the beginning of the year you will find they will now cost you \$1, 400 or thereabouts, a 40% inflation rate. So you have lost money by attempting to save, in this case \$320 of \$1, 000.

Over the whole economy the pattern is the same; if you save up to build a house, by the time you reach \$5, 000 cement and lumber have gone up and what you calculate would cost you \$2, 000 now costs you \$3, 000 and you have to look for more money. This is what economists mean when they say that the value of money is falling, and that inflation is a dis-incentive to saving money. Life insurance suffers in the same way - for it is not good economics to be paying premiums in today's money to collect a policy in 25 years' time in the comparatively valueless currency you can then expect to be prevailing; - and this horrifying circle affects perhaps most of all the really defenceless members of our society, the old age and other pensioners. Think of it, Mr. Speaker \$10. 00 per week to support an old age pensioner and

Honourable Members on that side of the House cheered.

The next problem is that Barbados is suffering from the new phenomenon characterised by the Prime Minister as "Slumpflation". I believe the word is "stagflation", but these neologisms don't appeal to me, Mr. Speaker, so I will have to leave the expertise on that to the Prime Minister. This stands for the paradox that inflation, which economists have been prepared to accept in very small measure as a necessary evil associated with the policies that lead to full employment, is now being accompanied in some countries by unemployment. On Thursday we were treated to a discourse that suggested that unemployment is something new in Barbados. Honourable Members will be aware from other speeches that I have made in this Chamber that I do not accept the figure of only 90, 000 put out by the Ministry of Labour as being the true work force in Barbados and that I consider that there are in fact over 100, 000 persons in this Island willing to work if work can be found. My figures are derived from the National Insurance statistics which show that approximately 15, 000 more people, exclusive of the self-employed, engage in employment each year than are admitted by the Ministry of Labour and that consequently over 20, 000 people, potentially employable, do not have jobs in this 13th year of Democratic Labour Party rule in Barbados. Nor will Honourable Members have forgotten that the Prime Minister, their Prime Minister, has promised to put an end to unemployment by 1976. But as of November, 1974, this possibility is not in sight, and far from employment increasing, we are having layoffs. First, the motor car salesmen and distribution staff; then the construction companies and companies operating on the Industrial Estates have laid off employees. The Prime Minister makes a tendentious and irresponsible speech about BWIA and alleges that it is overstaffed. BWIA then dismisses its entire Barbadian maintenance force. Perhaps they agreed with him. I wish it were possible to get jobs for people so easily just by saying so. Finally we have the President of the Barbados Manufacturers' Association saying that half of the jobs in manufacturing industry could be gone by next year. I want to deal at slightly greater length with this aspect of the economic situation than the Prime Minister did, since manufacturing and the development of industry has been one of the things upon which in earlier days great stress has been placed by Governments of Barbados. The notorious "no cane-blade"

speech was based as much on the employment opportunities of the industrial sector as of tourism. However, a little noted paragraph in the last Annual Report of the Central Bank of Barbados revealed a most interesting fact, a fact which contradicts much of the ballyhoo of the Industrial Development Corporation and the falsehood of a certain election broadcast in 1971. I am not going to read it, Mr. Speaker. It is, I believe, already a document of the House. Under the heading "Employment" on page 7 we read these words:

"Employment in the sugar industry has been declining over the years but at the end of 1973 it was about the same as in 1972. Although the manufacturing sector has expanded and diversified, employment here, estimated at 12, 300 this year (that is 1973), does not appear to have changed much since 1960".

That is from the Central Bank's latest Annual Report, and it refers to 1960, when the Barbados Labour

Party was in power and that able man, M. E. Cox was Minister - and employment in manufacturing despite the falsehoods put out by the Democratic Labour Party does not appear to have changed much since that year! The Prime Minister was successful in reducing employment in the sugar industry, but less so, it seems, with increasing it in its replacement. It is commonplace that very often when an advertisement offering jobs appears in the classified section of the daily press, hundreds more people apply for the jobs than there are places available and we are seeing more and more in Barbados the phenomenon of comparatively well educated school leavers unable to get work suitable to their education - or at all.

These then are the day to day problems of the people with which the economic planners have to come to grips. However, the Minister of Finance seems somewhat to have limited his approach on this occasion since his solutions are almost wholly directed to the difficulties of an empty Treasury rather than the difficulties of the people.

Figures have been outlined to the House, and it is clear that the stout defence put up last year by the then acting Minister of Finance, the Hon. Member for St. Michael North West, to persuade the public that the Treasury was adequate for all calls upon it was not true and could not have and has not made any one believe this to be the case.

The Prime Minister has admitted that there is a wide gap between revenue and expenditure, that reliance and muddling through can no longer close. For some years now I have been saying that projecting a deficit and then claiming a surplus was an act of political rather than of economic management. Year after year the Prime Minister would come into the House at Budget time and issue fulsome self-congratulations that an expected deficit on current account had been turned into a surplus by sound management and "the general buoyancy of the economy. " Now, however, when he projects a deficit he gets a deficit and nothing in his experience has given him the intellectual resource or economic competence to deal with it. There is really not much change in the financial position of the Government of Barbados between April and November this year, except for one thing and that is one to which the Prime Minister was careful not to refer. I will deal with it later. As he said, Government's current expenditure was up 18%, but so was Government's current revenue. Let us remember that revenue has been rising at the same rate, according to the Prime Minister, as expenditure, and also that the capital programme has not risen at all but has in fact slipped back slightly. It is possible, I suppose, that the Government will succeed in spending \$21 m. on capital account between October, 1974 and March, 1975, but I will be surprised. However, since the alternative will be to believe that the figure was exaggerated so as to alarm us into accepting massive new taxation, I will reserve judgment until April next year. Granted, then, that the whole potential deficit is \$57 m. this is a situation which already existed in April, for the projected overall deficit then was no less than \$61 m. It must be remembered, of course, that although the impression may have seeped through and may have been intended to seep through, that the \$57 m. refers to the period between now and the end of the year, it is really a corrected and reduced figure for the whole of 1974-75. The amounts may seem immense but even in 1973-74 the

projected deficit was large: than the current one, for before inflation had fully taken hold of prices the Government as long ago as that was planning for a deficit of \$63 million.

These figures give the key to some of Barbados' plight, for common sense and economic reality went out through the window in 1973. Deficits of this size could be financed only by borrowing on a much larger scale than Barbados was accustomed to, and the Prime Minister's acknowledged conversion to the belief that Barbados could carry a larger public debt came at a highly unfortunate time for several reasons. The first is that Government borrowing tends to be inflationary, while at the same time it tends to restrict the availability of private funds that might otherwise find their way into productive investment. The second main reason is that the Prime Minister prepared to multiply the National Debt at a time when interest rates were skyrocketing, particularly with reference to the financial centres to which we in Barbados are geared. The Prime Minister has always been a man for instant solutions, brutally administered without properly thinking out all the implications. In 1964 for example he decided that there must be no more sugar industry; tourism and manufacturing industry were the answer. The subsequent neglect of agriculture has us in the cart now. So in 1972-73 borrowing was the answer, The National Debt, once incurred for such productive enterprises as the Barbados Labour Party's projects for the Deep Water Harbour, Seawell Airport and Queen Elizabeth Hospital, now expanded from \$81 million at the end of 1971 (itself a very large figure and including for the first time the pernicious system of a floating interest rate characteristically on a \$2. 1 million loan for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation); rose to \$104 million at the end of 1972; \$129. 9 million at the end of 1973, this time including loans at crushing rates of interest at, and I quote, "1V5% over London Interbank test offer" and "2% above offered side of London six-month Eurodollar rate¹", whatever this economic gobbledegook means. By now I expect the total debt to be in the region of \$160 million inclusive gross. Barbados cannot carry this weight. Do you know, Mr. Speaker, what were the two highest expenditures of Government Departments during August 6f this year, when the real panic set in? The highest as always was Education at \$3, 255, 000 for the month. The next highest was not Health (which includes old age Pensions and Welfare) or Community Services. It was Charges of Debt, that is interest and amortisation, and it stood at \$3, 164, 000, only \$90, 000 less than we are spending on the education of our children, and \$% million more than we are giving the aged, the sick and needy in our community. These moneys have for a long time been borrowed to pay the day to day cost of running the Government and the true crisis of today is that the weight of debt is breaking the back of the taxpayer. In the last 15 months for which records are available to the public the Government has had to borrow money to meet its daily needs in 13 of them, an unprecedented situation. This extends even to paying back other debts, what is popularly known as borrowing from Peter to pay Paul, since under the special loan that have become the local fashion, there is no sinking fund as it is called, which is maintained by the Government to make loan repayments as they fall due. I have no doubt that there was more borrowing in the two months since August, the last month on record, and by this stage I daresay the Government is even borrowing money to pay interest.

No country can long continue with financial policies of this nature and the Prime Minister has been forced to call a halt. Borrowing for a productive enterprise is an accepted part of public finance and both sides of the House have commented on the desirability of associating future generations of taxpayers

with the repayment of debt incurred I for projects of use in those generations. Borrowing to pay for a coastguard station drawing 10 feet of sand instead of water or for an abandoned crematorium is bad enough, but Government borrowing to pay salaries and interest on other debts is the antithesis, the exact reverse, of what is proper, wise, competent or honest in public finance.

The situation which we have, Mr. Speaker, is therefore that the mechanics of Government financing in Barbados have collapsed and that the Prime Minister has had to build a new tax base from which to attempt to foster development and economic advance by the use of Government enterprise. Nothing else can explain the need for an emergency budget; as the Prime Minister himself said, this year's exports have been bouyant and the rate of increase of imports is the lowest for years, thus relieving the worst fears about the balance of payments. Revenue has been rising - as it will in a time of inflation - as fast as expenditure. The size of the projected deficit is less than that of the last two Budgets, but the mixture as before just will not cure, hence the panic button, hence the grabbing for \$161.4 rn. in the next four months, hence the alarm and despondency into which the public have been cast.

The measures by which the Prime Minister have sought to patch the ship of state are really very simple in their conception, the gasoline tax, the sale tax, the Corporation tax, and the new Estate Duties. The advancing of the dates by which present Company withholding tax will have to be paid along with the taxes applying to professional and self-employed men, are also hidden forms of taxation since the Companies in particular are losing the use of \$12 million which they might have held for some months longer. The taxes are simple but appalling, and I must confess to smiling when I heard the President of the Chamber of Commerce in what I took to be a real exercise in Christian charity' in forgiving his enemies say on T. V. that the Budget was "not too bad", while the President of the Barbados Manufacturers' Association actually said that it was "lenient". Considering that the \$15. 7 million which the measures will raise is the greatest increase in tax that Barbados has ever known and that the sales tax at \$8 million is the largest single tax at one go ever imposed in this Island, I fail to see what could ever be considered severe by these gentlemen. Politeness can be carried too far is what I will say to them, and a spade is a spade under whatever name. The gasoline tax was expected and was predicted even as to amount, by several sources. Its purpose is said to be not only to raise revenue but also to discourage consumption. Whatever its effect, no Government of Barbados will achieve any long term result in this area until there is an overall policy for Petroleum and Power and we will only be scratching at the surface of the problem by fiddling with taxes and prices from time to time. Venezuela, from which we get our oil under the present monopoly refining arrangements, is the highest priced of all OPEC oil suppliers, selling at an average price of US\$14. 50 per gallon as against the official Persian Gulf price of US\$11. 00. The Local oil company pays an average of \$28. 60 (Bar.) for a barrel of 42 gallons of oil taking into account that it imports both crude and semi-refined oil, and averaging the two. In Trinidad, on the other hand, oil was until recently imported from Saudi Arabia where the price was US\$9. 50 per barrel and it has been raised only a few more cents in the last two months. That works out to approximately \$10, 00 a barrel less than we are paying through the Mobil Refinery. Although Trinidad is our CARICOM partner, and although Nigeria, another great oil producer, has set the pace by supplying \$5 oil to its African neighbours, the Government seems strangely slow in Barbados in pursuing a vigorous policy to reduce the cost of petroleum to our people. The Barbados Labour Party

has already enunciated its policy on Petroleum which is to take control by the Government of the import and distribution of all petroleum products, including bottled gas, by means of a corporation which will combine these functions with those of the Natural Gas Corporation in such a way as to reduce the cost of all petroleum products to the consumer without distributing present retail outlets, and at the same time maintaining employment levels in the refinery and the storage operations at present in existence. That is our party's policy. I wonder what is the Government's.

This Sales Tax, Mr. Speaker, a real emergency measure if ever there was one, A device used in American States because they cannot levy import duties; a device being abandoned in Europe, because it falls on the consumer - and on the poorest consumer proportionately more than on the richer - in favour of a value - added tax that touches the profits of the rich rather than the pockets of the poor; and now we have such a tax thrust on Barbados at a week's notice. Full comment on detail has to be reserved until the details are known but there are many basic dangers and difficulties of principle that immediately spring to mind. First of all the tax is inflationary in that it raises the cost of the goods to which it applies. It will also have the certain effect of eventually raising the price of things to which it does not apply, since the administrative burden in supermarkets and shops will sooner or later have to be passed on to the public. There will also be the additional delay of working out the tax by the cashiers or the additional cost of new cash registers. In supermarkets where some goods are taxable and some are not, great problems will be created. Retailers and consumers alike are not going to have a happy Xmas with this one, Mr. Speaker.

I said earlier that comment on detail has to be reserved, and indeed it must await debate on the Bill now before the House and on the Sales Tax Order when published. But in advance of that I would make a plea, first for the exemption of drugs and then of animal feeds. The cost of drugs is high in Barbados, and it is the policy of the Barbados Labour Party to work towards the supply of all drugs free or at a low fixed price as part of a free National Health Service financed as part of an expanded National Insurance scheme. Until that day comes when we can implement such a policy, I implore the Prime Minister not to tax the Health needs of the Nation, especially at a time like the present when Government expenditure on the Health services fell by over \$3 m. in the first six months of this financial year compared with 1973. The greatest economy of all has been made at the expense of the people's health; and I can think of few worse economies, and to exempt drugs from the sales tax would be but a small redress.

The second thing I mention is animal feeds. These fight for low priced locally produced meat, and far from taxing them the Government ought to be considering a subsidy, particularly to restore pig production. Not only pesticides and fertilisers, but all agricultural and fishery inputs should be relieved of any additional financial burden. The Corporation Tax will also produce many inequities and the delicate way in which the Prime Minister, after saying that it was a new tax different in principle from the bid Company withholding Tax, yet declared that the rate of corporation tax "will remain at 40%", I found very amusing. I trust that this use of language did not conceal from less well-off shareholders in public and private companies that a new tax has been levied that will press less on the very richest

members of our Society than on the shopkeepers and other persons who have invested in Banks Breweries or Cave Shepherd; on the widows living on the dividends from shares in companies where their husbands worked all their lives to achieve a small bonus shareholding on retirement and on the people who have from time to time believing that ours is indeed a mixed economy, put a few hundred dollars into what they thought was the productive investment of a few shares in a public company. According to my information the arithmetic of the Corporation tax is that, assuming constant levels of the actual payout of cash by way of dividend, all shareholders who earn less than about \$800 monthly in taxable income will be 40% worse off in respect of their dividends; those who earn more will be progressively less hard hit, so that over \$2, 500 per month taxable the extra tax will make the richer man only 14% worse off. There is also the more fundamental problem that, granted the structure of many Companies in Barbados where a few individuals who are themselves large shareholders sit on the directorate of companies, there is now an enormous incentive for such company directors to pay themselves really substantial increases of salary so as to avoid corporation tax. They will have to pay personal taxes anyhow, whether they receive their share of the Company's earnings as dividends or as a salary, and they will probably, indeed obviously, prefer to receive a salary which will be taxed only once rather than which will be taxed twice. This will cost a loss to the Government and it will also cost at loss to the poorer shareholders of the Company who cannot achieve a directorship and who will therefore be much more severely squeezed.

I am baffled by the statement of the Prime Minister that the new tax has the advantage "of encouraging retention of profits in Companies for business expansion". Since this is the exact effect of the present tax system, and since the new levy will fall upon all profits whether distributed or not I cannot think that the Prime Minister either understood what he was saying, or wanted others to understand. What many commentators are sure of is that no one will now put money into a public company to bear, in effect, a tax rate of from 64% to 79% and that therefore the new investment for which the Prime Minister is hoping cannot possibly come from this source. It is instructive to note that in the United Kingdom the rate of corporation tax is 52% or about the same as the new Barbados rate when Trade Tax is taken into account in Britain, but a 30% tax credit is given. In Canada where no credit is given, the rate of corporation tax is only 10%.

Well, these are the principal proposals, Mr. Speaker, \$15. 7 million of them. This compares with previous tax increases of \$4. 4 million in 1972, \$13. 1 million in 1973 and \$13. 7 million in April of this year, all records for their time. What are the prospects that the expenditure of this sum of money will promote development and cure some of the ills from which Barbados is suffering? It is my view that the sickness of the economy will hardly be touched at all by any of the Prime Minister's measures. Government financial problems will be eased but the problems of inflation, stagnation and unemployment will remain to be dealt with by market forces which the Government apparently does not think it has the potential to control. And yet there are things the Government could have done which would have made a difference. First, inflation. There are numerous suggestions being put all over the world as solutions of the inflations that have been appearing in most non-communist countries, but the Prime Minister has resorted to none of them. There are many reasons for our inflation in Barbados some of it, about one-third to one-half at the most generous estimate, is imported. The rest happens right here

in the Island and it is instructive to note that our inflation is running at a pace in excess of our nearest CARICOM neighbours, very much in excess of Guyana and two and a half to three and a half times more than in Britain and the U. S. A.

Food prices are now generally falling throughout the world, and this price deflation has shown itself only very slightly in Barbados. Economic analysts are unanimous that the main components of our 40% inflation are the Government's own action in increasing commodity taxation in the April Budget and lack of action in administering price controls. Opposition spokesmen have been emphasising these points consistently since April this year; we have been joined by two popular economists in the daily and weekly press and the Central Bank's most recent Quarterly Report had this to say about the two domestic elements which have contributed to Barbados' rise in prices. I quote:

"The first was a relaxation in the controls on the prices of beef and pork combined with an increase in the control prices of a number of basic food items including rice. The other factor was the next increase in taxation on commodities stemming from the Government's budgetary proposals from the current fiscal year". That is what the Central Bank says is the cause of our inflation.

I spoke in the corresponding debate earlier this year of the need for reform of the distribution system in Barbados, but there is no evidence that the Government has taken the slightest step to institute any reforms. The Barbados Marketing Corporation is still as clumsy and inefficient as ever, and the handling of the cooking oil shortage some months ago cannot give anyone confidence in the operations of the Ministry of Trade. The strengthening of the trade section of the Ministry of External Affairs is a vital necessity in export promotion close at hand, and obtaining market information abroad, but that Ministry consumes over \$5 million of the taxpayers' money to little or no apparent benefit to Barbados. I mean the Ministry of External Affairs. Instead of doing something about inflation the Government spends its energy trying to convince itself, and the public, that nothing can be done about it since it is all the fault of foreigners.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I would mention CARICOM. There is no doubt that some of the damage is the result of -Barbados joining the Caribbean Community and harmonising its tariffs and more of the damage is due to our having to pay more for the higher priced and quite often inferior quality goods from Trinidad and Jamaica imported in the name of Caribbean economic integration. I want to sound a warning to the whole CARICOM performance; the Community was never intended to build roads for one-way traffic. At the moment Barbados is paying the higher prices without being able to get benefits by way of expanded employment - quite the contrary, in fact. The policy of paying more for imports from Jamaica and Trinidad for the sake of a principal can be carried too far. Traditionally, the smaller and less competitive units of great national groupings get political benefits in return for any economic disadvantages which they suffer. This happens in Federations. It is not happening in CARICOM, and as far as the Barbados Labour Party is concerned, this cannot go on forever.

A moment ago I said that the Government is trying to convince itself that nothing can be done about inflation. An easing of the introduction of CARICOM was something that could have been done. Food subsidies, even now, are measures which can be offered to reduce the prices of selected items. The Prime Minister spoke of rice on Thursday, and it is true that this one item accounts for 4.5% of the "basket of goods" that make up the package covered by the cost-of-living index. Barbadians imported over 14 million pounds of rice last year, and although imports have been running at a rather lower level this year, it is safe to assume that at least one million pounds of rice a month will be consumed, in 1974 in Barbados. At this level the money wasted at the Coastguard station could have reduced the price of rice by 15 cents a pound this year. Examples abound, but the best case can surely be made but for productive subsidies to be given to all aspects of local food output. Promises made when the Government released estates from their legal obligation to grow a certain acreage in food crops have not been realised and, as the Prime Minister admitted, locally produced items have been rising just as rapidly in price as those which are imported.

If the Government can or will do nothing to reduce inflation what is it doing to help people deal with the consequences of rising prices? Traditionally in Barbados many sectors of the working population have been given cost of living allowances and it is a Common place thing for the Union to negotiate wage increases based not on productivity increases but on increases in the prices of goods and services that workers have to buy. This is not a bad thing for Barbados. I have said before that the cost of imports represents so large a part of our national product as to protect us from the worse consequences of a wage - price inflationary spiral. This phrase, much beloved of economists, only means that since wages are a necessary part of the costs of manufacturing or producing anything, when you raise wages you raise costs and eventually prices. If wages have been raised because prices have gone up, the wage increase will cause prices to rise still further and chase the wages up the inflationary spiral' as it is called. This economic model, which implicitly dominates the thinking of the Governor of the Central Bank when he calls for restraint on wages for all those earnings more than \$200.00 monthly, is much less application in Barbados than it is in Britain, the U. S. A. and other major economies where trade plays an infinitely smaller part in generating national income than it does in Barbados. Put simply, no number of wage increases in Barbados will raise the price of Australian meat, British ours, Guyanese or Venezuelan rice American vegetables or Jamaican toothpaste We can therefore afford a much higher degree of wage "indexing" as it is coming to be called than can the countries where the economic textbooks are written. Indexing means quite simply tying a wage increase to the cost of living - in Barbados to the retail price index. As the index goes up so many points, so should wages rise by some pre-agreed amount. In local circumstances this can be achieved in Union negotiations, although I am not as yet aware of any index-linked wage agreements. However indexed agreements are common even in those countries where their implementation automatically puts pressure on prices and hence tends to create self sustaining inflations. Nonetheless their existence has not made the UK cost of living index go up by even half that in Barbados and I recommend the method to the General Secretaries of both the Barbados Workers' Union and the National Union of Public Workers, particularly the latter for this reason. Once the Government knows that a substantial rise in the cost of living index will automatically produce an unbudgeted for increase in civil servant salaries it will then have a powerful incentive to keep the cost. of. living down. It will see that it has a choice of subsidising the important items in the index rather than paying the

public service more, and it will be able to balance the cost of, say, \$3 million to subsidise rice, cooking oil and chicken production as against paying \$5 million in increased salaries to what the Prime Minister is pleased to call the 'army of occupation'. As a first instalment in such a policy the automatic cost of living allowance of 5% could be replaced by an indexed scale so that the Government can protect itself against giving a cost of living rise in a period of stable prices.

The Prime Minister has refused to give any increase to public servants through the usual bargaining channels, but in an obscurely put together piece of double talk has said that up to a certain salary level Xmas advances on salary will be made that need not be repaid. Put in honest language, he means that they are to have a Christmas bonus of 3%-4%. Not put in honest or any other kind of language is the fact that, according to the law as it now stands, the public servants who receive the advances will have to pay income tax on whatever money they get (unlike the previous, genuine, advances) and I could have wished for the Prime Minister to make it clear whether he intends this or whether he is going to give tax relief on the bonus. As a bonus, it is paltry; businesses in Bridgetown give a minimum of one month, not half, and it is not wrapped up in a lot of trashy verbiage. As a policy, it is meaningless and the approval that the proposal received demonstrates only the emptiness of thought on the Government benches. The public workers, by their representatives should have been treated with dignity and their just demands properly negotiated. The 3.8% bonus is reportedly less than the Government was prepared to offer at the start of the wages talks. It seems that the Prime Minister's talk of a Prices and Incomes policy means nothing more than keeping down incomes.

I want to say something Mr. Speaker, about the Prices and Income policies in general, and it is related to what I have already said about Barbados' position as an importing country. Some people are very ready to catch at slogans in this Island. Britain had a Prices and Incomes policy, so Barbados must have one too. Never mind that the phrase is just used as a sugar coated way of saying that the workers' wages must not go up, never mind that policy failed in Britain, never mind that it might be appropriate in a large industrial country but is bound to be inappropriate in Barbados where, as I have shown, local incomes have no effect on overseas prices; go ahead Britain, Barbados is behind you and we will have a Prices and Incomes policy. Few things can demonstrate the intellectual bankruptcy of the Prime Minister more than his grasping at this particular illusion, and even the honourable member for St. Lucy has characterised any wage freeze as part of a prices and incomes policy as "nonsense".

That is the description used by an hon. member on the Government side, not on ours, Mr. Speaker.

And now to the Old Age Pensioners. Some three years ago, quite early in this parliament the Hon. member for St. James, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, started to press for an increased Old Age Pension and this struggle has continued up to the present, for only last week just before the Budget, he succeeded in forcing debate on a motion dealing with the pensioners. He has always pushed for \$15 a

week, and I have joined him with the argument that, as more and more persons come to receive National Insurance pensions fewer and fewer will get the ordinary Old Age benefits and the Government will therefore have progressively less to pay out. What the Government has to pay out seems to be shrouded in mystery anyway, for the Prime Minister said that there are 16, 400 pensioners and the \$2 increase will cost \$1. 7 million per annum. A Government Information Service Release dated the same day as the Budget Speech says that there are only 14, 507 pensioners and on this basis the extra \$2 a week will cost only \$1, 5 million a year. Where the truth lies I don't know, but I tend to prefer the GIS Release, as I have previous adverse experience of the Prime Minister's statements. The extra \$200, 000 would be enough to give the pensioners at least \$15 each for Independence, instead of miserly \$3 which the Cabinet has approved. I hope that this matter can be gone into and a few extra dollars made available to the pensioners for Independence Day if the GIS figures and not the Prime Minister's turn out to be correct. In any event the extra \$2 a week to old people who are suffering from a 40% inflation that has reduced the value of an \$8 pension by more than \$3 a week is a contemptuous throw away. The pension should have been \$15 per week and if the Prime Minister wants to know where it could have come from he could have cut down on spending over \$200, 000 on a house and its furnishings for the Governor of the Central Bank, spending \$155, 000 for further redecoration of Mr. Cameron Tudor's official residence in London and elimination altogether for at least two years of the expenditure of \$2 million per year for acquiring more unnecessary land and houses for the Government.

We do not need at a time of economic difficulty to be buying houses for \$800. 000 or buying houses from former Ministers or whatever. That \$4 million would go a long way towards assistance with the old age pensions. The Government is already a large landowner and house owner and would be doing the economy nothing but good if it declared a moratorium on further. purchases at a time like this when the economy is shaky.

So much for inflation and the Prime Minister's empty measures. What has the Budget done for development? In one outstanding field the Government has failed Barbados consistently over the last ten years and that has been in agriculture. I am indebted to my friend, the Hon. Member for St. Joseph for the information that the Government has allowed 4, 400 acres of cane land to be taken out of cultivation and divided up unproductively in recent years making small fortunes for unscrupulous and indeed unpatriotic speculators while depriving Barbados of at least 11, 000 tons of sugar annually - worth perhaps \$10 million in foreign exchange at today's most likely prices. A crop of even the level of the last pre-election year, that of 1970, could this year have produced no less than \$28. 9 million in American exchange, a bounty that would have allowed the country to be enjoying a full Treasury and a flourishing countryside. But no. Agriculture was original sin, and instead of giving proper tax incentives to the sugar industry to mechanise its harvesting procedures so that the sweat and toil could be taken out of cane cutting and loading, Government spokesmen preferred to abuse the Barbados Labour Party and accuse its then Leader of importing 20, 000 baskets and hoes to give the people when we got power and to put them to work in the fields and it is one of the great tragedies of public life in this country that that abuse succeeded. The cane crop collapsed and the Government plunged into the mess from which the Prime Minister is desperately trying to bail it. The only real ray of hope is the same beaten-about sugar industry which has this year single-handedly saved the country from possible devaluation of the dollar.

And I discount altogether the self-praise of the latter day prodigal son the Prime Minister is implicitly representing himself to be, moving from extreme hostility to the sugar industry to claiming the credit for getting a better sugar price. Everyone knows that sugar is subject to boom and depression, for 300 years the sugar cane industry in Barbados has suffered the 7 or 10 lean years and then got its teeth into longer or shorter periods of high prices that create a prosperity in which, thanks to the work 20 years ago of the Barbados Labour Party, all Barbadians can share. Now comes along the greatest sugar boom of all time, with prices skyrocketing to levels that make the oil increases take a back seat, and Barbados is not in a position to take full advantage. Does the public know, Mr. Speaker, that at today's prices which have now reached \$3, 000 per ton at the London Market you can in theory gross more out of sugar in a year than the present cost of the land you grow it on? And I place the blame for depriving us of our local commodity boom squarely on the shoulders of the Prime Minister. He claimed that in this year oil will cost us an additional \$41 million. He did not also say that we have already received for re-exporting some of that oil an extra \$10 million or nearly half our extra import bill so far. It is, as I said in April, a matter of trust, but the Prime Minister's statistics should no longer surprise us. Sufficient to say that a proper cane crop, even if only modest by the standards of 1960-1970 would cover our net increase in the oil import bill with something to spare.

Before I leave this question of import and export I want to give the experts a bit of someone else's expertise. A lot is said about how badly off developing countries are in the light of the increase in oil prices. I would refer the people who say this to a study in the first issue of this year's Overseas Development Institute Review published in Britain. It points out that the main losers in the commodity boom of 1973-1974 are the developed countries, not the developing. Oil prices are not the only ones to have climbed, but startling increases have been registered in sugar, coffee, cocoa, cotton, nuts, metals, rubber - a straightforward list of tropical products and it turns out that except for certain South Asian countries and certain sub Saharan countries of Africa that have different problems, the developing countries are, for the main part, earning foreign exchange at unprecedented rates and are paying off their Eurodollar development loans with comfort. But not Barbados. Thanks to the Prime Minister and the years of misguided policy we are paying off our Eurodollars by taxation instead of with productivity.

The other and perhaps final point, Mr. Speaker, is what this Budget has done to get the economy moving again. The answer is nothing. The mere parading of familiar projects, all or nearly all, already recited in the Development Plan is no substitute for action. The comment that the Prime Minister made on the rate of interest is perhaps the saddest of all. If there is one thing that is sure beyond peradventure it is that rates of interest in Barbados are too high. The Government pays too much interest when it borrows money by means of treasury bills. When I said this on a political platform at Venture, St. John, in July of this year, and compared our 9. 8% with the much lower rates in Trinidad, Guyana and Jamaica the Prime Minister issued a Press Release in reply and said that in those countries the low rate of interest on treasury bills meant that the commercial banks were subsidising the government. I still see nothing wrong in this, not least because the Banks will receive a jolt that may make them get together and work out a system for reducing all rates of interest in the Island. There are, I am informed, 41 banking outlets. in Barbados, and despite the presence of a great majority of North American banks our whole system is still oriented towards London, where higher interest rates prevail than towards New York and North

America generally where money is cheaper. These 41 banks compete fiercely against each other for business, branch against branch and bank against bank and the high deposit rates which they pay mean of necessity that they are going to seek high interest when they lend. They have been quite rightly been cut down by the Central Bank on traditional high interest outlets such as credit for buying consumer durables, notably motor cars. They therefore can maintain profit levels only by lending high on mortgages and financing business overdrafts - the latter being a notable contribution to increasing the cost of living and at the same time reducing business activity.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Broadcast time is ended.

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, I did not know, Sir, that you were in control of the broadcast.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Sixty-six minutes.

Mr. ADAMS:

With great respect. I can speak in here for the rest of the day if I want to.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Sixty-six minutes without broadcast.

Mr. ADAMS:

With great respect. I can speak in here for the rest of the day if I want to.

Mr. SPEAKER:

There will be no arguments. Mr. ADAMS No arguments. I can speak. Mr. SPEAKER I rule. (Asides)

Mr. ADAMS:

With great respect, Sir, I am moving a motion. I am first speaker. I have unlimited time. I am nothing to do with anything about the Rules- of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The agreement has always been that the Reply should take just as much time as the speech of the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance.

Mr. ADAMS:

Sir, interrupting me will not prevent me from saying what I have to say. I do not believe that the availability of funds in Barbados is so low that London-style interest rates are appropriate. In London it is necessary to protect sterling and take steps to attack the massive volumes of short term capital floating around Europe looking for a good rate and low risk.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Broadcast time is ended.

Mr. ADAMS:

So what? Why are you interrupting me, Mr. Speaker? I have never seen...

Mr. SPEAKER:

What it does mean is that you can continue speaking but your broadcasting time is finished.

Mr. ADAMS:

I have never seen a Statement interrupted before in all my days in the House. Why are you interrupting me?

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member may continue. Order!

Mr. ADAMS:

I was referring to the 41 banks, Sir, when you interrupted me. Sir, can I be heard in silence?

In passing, Sir, I will just say at this stage that I started at 5. 05 p. m. and the Prime Minister spoke for 65 minutes and it is not yet 6. 10 p. m. I just toss that out at this stage. You told me, Sir, that he spoke for 65 minutes and not 70 minutes - in the dining-room today - and we are now reaching the 65 minutes. Never mind that. That can be checked subsequently when the length of time that I have actually been

broadcasting, with your interruptions removed, is analysed by the Government Information Service.

I was talking about the banks, Sir. The moneys to which I have been referring are not going to come to Barbados no matter what exchange rate we offer, and with exchange control fund should no longer be able to flow so easily but of Barbados. With increased taxation which amounts over this whole year to about \$30 million plus \$12 million in accelerated receipts of company tax bringing the Government's total extra take to something like \$42 million the banking system can surely have some relief from Government pressure on its available funds and lend more money to the public for productive enterprise at attractive rates of interest. The Prime Minister knows the demands for mortgage funds and the need for business financing; he should not have been satisfied merely to express the view that the rate of interest should come down. He should be taking the initiative in forcing it down, and to my mind this should include the reduction of maximum deposit rates if necessary. The American banks should be told to tap the cheaper American money market and, if a bank or two has to go to the wall I for one will not weep. Business should be about competition, and the banks have been a cosy circle for too long. It is still true, Mr. Speaker, that with the weakest of the economies among the Big Four of CARICOM we yet have the most favourable climate for foreign banks. This is a record we can do without if it is achieved at the expense of the welfare of the people.

In summary then what of the Budget as a whole? I have not dealt so far with, what the Prime Minister so touchingly called "the children"! Since the new school books will no" be available until the next school year beginning in September, 1975 it might very reasonably be thought that to mention them now rather than in next year's Budget is a major irrelevance. But it was said and we heard it. Heard it, Mr. Speaker, in a rather more watered-down form that was evidently, originally intended, since my copy of the Budget Speech actually reads!

"Government should purchase and provide all text books in all schools free of cost". Now "free of cost" is crossed out with "Subject to a small maintenance cost" written in manuscript, and going on "we will extend this facility to the hard-pressed students at secondary "and grammar but "and grammar" is also crossed out and nothing is put in its place.

Well, I reserve judgement until I actually see the scheme set up and observe whether the books are ordered through the usual channels or whether the Government is going to take the risk of turning the Central Purchasing Department loose on so unfamiliar a task. I hope that the secondary schools will not be subjected to the situation of the primary school in Christ Church, which has been brought to my attention by the hon. member for Christ Church West that has in one class school books for 8, to be shared among 40 pupils.

Earlier this year the Prime Minister said that he hoped that 1974 was the first year of the future.

Perhaps, but what future? All over the Island there is economic distress, with falling standards. Debtors cannot meet their commitments - there are over 9, 500 debt cases already this year in the Magistrates Courts in Bridgetown compared with under 5, 300 last year. All over Barbados people cannot find money to pay their debts. Malnutrition is said by the Director of Medical Services to be on the increase. The World Bank is lending Jamaica US\$20 million for Housing and Agriculture Development, Trinidad US\$18 million for its telephone company and Guyana nearly US\$3 million for drainage, all at only 7.4% interest. In Barbados we are being lent a lot of talk. The teachers in Trinidad are getting a 40% pay rise; in Barbados they are biting the bullet. And meanwhile the Prime Minister soldiers on, drawing a larger salary and allowances than Dr. Eric Williams and not even willing to set an example in reducing Government expenditure by offering to sacrifice even \$100. 00 per month. The Budget can have no effect other than its tendency to cripple an already overtaxed population.

I would just remind that modern Belshazzar, the Prime Minister, of just one of the words that Daniel was called upon to interpret - TEKEL - "thou are weighed in the balances, and are found wanting".

I hereby move that this House take note of the Budgetary Proposals introduced by the Prime Minister, Minister of Finance on November 21, 1974; observes that they lay the greatest tax burden at all times on Barbadians; considers that they reflect most adversely on the general fiscal and other financial management of the country;

And regrets that the measures will do nothing to reduce the effect of galloping inflation, to revive the flagging sectors of the economy, or, to restore and improve employment levels.

Mr. CRAIG:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the motion and reserve the right to speak.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, it may be convenient at this stage to revert back to Government Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS RESUMED

Mr. SPEAKER:

When Government Business was being proceeded with the House was discussing the Motor Vehicles

and Road Traffic

(Amendment) Regulations, 1974, and the hon. member for Christ Church West was speaking.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, if I may repeat what I said just for the record, I was expressing concern over the fact that it has taken the Ministry a considerable time to bring this Resolution to this Parliament, and events have now overtaken the Ministry.

I would like, without prolonging the debate to refer to one other aspect of this matter. It Concerns the arrangements being made about the importation of buses, to Barbados for the movement of passengers from the airport and otherwise. I want to make a few things absolutely clear. No member of the Opposition objects to the encouragement of the Co-operative Movement and particularly when the persons concerned in the Co-operative Movement are from the least privileged sections of our community.

But I believe that the Minister must also be aware that there is a manner of doing things. It is strongly felt that the Co-operative movement is used as a front line organisation to help other persons whose whole life time has not been spent in the transport business. I would counsel the Government to be careful not to allow various unlicensed taxis and mini buses to be operating under certain tour operators without having proper licences and without the people who really own these assets coming forward and declaring their interests; and what bothers me considerably about this whole thing is that taximen have met me on the streets in Bridgetown and have expressed their concern that they are being penalised in some respects.

I do not believe that, knowing this Minister, after he has considered the facts will leave himself open to any allegations of showing inequality of treatment; but this is a matter that I raise seriously for him and for his consideration, that if there are any unlicensed mini-buses, then he should do something about it. 6. 20 p. m.

This goes for the operation of the airport as well as the seaport, and it must also be remembered that taxi drivers are employed in other establishments in the Island, and we must do nothing to minimise the possibility of their making a proper living. I am not one of those who consider that it is the unbounden right of a certain section of the community to monopolise the complete economic life of this country, but I want to make it absolutely clear that on the other hand one must be careful in executing a policy that you are not cutting off your nose to spoil your face, and I wonder how seriously the Government has

looked at the long term effect of this matter. I trust that I will not, until the minibuses are brought in by the Cooperative Taxi Association at the airport, see minibuses being hired from other persons whose business is not transport, nor do I hope to see the Transport Board or indeed any of the private concessionaires being used in these instances to supply a need.

I believe that the Cooperative at the airport has a strong case if they can increase their size and increase their membership for some special type of consideration. That is what I want to make absolutely clear and I hope they will be given also some sort of financial encouragement by way of management of their affairs so that they can be much better able at the airport to run their business on a more satisfactory level. Indeed I make it part of my business every time I come through the airport and I do not see my . family or my wife and friends to give me a lift, of supporting their establishment. But they need not only monopolies; they also need other assistance if they are to compete fairly, and I hope they will not allow themselves to be misused in any way. I have the deepest confidence in the Minister of Communications and Works to make sure that any permits operated under his department are operated fairly, and although I have clever asked him to go forth and make himself into an inspector, I trust that he will try to ferret out as much information as possible on the operation of these taxi services so that he can make sure that a fair system operates. There are well recognised people like the gentleman from Kentruth who employs a lot of people and some of them have voiced fears to me that they may be turned out of business. When one is hitting at people, I do not even believe that the goodly gentleman supports me politically, and in terms of legal practice I believe the President of the Senate is his legal adviser, but it is not on self-interest that I am urging this. I have had complaints from some of his drivers as well as drivers from other people that there is the danger that their interest is not being looked after, and I should like to counsel the Minister to so operate his policy that it is fair. There are too many new operators jumping into this tourist field all of a sudden, people who have not dedicated their time to tourism, and every moment I look around I see some new -this tour' and 'next tour' coming up and asking for special considerations, and they have not got the case that the Cooperative at the airport has, and they should not be allowed to hide behind blank walls and blank faces, and I challenge the Government on this point to make sure it is not being misled. I am not one for name calling, and I only ask that the Minister be aware of these things, and if the information reaching me sometimes by way of constituents and otherwise is correct, I would like him to set the pattern straight.

I for one do not mind what other members on either side might think. I have every confidence that the Minister will try to set anything wrong right and I so express it even if unfortunately he might later make me eat my words. I doubt he will do so, but I trust he will take a warning on this point very strongly.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that I would be doing my duty if I say that I am satisfied beyond shadow of doubt that the Minister of Communications and Works has no personal interest in this Resolution or in anything called transport at Seawell Airport. I would like if I could say the same thing for the Minister of Tourism who spoke on this matter. Having said what I have just said, Mr. Speaker, it ought to begin

to throw an entirely different light on the situation and the fight I do submit is the dangerous type of light that we are seeing in our politics today. There is no doubt that mean advantage is taken of the concessionaires and everybody associated more or less with transporting passengers, groups and otherwise at Seawell Airport from time to time, particularly the small taxi operators, and I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Tourism has been exercising himself in all this, and we are going to witness what we will call a blowing up of this taxi business in and out of Seawell Airport.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation, would the hon. member explain whether I understood him correctly to say that the Minister of Communications and Works is not financial interested, but he thought I was, and if so, would he explain that.

Mr. HINDS:

He is Minister and he should know what elucidate means.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I should like the hon. member to remember Standing Order No. 28(7) - "No Member may impute improper motives to another Member. "

You have already gone far enough in imputing motives to an hon. member in the Chamber and that is out of order.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I have to pay every respect to what you say, but if I say something and not be in a position to prove it, then you have me. I ask the Hon. Minister of Tourism to take warning about my last remarks to you. What we are saying, Mr, Speaker, is that the whole situation at Seawell ought not to be what it is today if the Hon. Minister for Tourism would really exert his influence as a Minister and stop there. Already we have had before this Honourable Chamber an announcement from Ministers of Government that there will be a limit in the registration and licensing of more taxis, and I well remember the address I made on that occasion bringing it to the attention of the Government of the plight of a chap who had been a car washer for all his life saving up his 25 cent pieces and dollar bills in the hope that some day he would become a taxi owner, and on the eve of his realising the kind of money to buy a taxi, down came Government with the sledge hammer - no more taxis. 6. 30 p. m.

But the situation is changing, Mr. Speaker, at Seawell Airport. You heard from the Minister of Tourism about the Barbados Transport Co-operative being given a concession to do this and to do that; you heard, Mr. Speaker, about Tours of Barbados and Barbados Tours Ltd. -they twist their names around to form their companies for registration purposes and what not - but in the midst of all this you

will find, Mr. Speaker - and the Minister of Tourism cannot deny he knows this - that there are people who go abroad and make their own contacts; invite groups of people to come here, and the Minister has seen to it that those people who do this on their own, when the groups come here they have the taxis and accommodation but they cannot drive those people out of Seawell Airport. Let the Minister deny these things.

You will find, Mr. Speaker, it is the question of these coaches that we are hearing about. The Minister ought to declare his interest in all these coaches which are to be imported. As an Hon. Minister who wants to gain the respect of this country he ought to have disclosed all this when he was on his feet.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will give way, on a point of order, he is imputing improper motives. I deny here and now any interest whatsoever in any transportation thing, any coach or any transportation company.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, he never said "on a point of order".

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member is on a point of order.

Mr. HINDS:

He never rose on a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have so ruled. Will the hon. member take his seat.

Mr. HINDS:

I will take my seat but I will leave the Chamber.

Mr. HINDS left the Chamber.

Hon. P. G. MORGAN:

Mr. Speaker, I would like the matter clear, Mr. Speaker, I have no interest in any transportation company, bus, mini moke or any other form of transportation.

Mr. HINDS re-entered the Chamber. Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, Sir,

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member must leave the Chamber at once. The hon. member has flagrantly broken the rules of this Chamber. The hon. member was on his feet. Leave at once.

Mr. HINDS:

You asked me to sit and I sat, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Leave at once. Mr. HINDS For what, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER:

For a flagrant breach of the rules.

Mr. HINDS left the Chamber.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, we have seen in here today rules being interpreted, rules being broken and everything done in an effort to protect Government Ministers and the Government. I have said for a very long time (Hon. C. B. TALMA You had better be careful). I am not to be careful of anything, you cannot frighten me. This is why I believe that the, time has come in this country when Ministers must declare their assets. I challenge the Minister of Education who is so interested in the declaration of assets to look carefully at this position of coaches.

Ministers of Government in this country have been using the provisions of the Companies Act whereby private companies only have to list their directors and not their shareholders. This is an outmoded provision and one which should be changed in the interest of this country. It is grossly unfair for any Minister of Government to have any interest in any company that is operating and dealing with the Government's money. It is immoral and I can firmly say that I know for a fact that Ministers of this Government have interest in companies and are receiving the benefit of money, and sooner or later this whole issue is going to blow up in the faces of the Ministers of this country if they do not put a stop to it.

If they believe that hiding behind outmoded provisions of 1910 will continue they are wrong. You cannot go on fooling the public for ever. If the Ministers believe that merely getting up in here saying that they have no interest in anything is going to be satisfactory to the public they are wrong. Any Minister with assets knows that he can afford to say so now because if you go to the Registry and check you will see a list of the directors but not the shareholders. They cannot hide behind that all the time, Sir.

It is significant that only two Ministers I know of said they were prepared to declare their assets whether legislation is brought into that effect or not. The time is ripe when things in this country are getting so bad there is a lack of confidence in the politicians of this country and it is based upon conduct such as this.

As I understand what has happened, the situation at Seawell is that there is a company formed in this country which decided to bring in coaches. The Minister of Tourism and some other people I believe had some meeting on co-operatives, and when some of the members tried to take notes the Minister of Tourism said no. He said he did not want notes taken and when the members insisted that notes be taken the meeting came to an end. After the Co-operatives and the taximen started to keep a fuss about these coaches coming in which obviously would deprive them of revenue, a suggestion was made to the Co-operative that they would run the coaches on behalf of this company. You cannot go on fooling the people all the time, but throughout the next year you are going to hear a lot more about situations such as this where Ministers have interest in companies dealing and contracting with the Government, and it is wrong. 6. 40 p. m.

We cannot go on forever; because if we in here cannot succeed in making them declare their assets - people are in economic difficulties in this country at the moment - and nothing will prevent them from feeling or realising - and I believe that they are beginning to realise, from the feed back that I have been getting around the country - that they are now realising what the Opposition has been saying all along, that you want to bring back morality in politics and that Ministers should no longer; hide behind Companies Act provisions to operate as shareholders in companies and drawing profits when they have no right to be doing that.

It is a serious situation, and if you cannot make Ministers declare their assets, sooner or later the people will take it on themselves to make sure that the Ministers declare their assets. You cannot go on fooling the public all the time. These bold declarations that "I do not have any interest in this", whom do they believe that they are fooling? Do they really believe that people are so stupid? Do they think that people believe that a Minister would be so stupid as to put down his name as director of any company? But there are other ways of doing it, and that is what is happening. That is what makes the whole situation disgraceful. In spite of the many denials you get in here, Sir. (Asides)

Mr. SPEAKER:

Order, please.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Nothing can change my mind about the interests that Ministers in Government have. (Asides)

Mr. SPEAKER:

There must be order. Members who are not standing must observe the Standing Orders.

Hon. P. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I want to clear up a few things. Perhaps a lot of people do not know what the function of the Ministry of Communications and Works is. As far as the Laws of Barbados are concerned, my function, or my Ministry's function is purely to license taxi cabs and vehicles for hire. I have nothing whatever to do with Seawell Airport, concessions at Seawell, who runs them and who gets them. I have nothing to do with Seawell, either from the point of view of development or transport. That falls under the Prime Minister's office - the Ministry of Civil Aviation.

Some time ago I received an application from a group of people who were not in the Tourist Industry and who wanted to rent buses from the Transport Board to move people and go on tours. Apparently it had started before it came to my knowledge. When it came to my knowledge, I, as Minister, stopped it because I was not prepared to allow individuals to use the Transport Board's buses worth \$50, 000 a year, to put out no capital, and to make a profit on the taxpayers' money. I stopped it even though it meant a loss of revenue to the Transport Board.

Apart from that, at that time I felt that it would affect the livelihood of the taxi drivers who have families to feed. Now if there is one man who is in favour of taxi drivers and whom they know is a champion of their cause, it is the Minister of Communications and Works. I have no doubts about that,

The question simply is this: if buses are to come into this island for this purpose, the Ministry of Tourism must make out a case for it. The Ministry of Trade must give the licences. When they come into the island, it is then that I come in. I do not come in before. That is the function of the law as I understand it. I am only involved when the bus comes to the Pine to get licensed.

If the pattern of tourism is changing and there is need for them, that is a matter of tourist development, if a group wants to import them, the Ministry of Trade will decide whether they get license. Only at that point am I concerned -when a bus comes to be examined at the Ministry of Communications and Works. I want my position to be quite clear on this.

Now, I want further to say this: my job and the Chief Technical Director's job is to license taxi cabs in this country. The Prime Minister in his Budget Speech in April said on Page 21 "I propose no increases in licence fees on Motor Cabs. I however propose to limit the licensing of motor cabs to replacement units only - i. e., I propose to freeze the number of taxi cabs at the number already in operation. "

So even my discretion as Minister for licensing taxi cabs is gone as a result of the Budget speech. If you hear that there are taxi cabs getting licences, if they are not given by the Ministry of Communications and Works that is a breach of the financial instructions contained in the Budget Speech.

One thing that I am definitely against is people using their positions or trying to give the impression that they can break the law because of their connections with other people. There is a mini bus that has been drawn to my attention, and I know of it, running somewhere in St. Lawrence and carrying people on tours without a licence. I have written to the Commissioner of Police about it: Up to yesterday I rang the Police at St. Lawrence and asked them to check it out and if it is so, to take the appropriate action; because the Minister of Communications and Works is not an enforcing agency.

I do not have it here, I have it on a pad in the office; but be that as it may, I have asked the Police to investigate and take appropriate action because I do not want people to believe - and in certain cases people give the impression that because they know a high up politician they can break the law, and the Minister, if he gets the blame, it is claimed that it is because of his connection to somebody.

I am not in that at all. I do not want arty friends in politics. There are very few real ones anyhow, and I know that tomorrow a knife will go through my back and through my heart if I do not keep my eyes open. Do not think that I do not know where I stand in politics; but as I said, I want my position clear.

The hon. member for Christ Church West talked about being overtaken by circumstances. These taxi fares were made by me on the 30th September, to get parliamentary consent to enable these taxi rates to be changed. In fact it is only if there are opposed within a certain time. It is just a formal procedure.

Let me tell you this, and the taxi drivers can understand this. I do not walk about giving away money to taxi drivers. If a case is made out for an: increase of parts, tyres and gasoline and it is submitted to my Ministry, I promise that I will work on it promptly. So I do not want members of the Opposition to get the impression that the Minister, because prices go up, is going to call them in and say "boys take your 25 per cent increase", I do not work it so. They have to let me know that because of an increase in the price of a certain commodity or group of commodities their operations are being affected, and a price increase is necessary I do not intend to walk around giving people money if people do not make recommendations which justify an increase.

Now, the question is that we may have to come to the House with a further order. The arguments they submitted in respect of this present Resolution will have to be submitted again and I promise that it will receive urgent attention if and when it comes.

The position finally, Mr. Speaker, is that the Prime Minister has frozen taxis only to replacements. They are going to be no more taxi licences issued. The question of coaches and buses is nothing to do with me except as a member of the Government. When I am instructed to licence them I will licence them; or if there is a Cabinet decision to licence them, I will have to licence them or leave the Cabinet. It is as simple as that. That is my function with collective responsibility.

I do not know anything about these buses. I do not know who is bringing them in. The point is that if the Cabinet takes a decision that in the changing pattern of tourism and for the reasons given by my colleague, the Minister of Tourism, that they should come in, they will be licenced in due course. 6. 50 p. m.

I have no interest in taxis. I have a car eleven years old which I have just had decarbonised. That is the only thing I have. I have a bicycle to give me a little exercise.

I beg, to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:

I beg to second that.

- The question Was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

THE PETROLEUM (AMENDMENT) (No. 2) ACT, 1974

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 2 be the next Order of the Day.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA; Mir, Speaker as the Objects and Reasons set out, this Bill would amend the Petroleum Act, 1882, in order to increase the charge on gasoline payable under section 26(l)(a)(i) and (b)(i) thereof from 41 cents per gallon to 81 cents per gallon. This is part of the Budgetary proposals as enunciated by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance here oh Thursday last when he presented his Supplementary Budget. I do not think I need say any more.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I beg to second that.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, this Bill has come at a time when users of petroleum products in Barbados have been publicly and vociferously making expressions as to the quality of fuel being sold to them on the open market in this country. I want to say here and now that I join with each and every complainant about the fuel that is sold in Barbados.

A few weeks ago I noticed a report in the Nation of some gas station proprietor saying that no bad gas was being sold in Barbados. I am saying here now that Mobil oil has changed their specifications for fuel oils in Barbados, and I am calling on the Government now to say what are the standards of oils to be sold here, because I have personal knowledge that they have changed their No. 2 boiler fuel oil from a rating of 42-47 to 44-55, and the consumer is not getting quality for money, and this is simply because of the monopoly which exists in Barbados. It is time the Government forthwith take over Mobil Oil in this country, and the longer they wait the more the consumer will pay out, but if the Government is dependent on the consumption of petrol products to enhance its revenue in the Treasury, then they will do something. I would like to hear the Minister's reply on this, because a few years ago you used to get two grades of gasoline in Barbados; you got a low octane and a high octane at different prices. There was a change of price and overnight every gas station in Barbados had one fuel. It is known that at every gas station there are 200 gallons in every tank even when the dip stick is reading empty, and no explanation has even been given to the public why one grade of fuel has been removed from the market. Daily people are complaining that whereas they bought a tank full of gasoline and got so many miles per gallon, now it has been reduced, and I heard a gas station owner say that there is no difference in the quality. Has Government ever set up specifications for the fuel to be sold in Barbados? Has Government got in its employ any person who goes around and checks?

Once before when people used to sell milk, you had milk inspectors who would meet a person in the road and take two portions, the bottles were sealed and one was held by the vendor, and if the milk was not of a certain quality, the vendor was prosecuted in court. This does not happen with the same fuel which is the life blood of the economy of this country. Another point we must realise is this, Mr. Speaker. It seems strange to me that in December last year the Minister of Trade went on television and counselled everybody in this country to use less electricity, otherwise we would have a black Christmas. Overnight the Barbados Light and Power Co. changed their advertising from telling you how to use more electricity to how to conserve energy. They went to the added expense of publishing a booklet to tell you how you must economise in the consumption of energy. This continued up until Thursday last week and on Friday morning Light & Power made a turn about and is telling you now how to use more energy. What kind of policy is this? Following the Emergency Budget by the Minister of Finance the Barbados Light & Power has been telling people to buy vacuum cleaners and the like. I can tell you of a personal experience and I have told Mr. Sumpter that he cannot stop me from speaking; so he can do whatever he feels like. Three weeks ago I had a boiler in St. Philip that has been working on No. 2 diesel fuel bought from Mobil Oil. I ordered 300 gallons and from the time it went into the tank the boiler stopped working. I had three engineers come and check it and they told me that the problem is with the fuel being used from Mobil Oil. They have changed their specifications, and none of the boilers in Barbados is using it now. Sumpter and his gang of satellites have not got the guts to tell the public of Barbados that Mobil Oil have changed their specifications for fuel oil and are producing fuel at 47% density, and all the engineers in Barbados will tell you that they are scraping the bottom of the barrel in

international standards. Sumpter is telling people that they have mechanical defects when the oil would not burn. Sumpter and the public can hear that one engineer at Light & Power has said that because they are forced to use Barbados oil which is full of ash that they cannot produce fuel of a better quality. It would cost them too much to use a better cocktail mixture from Venezuela; but I say that if they are getting the price, Government should insist that the monopoly produce fuel oils and gasolene of a specific quality so as not to rob the consumer because the Mobil Oil and its parent company has four times increased their profit margin in the first quarter of this year as a result of the increased prices in oil 7. 00 p. m.

I agree with the Prime Minister in this respect, that the method of international accounting is such that places like the Telephone Company and Barbados Light and Power have devised a system whereby they can show that they lose money in certain territories and therefore tell you they are not making a profit. The only way to stop this is for Government to take it in hand and lay down specifications for fuel. It is no use Government talking about satisfying ourselves with 33 1.3% of fuel in this country when at the same time you are extracting from the earth sufficient crude oil to give you a 33 1.3% decrease in imports. At the same time the oil company is producing a fuel of such poor quality that the consumer is using up that amount and more, and putting the profits in their pockets.

It is time that the Government really look around, if we talk about socialism. I hear everybody over there talk about a socialist policy, but they are sitting down and doing like the proverbial ostrich and that is not a socialist policy, Mr. Manley in Jamaica took a decision about bauxite, but we do not have in Barbados the sort of wealth coming out of the ground, and if we find a little bit of oil we should use it as carefully as possible, we should not allow the multi-national corporations to make a mockery of our efforts because every increase in price and every diminution in quality of produces produced in Barbados decreased the standard of living of the consumer in this country and it is time that a positive step be taken about this. Government cannot stand up in this Chamber and say that they are doing justice to the users of gas in this country.

The taxi drivers. We have just debated an Order in which it was stated that the taxi drivers cried out for an increased in their fares. If this is so, and the quality of gasolene goes down.....

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER:

It is now 7 o'clock. We have to suspend until 7. 45.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER:

The sitting is now resumed. I had inadvertently suspended until 7. 45 but the time is 8 o'clock. We are near enough to 8 o'clock to begin.

Mr. ADAMS:

On a point of order, Sir, I was just saying that since you are sticking to the rules the House is now automatically adjourned since we didn't resume at 7. 45. We are ten minutes late.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Standing Orders are there, but it was my own error. The hon. member for St. Joseph may now continue his speech.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, I continue on the question of the petroleum which is being produced and used in Barbados; There is a St. Philip word called "scrunch", and as I heard some person say, when the scrunch of the fuel hit us everybody cried out. In the midst of this, in order to pretend to the public at large that the Government was doing something the Minister of Trade made an announcement about the setting up of a committee to investigate and report to Government on the importation and use of fuels oils in this country. From the terms of that committee it would appear that the Ministry of Trade was of the opinion that they were being short changed by Mobil Oil, the company which holds the monopoly in this country. I might be wrong in this, but I believe that that committee should have reported to Government within three months in regard to recommendations for the importation of Oils and fuel in this country. I have constantly said that Government has not made use of its facilities, its legislative powers in respect of consumers in this country.

About 1966 I wrote a letter to the Advocate and to the Beacoil, when it was then being published, about domestic gas and its sales in this country. All of these are by-products of petroleum. Even today, Mr. Speaker, if you use a gas stove in your house and you order a 100-lb. bottle of gas or a 20-lb. bottle of gas, when it comes you cannot tell whether it has 100 lbs., 90 lbs. or 60 lbs. in it. I have constantly prayed and begged Government to pass consumer legislation in this country to protect the consumer, and nothing has been done.

When the Minister of Trade announced the appointment of a Committee to look into fuel oils, to my mind and in my humble opinion he was not getting full use of the fuels for the money he was paying. It goes a bit further now, Mr. Speaker, some of us seem to think that when a debate like this comes up on oil it only relates to oil, but it stretches even further.

Barbados is now exploring for oil throughout the St. Philip region. I have seen letters in the newspapers where people have asked about royalties being paid to Government and when will Government pay royalties to the owners of those lands on which the exploration is going on. At the moment every oil well that has been sunk in Barbados has been sunk in the middle of a field which has been producing sugar cane, and particularly in the Wopdbourne area which has now engulfed the area owned by small people, and if these people have to depend on the sale of sugar cane for a livelihood, then it is absolutely right and imperative that the Government should come out early and pay them compensation for the use of their lands when they have not been able to produce sugar cane, in order to protect them from the starvation and the wants and needs which will certainly fall upon them.

It is time that the Government looks carefully at the acquiring of those facilities in the country which bear most heavily on the total population. Oil is one of those things. In every country so far where oil is being produced, in the Arab countries the Arabs have taken over the oil wells which are owned by the Americans, and one cannot shut their eyes to the threats of the President of the United States of America and his roving Ambassador, Dr. Kissinger, who threatened the very Arabs about the use and production of their oil wells on their own lands. 8. 05 p. m.

I remember sometime ago Mr. Speaker, that the American Government made a pronouncement at the time when Cuba was struggling to maintain her independence, that she has got a right to go into any place where the Americans have lands or investments.

Let us get it straight now. If Mobil Oil is an American off shoot, the Government must step in right now and protect the interest of the single natural resource which it can extract from the soil. We must not sit down and allow Mobil Oil or any other oil company to amass million of dollars in profits out of Barbadians in this country by exporting to the USA and tell you or me that all the Government is prepared to do is to raise taxes on that oil and put into its coffers; because in that way we are reducing the standard of living of the population.

If the Government finds that the only way to reduce the importation of oil into this country is to raise the price of gasoline, the sum which is raised from that gasoline should be utilised to the profit of the

community at large, and it must not be used in such a way that only one particular section must profit from it.

Let us look at sugar production. My belief is that the money raised under the Sugar Stabilisation Act, or the Bill that was passed earlier - the bulk of that should be spent in the rural districts where the people are primarily engaged in agriculture and are therefore directly responsible for the production of sugar and the revenue taken therefrom.

If the general pattern of behaviour in Barbados is such that every Tom, Dick and Harry must drive a motor car and you raise revenue as a result of this, then that sum of money should be put back into the country in a pattern that can be recognised; but you cannot do it unless you control a company like Mobil Oil having a monopoly in this country.

I can tell you what they told me. There is no use going to Esso and there is no use going to Texaco to buy oil because wherever it comes from it is coming from Mobil Oil tanks. That is the basic pride that they present to you when you complain. Do you know the reason why? It is because this Government has not equipped itself with the necessary technical ability when they sit down with Mobil Oil technicians to argue a profitable case for Barbadians who live in this country.

On this side we raised a debate when my colleague, the hon. member for Bridgetown made a motion last year on the crisis in oil, I stated at that time that the Government found themselves with their backs against the wall when the first tourist ship appeared on the horizon and the Port called Esso and asked for bunkering fuel and they were told "we have no fuel". When the Minister of Trade phoned and asked how do you mean you have no fuel when my records show that all your tanks down there are full, they said, "Mr.

Minister, what we mean to say is that we have no fuel at your price. "

There is no one on that side who can deny this because Mr. Frank Alleyne a member of the executive of the Democratic Labour Party wrote subsequently in the newspaper that the application for an increase in the price of fuel had been on the Minister's desk for six months, and he only acted upon it when he was faced with this ultimatum - raise the price or you get no oil I do not believe that any company, any body or any institution or citizen should be able to intimidate a Government. I heard the very Minister say that Mobil was using intimidation tactics to him when they demanded an increase in price and took a ship that was discharging oil in the harbour and sent it back out to sit on the horizon. That is the position that Barbados lies in today, that an oil company can hold a government to ransom and demand what

price they want.

That can only be done if you have a government with their hands so tied up with an oil company that they are afraid to act. I always heard my mother say that when your hand is in the lion's mouth you have to ease it out; you cannot struggle. She was repeating an old saying which means that the Government's hands must be in some way tied up in Mobil Oil's mouth when they cannot wriggle out and tell Mobil Oil what to do.

The Minister of Communications and Works has said that the last Resolution passed here was to approve certain taxi rates. Already the taxi drivers are saying that they are not getting the mileage from their vehicles. Do you know what it means? It means more expenditure by every person in this country who has got to use any form of fuel whatsoever. Already you hear advertisements on the radio about somebody selling gadgets which will boost your mileage. The American Motor Industry has experimented with these gadgets over the years, and there is a consumer report which says that not one of them was able to increase the mileage as they claimed. As a matter of fact 90 per cent of them decreased the mileage you obtain from gasoline, but as long as you get gasoline which is not giving you mileage everyone of us is going to go and seek for something to increase the mileage.

You will only increase the mileage if the Government appoints an individual who has got the technical knowledge, if Government sets up the standards and sends inspectors out daily to check the fuel which is produced by Mobil Oil and prosecute them to the hilt.

I have heard the Prime Minister come in here and say when BWIA raised their fares that it was illegal and you should report it to the Director of Public Prosecutions. I have not yet seen a prosecution. I hope that something will be done constructively and positively in this approach, because I believe it is time that small communities like this are not taken for a ride.

I believe also that the answer to any monopoly is to bring a competitor. There is a Minister on that side who I know is in contact with at least another oil company which is willing to come in and drill for oil. Do not ask me who it is because I will call names and I will call the oil company. I will tell you about the negotiations. I have the knack and ability of receiving news on my radio set that a lot of the back benchers do not receive. I have always pushed my aerial high up. (ASIDE: CBC?) If the Minister wants me to call names I can call names. All that he has to do is to ask me to give way and make a statement and I will call the names. 8. 15 p. m.

Mr. Speaker, this is the way to break a monopoly. If they say they have not got the money, let us be frank about it now. Jamaica decided that they must get something out of their natural resources and they levied a tax on bauxite for the good of the country. If you feel that you cannot take over Mobil Oil, there is nothing wrong in going to court and taking ten years to pay. Jamaica has just agreed to pay Germany \$42 million for the last World War which finished in 1945. This is the life blood of the community and we must do this.

Mr. Speaker, hon. members are taking this as a joke, but as I said earlier, the 1975 cane crop will find an increase in freight rates to the small man, not to the big plantations because every big plantation in the island is using tractors to haul canes. It is the small man who has to employ lorries to haul the canes, and the lorry owners will have to buy gasoline at \$2.00 a gallon and it will not give the mileage they are accustomed to getting, so the small man will have to pay more for having his canes transported. This makes the small man poorer and the rich man richer. The big plantations will do their ploughing by tractors that used diesel fuel which does not attract an increase in price or a 5% sales tax. The small man will have to depend on somebody to do his forking and do his freighting at the increased price, so he does not come out in the long run with the benefits of the large plantation. If one has to pay more for gasoline but you are getting better mileage because of better quality gasoline, then you can seek a restraint on those people who attempt to charge a higher price for freighting, but at this stage I will say that any freighter who asks for an increased price using the present day gasoline is justified. It means therefore" that the small man who has got to employ a person with a gasoline vehicle gets less from his return in the booming economy of sugar than he should get.

Now I turn to the question of the buses. I heard the Minister of Communications and Works say that people applied to him to use buses to move people from Seawell. I want him to know now that if these people want to move people from Seawell, they must not do it with public transport which is using diesel fuel which has been exempt from the increase charge. Let them get involved in expenditure like anybody else, let them feel the pinch of the shoe, let them hear what the bank manager would tell them if they applied for an overdraft if they want to get into a lucrative business, but do not let them use Government reserves. I hope that Government will look carefully into the question of fuel oils in this country and come up with a Committee. I do not want a Committee set up with the Chairman of the Natural Gas Corporation and certain other people. It is time we reach the point in this community where we have all-party committees. We do not want only those who are sympathetic to or carry party cards of the Democratic Labour Party sitting on committees. It is time we look to see that this is a changing world, and that Barbados is caught in the grips of an international situation, and it is time that we look to people outside who will advise us correctly, even if that advice which is given does not coincide with the Government's thinking. I think that is the only way we will try in the right direction. It is time that Ministers and backbenchers. understand that while many of us sit down in here and draw a salary, while many of us have our other occupations and are able to squeeze through the economic situation, there are those outside who are feeling the pinch of the shoe. If the taxi drivers can tomorrow have an increase in fares, it is going to reflect in our tourist industry. If the freighters call for an increase in price, if the commission merchants who have to move their goods from the Port into bond and then out into the

country ask for an increase in price because of the increase in the cost of gasoline, it is going to affect the small man in the country who has to pay, and therefore it is time that Government controls at least fuel and petroleum in this country so that they can set prices in relation to what the economic standards are and what the people can reasonably be expected to pay.

Mr, FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the Government expects a measure of this nature to merely receive some passing notice in a budget reply and possibly a budget debate and be satisfied with that as the treatment which should be meted out to a measure of this sort, and I would expect that at this hour when we have been going for several hours in this House, hon. members might feel that the better course would be of course to treat this matter lightly, but I feel I would be failing in my duty if I did not make certain significant points about this amendment to the Petroleum Act. The first point which I would like to make is that really it is a revenue-gathering measure pure and simple. It has no intention of venturing into the realm of wider policy and to this extent I think it is short-sighted. If it is judged a revenue-gathering measure, I contend very strongly that it has come at the wrong time. The simple reason is that at the time when there was really a shortage of oil supply and some restriction and doubt about the amount of oil which would be supplied to this country, there was need then to encourage conservation measures) by using the price increase weapon as a deterrent to people who treat oil supply lightly. At that stage the increase which the House was asked to concede was not significant. Now when on the other hand the oil wells are flowing and the Arabs are no longer pressing oil as a political weapon, because even the Arabs recognise that there is a limit to the political mileage which they can get out of oil, when there is no difficulty for this country in finding sources of oil supply, we find that Barbados has increased the price of oil supplies at the wrong time. With respect to the Minister of Finance and with respect to the awe in which he is held in his Party and by other people, I think he is consistently showing a lack of adequate appreciation of basic facts and his policy is getting more and more out of keeping with really current thought on these problems.

I would have expected that a year ago we would have had a significant increase in petroleum products with a consequent reduction now, because you would have inculcated in people the basic habits of conservation, and we would be at the stage where we can pass a measure reducing the cost of petroleum products and keeping down the consequential effects of the rise in the cost of living. The Minister has done it in the opposite way, in a bad way, and I refuse to believe that this is the same Minister who in 1961 whetted the appetite of those of us who looked forward to a new economic era. The Prime Minister is a tired man and as Minister of Finance he has lost his wizardry. His vision has gone and certainly in this. Bill he has used the reverse measures whereas he should have used a different way of dealing with this problem. 8. 25 p. m.

It is significant that in some other countries they are now taking steps to reduce the price of petroleum. In Jamaica, for instance, indeed Jamaica has gone so far that it has subsidised the price of gas in order to minimise transportation costs, whereas we are increasing the price of gas at this time simply because we

have a shortfall on current account. I really cannot understand this financial type of outlook on this.

I am going to launch out for a further development of the idea of the Labour Party on a proper Ministry of petroleum and a proper policy for oil. I believe that we have said enough that even if the Government should now have second thoughts and grapple with our idea, either in a refined or in a cruder form, that the country will recognise that all the thoughtfulness does not reside on the Government side. Certainly speaking as a Barbadian and not only as a member of a political party, if the idea improves the quality of our economic life I am happy regardless of where it has come from, but I think none of us can be satisfied in this House that what has gone on in dealing with Mobil Oil, particularly the methods adopted by that company earlier this year in negotiating an increase in this price to itself. It proves a point that has been made consistently by the Labour Party, which is that Mobil Oil should never have been given the monopoly that it has, and it should never find itself in the situation that it is controlling the only refinery in this country and is in a position to call the shots to Government rather than the Government calling the shots to Mobil Oil.

In 1961 when the Mobil Oil agreement was entered into and the arrangement made the Democratic Labour Party erred, and it is not going to correct those errors by simply taking taken shares in this company as it has just recently done with the Telephone Company. Fifteen thousand shares in the Telephone Company or fifteen thousand shares in Mobil Oil is no way of grappling with these multi-national corporations, and a growing distinction in the philosophy of the two parties at the present that I have seen developing in this country is the fact that we on this side believe that you must face up to public enterprise going into these realms, and the Government seems hesitant in dealing with the matter.

The Government may think that the way to deal with Mobil is to guarantee their supposedly overdraft and take a few bonus shares as is now done with the Telephone Company, That is totally unsatisfactory. For one moment if one analyses Mobil's dealings as the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has done on another occasion, one will find that that company is only suffering a nominal loss on its Barbados account and transferring its principal profit otherwise. Government must be able to deal with this, if it does not the Minister will be made to look a fool as he was made to look earlier. I cannot for the life of me, no matter how much love or lack of it I have for this Minister, feel happy at the fact that the Government of Barbados through its Minister was made to look stupid on its oil policy by a multi-national corporation controlled by the Rockefellers and that type. I cannot feel happy about it, and I believe that the Government has had 13 years of exposure.

I heard the hon. member for St. George North on another aspect begging us to have an approach to Government. These are not school boys, these are tried politicians who have been exposed to all the economic intricacies of Government. We are supposed to be the neophytes on this side, we were held up on the last occasion as being people who could not negotiate on the international level. We had not

Supped with President Johnson or swam with Mr. Trudeau, but the more that I see of the Prime Minister's exposure to these international tykes the more I think he is being taken in by form and forgetting substance. It is a pity he is not in the House for his own measures. This is the first Minister of Finance that I see introduce budgetary measures and has so little respect for this country that he does not come in the House, and not even an excuse is offered for him. It serves this country right, because the country is believing too much in slogans and the dogma of the media and the personalities, and forgetting policies. I believe that if the Minister could not come in here this afternoon we were entitled to some excuse, and I do not think it is good enough to push through measures and he is out of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I said before I do not know how long I will remain in the political life of this country, but I am appealing to the Government. It has the duty to do its homework much more properly, to be receptive to ideas from the Opposition and furthermore to begin setting the standards again. I make no bones about it. I was one of his greatest admirers, he knows that, but I have always differed from him on matters of policy and I can see his budgetary measures teaching me the fact that rather than the Prime Minister being in any position to tell people today that they are conservative, he has become in his old age increasingly conservative to the extent that he has lost all signs of radicalism. I hope he never comes into Christ Church West again talking about my being on the side of the conservative element. By his policies, like this one, changing the figure to 41 cents, one would expect him to come down with a bold measure on the petroleum policy for Barbados, but no such thing. Old age ripens some of us, unfortunately his fruits are almost picked. I hope that they do not drop too soon.

The question that the Bill be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. C E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill Mr. LOWE in the Chair.

Clause 1 was called and passed. Clause 2 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that. 8. 35 p. m.

The question that Clause 2 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative, the committee 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. L. E. SMITH, Mrs. EASTMOND, Mr. HOPPIN and Mr. WEEKES. (9)

Notes: Mr. ADAMS, Mr. FORDE, Mr. HINDS and Mr. BOLDEN. (4)

Clause 3 was called.

The question that Clause 3 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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.

On separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON the Bill was read a third time and passed.

BILL TO PROVIDE FOR IMPOSITION OF A SALES TAX

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, the next Item is Item No. 3 which stands in the name of the Prime Minister an Minister of Finance and Planning. It is to move the second reading of a Bill to provide for the imposition of a tax on the proceeds of the sale of goods by retail and for connected purposes. (ASIDE No, not that order.)

Mr. SPEAKER:

Order, gentlemen. Hon. members not standing must observe the Standing Orders.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. When the Prime Minister introduced this measure last Thursday he said that the relevant Order would be made shortly. I have not got the appropriate document, but if Your Honour will grant me time, I will find the necessary paragraph in the speech. This is really short changing Parliament to ask us to debate an Order of this nature without the order being laid in Parliament. We would be approving something which we know not of.

It is not fair. Already business houses are asking us what are the various items and tariff numbers etc. on which the Prime Minister will be laying this new 5 per cent.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Hardly a point of order.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Sir, it deals with what we are expected to debate in Parliament. How can we do the Order without knowing what is going to be involved? It is like an Attorney-at-Law going into Court to plead a case without getting a statement from his client. Mr. Speaker, on Page 18 of the Prime Minister's speech he said "The detailed list of exempted goods with BTN Classification is contained in the Order which will be made under the Sales Tax Act. This list will be available very shortly. "

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is really no point of order. I have granted the hon. member much latitude.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, as far as I am concerned this is going to bring us back to the same position that we were in when we came here with the tariff under CARICOM. We cannot usefully debate this unless we have the order before us. As far as I am concerned, if the House is going to deal with this now, I must take my leave. I cannot participate in it.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will have to lay the Order; but this Act has to be passed to give him the authority to make the Order. There is no law that I know of under which he can make an Order under Section 4 - look at Section 4, Sir. It says subject to this Act so and so as may be prescribed by order. Section 5 says that the Minister may by order and so on. Under what authority can he make the Order

unless the House passes the Bill to give him the authority? That is elementary. I see my learned friend the Hon. Leader of the Opposition - the Prime Minister cannot bring an Order here if the Bill is not passed by the House.

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, he can bring it by virtue of the Provisional Collection of Taxes Act. The sales tax will be law next week whether this Bill is passed or not. Provisional Collection of Taxes Act gives the Prime Minister the power to collect such taxes as are set out in the Budget Speech. By next week it will be illegal to collect tax on books or stationery although the Prime Minister said books in one place and stationery in another. The device of circulating a draft order can be resorted to and members can come prepared next time. Deal with the Maintenance Order. Nobody on this side is going to oppose a sensible Act like that, updating a piece of 50 year old legislation. We only have 20 minutes, Sir.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I cannot see any argument in what hon. members have said. In passing this piece of legislation we are just implementing part of the Budgetary Proposals. I think that what the hon. member was referring to was the machinery in connection with the assessment and the various duties of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. This will be brought in in time, but this Act does not become enforceable or operative until the 1st December. It is law whether you pass this or not. If we pass it now, how much worse is the position? Whether we pass it or not, it is effective. The law says that it can be passed within three months, but it is the law as of now as a result of one of the Budgetary Proposals as presented by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning in his Supplementary Budget last Thursday.

The Bill is to provide for the imposition of a tax on the proceeds of the sale of goods by retail and for connected purposes at the rate of such percentage on those proceeds as the Minister responsible for Finance may from time to time prescribe by order. As hon. members are aware, this is one of the Budgetary Proposals brought down by the Minister of Finance and Planning in his Supplementary Budget, and the Bill defines selling by retail as selling goods by way of business otherwise than by wholesale. 8. 45 p. m.

Under Section 4 which was referred to a few minutes ago, the Minister of Finance and Planning is empowered to prescribe by order the rate of retail sales tax to be collected on the proceeds of goods sold by retail, and pursuant to section 6 of the Bill the Minister may waive or remit retail sales tax as he thinks fit. By Section 5 the Minister may also by order exempt goods liable to payments of retail sales tax. Is that the order the hon. member is referring to? The Bill is not yet operative and so you cannot bring in the order.

Under Section 3 responsibility for the administration of the retail sales tax legislation and for assessment, collection and recovery of tax lies with the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. Along with that under Section 7 retailers are required to submit to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue returns showing the full amount of their taxable proceeds and the full amount of proceeds of exempted goods, and the failure to submit returns would be subject to penalties and interest, and persons submitting false statements or avoiding payment of tax will be liable to payment of a fine and/or imprisonment. That is contained in Sections 14 and 19 of, this Bill. Retailers are required to keep records of their retail transactions so that sales tax payable may be determined by the Commissioner of Inland Revenue who under Sections 9 and 13 of the Bill is empowered to inspect such records and assess proceeds liable to be taxed, and according to Section 13 retailers are given the right to object to assessment of taxes.

These are some of the main provisions of this Bill. Hon. members, I take it, have looked through the Bill, and I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, if ever there was confusion in the minds of those who advised on this Bill, one can say it is present now. This Bill in the first place is going to add confusion in the supermarkets; it is going to put money in the pockets of people like the IBM and those who sell cash registers; it is going to cause confusion between customers and supermarket vendors, and it is going to give attorneys a lot of work. In every supermarket in this country there are selling pots and pans, scrubbing brushes, Brillo pads, soaps, detergents, hand creams, and the Bill says it exempts food and beverages alcoholic and non-alcoholic. Now I would like to know what some supermarkets are going to do starting 1st December. If you go to Collymore Rock there is one there called "Gertz". If you go to Fontabelle there is Goddards Food Fair, and in Roebuck Street there is the Low Budget Supermarket. In Baxters Road there is Hill's and Shamrock, and there is Rick's in Fairchild Street. It means, Mr. Speaker, that when a customer goes in and takes up a pound of sugar, a cake of fancy-smelling soap, a bottle of deodorant, a tin of under-arm spray, a pound of flour and goes to the cash register, there are one or two situations either you have to put them down and sort them out with food on one side and the other items on the other and then the cashier rings in the taxable items, calculates the 5% and then adds the other items, or the supermarket proprietor will have to abandon the cash register he has and buy the two-channel cash register, and then there is still going to be an argument because the cashier will have to be competent enough to insert the non-taxable goods on one side, the taxable goods on the other side, strike the total price, add the 5% and come up with a figure. Whenever she finishes, there will be arguments, and it is not going to work. It is going to increase the expenditure of all the retail businesses in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, a corporation tax has been levied on companies, and the ultimate effect will be a reduction in staff, a reduction in operation and a reduction in revenue to the Income Tax Department. The Income Tax Department will also have to equip itself with new officers who are capable enough to go around and check whether or not they are truly getting the 5%. Already supermarket owners are wondering how they are going to work it out. Some are saying they should take stock on 30th November and see what are taxable goods and what are non-taxable goods, add 5% on the taxable goods and then make returns to the Income Tax Commissioner. It is going to open more doorways for evasion of taxes and disputes in tax collection. But the serious consequence of this lies in the fact that the Prime Minister believes that by telling the nation that he is going to give the old age pensioners an increase in pension that that will keep them quiet. But he is giving them the increase in one hand and taking away from them more than the increase from the other hand. The old age pensioners almost always suffer. The 5% tax is levied on things like lamps because you cannot buy a lamp in Barbados for under a dollar. The lamp shade costs more than one dollar, so it attracts a 5% sales tax. Old age pensioners will have to buy pots and pans which also attract a 5% tax. A scrubbing brush nowadays costs more than a dollar, a bottle of detergent costs more than a dollar, and I will tell you something, Mr. Speaker, if you ever take it upon yourself to go shopping you will find that one of the basic causes of inflation in this country has been the operation of the Ministry of Trade. 8. 55p. m.

I have said in this Chamber already that you can apply controls until you control out of existence. Many of us who go shopping will tell you that as soon as controls are placed on one commodity the proprietors of the supermarket or the wholesale distributor applies his interest to another commodity, and a typical example of this is the fact that if you want to buy a can of deodorant you will find that as soon as you put the control price on baby foods the price of deodorant goes up. You cannot buy a small can of deodorant for less than \$2. 00 in Barbados. You cannot get vexed with the old people if they want to smell sweet. The Government is already threatening to put water meters in all the houses. I lived in Britain for a long time, and one of the things about the English man, and his counterpart the woman, is that they tell you that in winter they do not bathe, they use deodorant. That is going to happen in Barbados shortly, but for the time being the old people will find themselves paying the 5% tax on the goods they buy every week.

The sales tax was put on from 1st December. It is known in Barbados that the majority of people like to decorate their houses for Christmas. The Prime Minister has not exempted household articles, so the curtains will attract 5%, the mat at the door will attract 5%, medicines will attract 5%, a bottle of aspirins nowadays costs more than \$1. 00 and it will attract 5%, and the old people who want to rub down at night will have to pay 5%. Do you think that when you exclude food you are benefiting the country? In my opinion you are causing more confusion. You either find means for the exclusion of certain people or you do not. You had better tell the facts and tell the people that you are trying to raise revenue for the badly organised financial position of the Government due to the incapable methods utilised at this time. ,: •

We go a bit further. Animal and poultry feeds have been two of the biggest bugbears between Government and the Union in this country for the last two years, and the Prime Minister has not spoken about that as yet, because I am saying now the animal and poultry industry in this country has on & through the most devastating period in the history of this country under the Minister of Trade who does not understand the economics, of a small community, and the Minister of Finance has not seen it fit to mention this in Jus Order, so therefore when you put 5% on animal and poultry feeds you automatically show that the producer must demand an increase in price. Already there is a grave shortage of pork in this country. People are asking \$4. 00 per pound of pork now. Turkeys and chickens short in this country and to impose a 5% oh animal and poultry feeds you are going to cause a serious retardation to an effort which was being made and which was killed at a period of time when every Caribbean country is seeking to maintain its position.

The United Nations has already declared that the Caribbean is a starvation area lacking in protein. We are not producing enough protein for the people in our communities, and I say it is time that the Prime Minister get around him advisers who understand the economics of this community and not those who misquote and tell you they know what is going on. I have said before that the Ministry of Trade is not operating in the interest of Barbadians in this country and the time has come when we have to do something.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The moment of interruption has arrived. Unless the Leader of the House wants to make a motion the House now automatically stands adjourned.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be now suspended till 12 o'clock tomorrow.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, automatically the House stands adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have not fully declared that the House was suspended, so it is just in the nick of time.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, with all respect to you the rule says that the moment of interruption has come, so you

cannot make a motion to suspend the House, when the moment of interruption has come. You drew it to my attention that the moment of interruption has arrived, and a motion cannot be made thereafter, otherwise it means that you have short changed me. The House automatically stands adjourned, we cannot suspend at this point.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Your right to speak is preserved.

Mr. BOLDEN:

I am not dealing with my right to speak, I am dealing with the moment of interruption under the rules. You said the time had indeed come, and in my interpretation 9 o'clock has struck and the House automatically stands adjourned. We cannot suspend at this point. The rules were not suspended, therefore the Standing Order takes effect, and as of 9 o'clock the House automatically stands adjourned.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

As far as I understand it, the Speaker intimated the time was coming up and he allowed me and I had ample time to do it. Every little trifle they try to make a fuss about.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is no point of order.

Mr. ADAMS:

If the moment of interruption had not come, the hon. member was technically still speaking and a motion to suspend the sitting of the House cannot be made by rising in your place, a motion to put the question can be made on a point of order, but not a dilatory motion, and therefore the Leader of the House had no locus standi to get up to move anything on that particular point. Either it was interrupted, in which case motions would not be in place, or else it was not interrupted, in which case the hon. member for St. Joseph had the floor, in my submission. A dilatory motion cannot be moved on a point of order, Sir, that is the essence of it.

Mr. SPEAKER; The whole matter, in my opinion, is that I have not declared the House suspended yet, or for that matter adjourned. I will therefore entertain a motion for the suspension.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I would like to refer to the rules of the House, if you give me a minute to find the appropriate rule. Order 6 rule 4 states

"At 9. 00 p. m. hereinafter referred to in these Orders as 'the moment of interruption', the Speaker shall interrupt the business under discussion. If the House is in Committee at that time, the Chairman shall interrupt the business and shall leave the Chair forthwith to report progress to the House and ask its leave to. -sit again. Any other business, if unopposed, shall then be disposed of, and the Order Paper for the next sitting fixed. "

It is therefore automatically adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I will entertain a motion for the suspension.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until tomorrow, Wednesday, 27th, at 12. 00 noon.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that. 9. 05 p. m.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, surely the House is entitled from the Leader of Government Business to some indication of the necessity for continuing the debate tomorrow. Mr. Speaker, I am one who has been contending in this House that surely we should get some idea before hand when the sittings are going to continue and how long they are going to continue for.

Apparently, Sir, - the business of the House conducted from minute to minute and second by second rather than there being any proper liaison between the Government and die Opposition so that we can plan a proper Schedule of work for the House. I think that today we have done some work, but hon.

members should know when the House is going to meet, and the staff certainly does not know that we are going to meet tomorrow. We come here from time to time on haphazard adjournments and we do not know what is happening next time; and I really cannot be very enthusiastic on a matter of this nature unless we are told how we are going to proceed with business.

Perhaps if the hon. member could tell us whether the Government wants us to meet tomorrow, Thursday and Friday to do what ever we are doing we could get through.

Mr. ADAMS:

Mr. Speaker, I know that the Hon. Leader of the House is not as familiar with the Rules, being new Rules, as he would have been with the old. Technically, only part of today's proceedings were in order at all, and that is the part that started at three minutes past five and ended at twenty past six; because technically the two sitting days which immediately follow the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals must be given entirely to the debate thereon; and tomorrow, since I made the motion, since I moved the Resolution, I am going to come at 12 o'clock and insist on the observance of Standing Order 31. We can talk about the Budget for the rest of tomorrow if the Leader of the House wants to come. Standing Order 31 states quite clearly "The two sitting days which shall immediately follow the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals shall be allotted to debate thereon. "

The Government was given a break today, but if the Minister wants to be tough we will get tough too and ask Your Honour to enforce Standing Order 31 strictly tomorrow especially now that the motion has been moved. (Asides) Really? Mr. Speaker is going to admit the suspension of the order tomorrow morning? I don't think so. You believe that 18(6) is the answer? It cannot answer the economic problems of this country.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That was not a major point.

Mr. ADAMS:

Thank you, Sir. Standing Order 31 says that we should be debating the Budget tomorrow.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would give way. The hon. member in his reply to the Budgetary Proposals and then the Deputy Leader of the Opposition was not in a position to make his speech. He reserved the right to speak, which was a clear indication that he was not ready. He seems to be forgetting that.

Mr. ADAMS:

Who said that the hon. member was not ready? The hon. member reserved his right to speak again. Do you mean that when hon. members over there second something and reserve the right to speak they are not ready?

I well remember the hon. member for Christ Church North Central for once in his life being defended by the Leader of the House on a similar occasion but nobody said that he was not ready. What I am pointing out is that Standing Order 31 says that we should not have been doing Government Business at all today. (Aside: It is not the annual Budget).

Mr. SPEAKER:

Order please.

Mr. ADAMS:

"And" there is disjunctive. Mr. Speaker will understand what that means. You will not, do not mind that you are the "Attorney General".

Mr. SPEAKER:

What has this to do with the motion for suspension? Speak on the motion for suspension.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, I am very worried now about the bending of the Rules of Parliament. We came here today and no Standing Orders were suspended. At 2 o'clock on the dot the House took the break as set out under the Standing Orders. At 7 o'clock on the dot when I was speaking the House took the break as set out in the Standing Orders; but at 9 o'clock tonight something else happens.

The Rules cannot be bended as it suits certain people. I am saying categorically now that if we are going to stick to the Rules we are going to stick to them. If you are going to bend them, let us bend all. Do not let us bend half or one third. The Standing Orders say that at 9 o'clock, the motion for interruption, the House is automatically suspended. My interpretation of that is that you cannot ask for any motion thereafter. The House automatically stands suspended.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have already ruled.

Mr. BOLDEN:

I am speaking on the motion. The Leader of the House has his rights under the very Standing Orders. He can give notice to the Speaker and to the Clerk and send out notices for tomorrow; but I do not see why after 9 o'clock this should be done. It does not smell good, and it does not look good. It frustrates everybody including the back benchers of Government and including the Minister because it shows that the Leader of the House comes into Parliament - this has been going on for a long time. They come into Parliament expecting that the Opposition must sit and keep their mouths shut.

Take the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Bill this evening. They said that it was a clear order and there was no need for debate. On the Petroleum Order we heard that there was no need for debate. If the Government does not know how to regulate its business properly it means that they will be making a complete mockery of the Standing Orders. When they want them enforced they are enforced, and when you want to bend them you bend them.

I do not agree with this, and I say so categorically. History will record it, and each one of us should at least look back to see how history will record us. I say that if you write rules you write them for the keeping. If you, Mr. Speaker, find that the rules are not working adequately, or if the Leader of the House finds that the rules are not working adequately, there is a Debates Committee, and the Leader of the House can suggest to the Debates Committee to convene another meeting and look at the rules after they have been in operation for a certain time and make the necessary amendments; but I will not be a party to the bending of the Rules. You cannot adhere to the Rules at 2 o'clock and at 7 o'clock and at 9 o'clock you make a diversion. 9-15 p. m.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Are you challenging my filling?

Mr. BOLDEN:

I am entitled, Mr. Speaker...

Mr. SPEAKER:

Please speak to the motion for the suspension.

Mr. BOLDEN:

All I am saying is that all of us have rights. You have business set' for tomorrow; I have business set for tomorrow and the Ministers have business set for tomorrow, and I do not see why any Leader of the House should wait until one minute past 9 o'clock, especially after the moment of interruption is well past, to say he is moving a motion for the suspension of the House. How can the House be automatically adjourned and then you move a motion for suspension? It is a contradiction.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have already ruled on that point that a motion for suspension is allowed. If you have nothing more to say on the suspension, please take your seat.

Mr. BOLDEN:

I have other remarks to make on the suspension.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Let the hon. member continue his speech.

Mr. BOLDEN:

As I was saying, Mr. Speaker, coming tomorrow is completely out of the itinerary of many of us, and I would hope that the Leader of the House would reconsider the motion which is being entertained, albeit I do not agree with it. At this stage therefore I move that the House be suspended until 4. 30 p. m. tomorrow.

Mr. HINDS:

I beg to second that.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I just want to be very brief, because when some member of this Chamber gets up and reads a rule and as a lawyer does not understand what the rule says, it is really pathetic, and if this was being broadcast he would give the public the impression that you, Mr. Speaker, were taking away the rights of the Opposition, and that you were preventing him from having his say. All the Rule says is that at 9 o'clock, 'the moment of interruption', the Speaker shall interrupt the business under discussion. If the

House is in Committee at that time, the Chairman shall interrupt the business and shall leave the Chair forthwith to report progress to the House and ask its leave to sit again. Any other business, if unopposed, shall then be disposed of, and the Order Paper for the next sitting fixed.

Mr. BOLDEN:

On a point of order, this shows where the ex-Attorney General does not understand, because if he reads the Rules carefully he will see that Order No. 2 says that after the first sitting, unless the House otherwise decides, the House shall meet on every Tuesday at 12 o'clock noon, and, unless previously adjourned, shall meet until 9. 30 p. m., and then at 9 o'clock you interrupt the House, and you fix the Order Paper. The hon. member does not even understand the rules. So even a motion for suspension is out of order, and this is what I am trying to bring to Your Honour. The House is out of order at this point.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The House is not out of order.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Everything on the Order Paper should be put at this stage.

The question that the sitting be suspended until 4. 30 p. m. on Wednesday, 27th November, 1974, was put and resolved in the negative the House dividing as follows:

Notes: Hon. C. E. TALMA; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDIE; Hon. L E. SANDIFORD; Hon. F. G. SMITH; Hon. P. G. MORGAN; Mr. WEEKES; Mr. HOPPIN; Mrs. EASTMOND; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON and Mr. LOWE - 10.

AYES:

Mr. FORDE; Mr. HINDS and Mr. BOLDEN-3.

The question that the House be suspended until 12 o'clock noon on Wednesday, 27th November, 1974; was put and resolved in the affirmative without division. 9. 20 p. m.

RESUMPTION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER:

The sitting is now resumed. According to Standing Order 31 two sitting days following the Budget must be allotted for the debate on the motion moved yesterday by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On a point of privilege. I just want an explanation. If you read the rules, Sir, unless you are interpreting - it is a matter for you. I am not quarelling with it - the Rule says annual Financial Statement. Now this was a supplementary budget, not that it should not be debated, but are you reading both into one as one annual statement?

Mr. SPEAKER:

I am doing that. Hon. F. G. SMITH Well, all right.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, likewise, now we are not in a position to continue the debate on the Budget, but I heard the point which was advanced yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition; but I myself have had a look at the rules, and without disagreeing with your interpretation, with respect it seems to me that the Rules are silent on the question of a supplementary budget and really only have appeared to deal with the circumstances of the usual annual statement. It seems to me with respect - I have not had a chance to discuss the interpretation of the Rule with the Leader of the Opposition to know if he would still really advance his contention, but it does seem to me that the Rules should be revised to take account of these circumstances, and that in the normal business we could only go on with the items which were on the Order Paper, and the Budget Debate, if the Leader would agree, could come up on the next occasion.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Sir. I am inclined to agree with the statements made by the hon. and learned member for Christ Church West in that this is a supplementary budget. It is the first time that it has happened, probably in the history of Barbados, and in any case, for quite a long time.

Rule 31 (1) says:

"The two sitting days which shall immediately follow the annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals shall be allotted to debate thereon. " It makes special mention of "annual". It is quite clear that it did not have anything like emergency in mind;

so like that, Sir, it seems as though we can proceed.

Mr. LOWE:

But, Mr. Speaker, if you look at Rule 31, from any point of issue this is the very same sitting. It is only one sitting. So there are no other days. Today is the very same day of the same sitting. So therefore it is a continuation.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Now, gentlemen, I see no problem. If the members so desire, we can postpone discussion of the Resolution moved by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. The practical result would be the same. However, if I was required to give a strict ruling, I would insist that even though the letter of Standing Order 31 does not deal with supplementary budgets, the spirit no doubt is the same. It is a supplementary budget as given a week ago and it is precisely the same thing; and I will be ruling, if the time so comes, that two sitting days must also be allotted for discussion of this Resolution.

Now, whether we discuss this Resolution now or next week, is entirely at the convenience of hon members whom this most concerns. I agree that Standing Order 31 is silent on the point, so I am really here at the convenience of hon. members. If you want to discuss the Resolution as moved yesterday, we do it for two days because in spirit it is the same thing as an annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals.

The letter is not the same thing, I agree, but in spirit we are doing precisely the same thing as what is said in Standing Order 31. So that we can be here, lax as it were, in continuing the Order Paper or doing the Resolution as members please. I am at you convenience.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest at this stage that we postpone making any decision on this question whether we will continue with the Resolution moved by the Leader of the Opposition until later in the day, and at this stage perhaps we could continue with Government Business. I would like to consult with all the members of the Opposition later in the day and perhaps we could make a decision and we could at this stage continue with the other items of Government Business.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Point taken.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

As I understand it, the hon member is willing to allow the Government to continue with Government Business until the luncheon period. Not until they arrive. If they arrive in 10 minutes time - I am making that clear. You are an Attorney-at-law.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

If the Leader of the House would give way, Sir, that would be correct because I would not expect to get up and say in 10 minutes time we are ready, Sir. Until lunch time, Sir.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

So I take it, Sir, the understanding is - there is an open understanding this time, nothing said by word of mouth between two people. The understanding as it stands now is that until 2 o'clock, lunch time, there will be Government Business, and as the Standing Orders have not been suspended, and as we are keeping to the Standing Orders and complying with the rules of the game, we will deal with Government Business, with you permission, Sir, until 2 o'clock.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES:

This is on a slightly different matter, Sir. It is the question of the speech of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition yesterday. I understand that the speech was read, and I expect that the speech would be tabled and made available to hon. members in the same way that any matter that is read is made available. I was not in my place yesterday. That is not the fault of the House; but at the same time certainly, any matter that is read in this Chamber, not being a document of the House, should be immediately made a document of the House.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

I am not giving an undertaking, but I think that the speech will be made available, Sir, This is the usual practice.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER:

Government Business, I understand, is now the instant Order of the Day.

Hon. C. E. 'TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, hon. members will recall that the Bill to provide for the imposition of a sales tax was being debated at the time when the sitting was suspended. The hon. member for St. Joseph was speaking.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The hon. member for St. Joseph is not now in his place. Is there any other hon. member who wishes to continue?

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, I will try not to recite the points which have already been made in this debate concerning the sales tax as this new Act will in due course impose on people; but there are certain aspects of the Act that I wish to advert to at the outset. One is that it is becoming the constant practice of Government to place on two officials or two departments primarily in this island the burden to collect taxes. One of them is the Registrar's Department and the other is the Commissioner of Inland Revenue; and this sales tax seeks to make the Commissioner of Inland Revenue responsible for the collection and recovery of the tax. 12. 10 p. m.

Speaking for myself, Mr. Speaker, I do not consider that that department should really be overburdened in this way. I know that of many Government Departments it ranks first for possibly its efficiency of performance, but it seems that had the Ministry of Trade been properly organised and had its section dealing with trade matters been functioning in a proper way, then of course one would have placed the obligation for the administration of this Act squarely where it should belong, in the Ministry of Trade, and it would have been better if this had been done for other reasons. One of the reasons must be that it would have given the Ministry of Trade to understand and to have first hand knowledge of the functioning of the retail section of business in this country, and again I believe that part of the panic measures as the Hon. Leader of the Opposition had referred to must be the failure on the part of the Government to rationalise its organisation and methods functions so that it gets the best of its administrative machinery, and I predict that this will either in due course call for an increase in the amount of staff at the Department of Inland Revenue or it will have the alternative effect of taking the Inland Revenue off of very vital work which it should be doing now in relation to the collection and organisation of the tax structure of the Island.

This is a matter that can easily go unnoticed in a debate such as this in the way one looks at the heavy

burden of taxation and forget the method of administration. Indeed the result in any event of this tax will be the additional administrative cost to the country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition has said that this is perhaps in terms of the quantity of the tax the highest level of taxation being collected from one measure in this country. It is the sort of tax that I would submit should not be continued beyond the necessary length of time which the circumstances dictate, and it seems to me that if one is looking at this as part of the over-all measure, the Government should take urgent steps as early as next year not only to reduce the amount of taxation under the sales tax, but if necessary to remove it. Let me tell the Government how they can do it next year. Assuming that the crop grows and the planters do not let us down, the Government has the facility of negotiating proper sugar prices. For several weeks now people have been knocking at our doors asking to buy sugar at remunerative prices varying from \$2, 000 upwards and some in the region I believe of \$4, 000, and unless the Government is not on the ball, it can anticipate with a good sugar crop a substantial windfall as occurred before next year from sugar. Maybe this would be at the sacrifice of our longterm commitments in the sugar industry, but I anticipate myself that the revenue from sugar next year if the marketing opportunities now available are used by the Government will be in excess of \$120 million, and the Government should give the people of this country the assurance that that windfall money will not be used simply for electioneering dressing, but rather to relieve taxation that they should not have had to bear at all. I want to sound this warning because all the information from international sources shows that not only will the Government revenue from sugar fall next year, but that it will increase, although I agree that there is a risk with the Government in negotiating short term contract, but it can use the United Kingdom's rather farcical stand by continuing so to increase the price as an excuse for grabbing the contracts that are being offered to this Government now.

I see the hon. member for St. Michael South wants to know how the Opposition keeps in the forefront of what is happening, but any true Opposition which is an alternative Government must know sometimes ahead of Government what is happening in this sphere, and I am throwing out the challenge to the Government now that if they want me to negotiate the contracts for them as Shadow Minister, they can ask me; but there are the opportunities there; so do not let us hear you say next year that you have not got the money to release this burden brought on by a sales tax. There are opportunities there. Some time next year you will have \$120 million to \$200 million coming into the economy by proper negotiations, and you must use that opportunity to reduce the tax burden not merely to plan for elections in late 1975 or early 1976.

I want to talk about the difficulties of the administration of the sales tax. They are going to be as has been stressed by the hon. member for St. Joseph, a lot of problems arising from the administration of this tax, and I expect that I would advise the Government that there should be the widest measure of consultation with the business sector so that it does not add an undue burden to the cost of the services which they are providing in the collection of these taxes in the first place on behalf of the Government. There is also a danger so far as the Government is concerned, and the danger is from the small traders.

When I talk about small, I am not talking about the shopkeepers; I am talking about the small section of our community who are not paying their fair share of taxes, and unless the Government has a proper inspectorate to ensure that the provisions of the Sales Tax Act are enforced, it might find itself being short-changed not by the consumer, but by the collector, the retail store owner, of certain aspects of this tax. That is why I said, Mr. Speaker, that I would have anticipated that the inspectorate division of the control section of the Ministry of Trade should have had some duties in relation to this Act. But this is not to be.

There is another aspect of the Sales Tax Act that I find very repugnant. It is a provision that has been becoming all too noticeable in our laws. Now under this Act a person who fails to pay the tax on time is surcharged by way of interest and by way of penalty. Now the reason for this has been to force people to pay to the Government promptly and no one can argue strongly against the equity of such a provision in an Act, but what you can argue strongly against, Mr. Speaker, is the other end of the argument or the other end of the scale where when Government is overpaid taxes, Government has the right to hold on to your tax and then give you a refund without necessarily paying you interest on your money, whereas Government would have had the use of the taxpayers' money for a considerable period of time. 12. 20 p. m.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this would be all right if the repayments of taxes were done promptly in this country. With no disrespect to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, there have been times where people have been held up in the repayment of taxes, for not only months, but in some cases years. I will cite instances. There have been cases where cheques have been written in the Department for repaying taxes in the month of August, and because of the shortfall in Government revenue and the tight financial squeeze of the Government, the cheques have not been sent out until the month of November.

Now that is not Civil Service inefficiency as we so often hear. That is a fact. I can cite many instances of people within my experience who have had cheques drawn in August, sent to them in the month of November. And they have been phoning for their money to be told that you have to watch the daily bank balances of the Government.

There is another aspect of it, In most of these taxing statutes we are providing these days for an appeal provision; but the statute, as this one does, places the obligation on the taxpayer to pay up even if he is going to appeal against the payment made.

Now if this is so, it is incumbent on the Government to ensure that appeals to the Tax Appeals Board are promptly heard and disposed of. The Government has shown in no sense of urgency in having statutory administrative tribunals set up so that they could function promptly. I am against these part time Boards with no proper established Chairman, properly paid, to dispense justice quickly; and rather

than saying to people you cannot get justice in the Law Courts, I would like to tell them now that the chances of getting any prompt justice from any tribunal in this island happen to be almost nil.

Administrative tribunals under the Tax Act, like under the Town and Country Planning Act, are not functioning properly. Let me give you an instance, Mr. Speaker. You can have people who are waiting for appeals such as tax appeals to be heard for two years and as a result they are not getting prompt justice. The only exception is the National Insurance Board on which I have the honour to serve; and both myself and my political competitor, Mr. Maurice King, have dispensed justice as quickly as we could without any regard to the political affiliations of the people coming before us, in the true traditions of people who sit in such positions.

I commend the Minister on having the foresight to choose two people of opposite political camps in this instance, to get things done; but I am not blowing my trumpet on that point. I seriously want to go back, because I am making the point seriously. If I was not being challenged across the board I would not even have referred to that, Sir; but the point that I am making on this is that I am really perturbed at the number of cases that I have had representation made to me on the number of people who are waiting to have tax appeals heard and disposed of.

Part of the problem is the lack of prompt attention from the Ministry of Legal Affairs where their officers are so over burdened that they cannot offer advice to the Department. And I am saying now that if we are placing additional burdens on the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, his Department should be staffed with a Legal Adviser who can attend to the problems that must necessarily arise in his Department to ensure that the taxpayer is treated equitably. Because it is unfair to put a penalty on a man for late payment of tax, but when He has prepaid tax that is rightly his to be refunded to him, when he finds that he wins the case on appeal the Government gives him his money, but denies the right to interest.

That is inequitable, and I am surprised that the Government persists in bringing legislation with provisions which penalise taxpayers particularly when they are seeking to extract something in the region of \$8 million from the consuming public.

Mr. Speaker, I have been advised, looking at this Act, that it adds to the average family budget something like \$148 a year - the average person, sorry - so that it adds to the family budget more than \$148 a year. Now for those people in the lower paid brackets this is a considerable burden in a way; because if you assume that three people in the household are being subject to this type of tax then you can well see that you are talking about an additional burden of \$500 per annum to the average Barbadian

family.

And, Sir, the Prime Minister should be aware that this is a further decrease in the ability of people to maintain a proper standard of living in this country. I regret very much that Barbados has been brought to the stage where all we can see is additional taxation; and this form of taxation which is across the board without singling out anyone who may not be able to bear the burden of the tax is a serious enough tax burden for anybody.

I would suggest to the Government that in addition to the subsidies of which the Hon. Leader of the Opposition spoke, the Government must give urgent attention to two aspects of taxation to help the average family, particularly those in the lower income brackets. One is family supplements or allowances. There should be family supplements on a higher level than are given, and of a different nature from those which are given at present for personal income tax allowances; so that the families are being indirectly subsidised - those who particularly are not able to buy their basic necessities of life.

Why family income supplements have not been implemented in this country I cannot understand; but we will let the Government know that when we form the Government of this country next year, 1975, that at that stage we intend to review the whole position.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Strangers in the gallery must behave themselves in a proper manner. They are here on sufferance.

Mr. FORDE:

We intend to review the whole position of family income supplements and benefits so that we will not only be removing the additional burden under the sales tax, but we will be increasing the purchasing power of the families, and relieving the nutritional problems which now confront the Ministry of Health.

Secondly, there is another thing we think is necessary. If you look at the supplementary budget introduced by the Hon. Minister for Finance in Jamaica, the Hon. David Core, you will see that Jamaica has done just the opposite of what Barbados has done. It has upgraded family allowances under the Income Tax Act, personal allowances for families and contributions to children.

Only a couple of days ago, if the hon. shadow shadow Minister of Finance wants to see the actual proposals, I will let him - no the Hon. Acting Minister of Finance. The Hon. Minister substantively of Lands and Housing - if he wants to see the provisions he will see that instead of going at increasing taxation by way of sales tax, Jamaica has eased taxation by way of increasing personal allowances under the Income Tax Act. 12. 30 p. m.

I am talking, Mr. Speaker, of measures taken in Jamaica during the month of November, 1974, and it is not a question of their catching up with us. Their benefits are higher than are given for ourselves, and I will bring a copy of the Gleaner and show the hon. member if he does not get it. Ours were revised for election year of 1971, but the significant difference is that Jamaica is not anticipating an immediate election; so there is no electioneering gimmick.

Secondly, it has gone through the same financial difficulties that we have gone through, and yet it is able to adopt different tax measures and increase the personal allowances of people. In this day and age to tell someone that \$270 is all that is allowed to him to maintain a child in this country is really ridiculous, and then you are taking away from that by placing an additional burden on him, and certainly one would have expected some relief to be given. The allowances under the Income Tax Act vary between \$270 and \$300, and it is ridiculous to think that that is the allowance that should be given in this day and age. They are by no means worth while.

(Asides) I believe the hon. member for St. George North tells me it is \$500, but even assuming that it is \$500, and I do not think it is, but I do not have the exact amount, it is still inadequate, particularly when I have just argued, and I think if you put this on a computer you will see that I am correct, that the additional tax burden being added to the average family of three by this sales measure happens to be exceeding the \$500 which we talked about. That is why I say that the Government seems to have no proper over-all policy in relation to its taxation measures. This was easy to do, so it was brought in. I would expect that the reason why it was not put on customs duty was because of the danger that locally produced goods would have escaped the tax. It could have come by way of consumption duty, but why this was not taken is probably because of some reverence and feeling for our CARICOM partners. Whatever the measure may be, however it is brought, whether by way of official customs duty or consumption duty, the sales tax has nothing to commend it at all. It is a purely revenue-gathering measure for Caesar, and there is nothing being given for the people. What the Minister of Finance is saying is, give unto the Government that which is not the Government's, and we will not render unto you what should be rendered to you.

I am asking the Government to have some consideration. You cannot burden the country anymore. Start cutting out waste and stop this sales tax. I know the numbers are against us, but I am asking them now, since they must pass this now to save their faces, next year, the windfall year, to give some

consideration to relieving the people of taxes.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there can be no doubt that this Bill will create untold hardships on the general masses of this country. It may well be that the Government through lack of proper planning and without any sort of new economic policies decided that this was a good way of getting revenue at a time when the Treasury of this country is in a very bad financial state. It comes at a time when one would have expected some sort of relief to be given to the public rather than to have additional taxes such as this imposed upon them.

I am told that shortly there will be increases in the handling of cargo both at the Careenage and also at the Deep Water Harbour by almost 100 percent, and this will no doubt add greater burden to the general masses. One would have expected that the Minister of Finance would have at this stage used the occasion to implement new economic policies that are in keeping with a 20th century developing country, and not merely policies whose only significance is to impose taxation on the already burdened people of this country. There is a great need to look at the question of subsidisation of foodstuff. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, indeed if some of the money that is now being spent on some of the schemes in which the Government is involved was directed to a system of subsidisation of the essential foodstuff in this country, then it would go a far way in easing the pressures under which the people of this country now find themselves.

Even in a place like Trinidad where the economy is in a strong position, you still have subsidies in order to cut down the cost of living, but here in Barbados we look in vain for this sort of assistance from the Government. I think it is a question that obviously in Barbados the revenue is limited, and therefore the question of priorities will arise. How best can we utilise our limited resources for the general good of the public? I do not believe that when you analyse the use to which money is being put by the Government that we can come to any conclusion that the money is being utilised properly. As I said, there is need in this country to review the whole situation of food distribution. We need to look at the question of alternative markets rather than looking at the traditional markets from which we now import.
12. 40 p. m.

We need to look at the question of alternative markets rather than looking at the traditional markets from which we now import. We need to get information in the Ministry of Trade as regards alternative markets; and we will stop, purely because of tradition from importing from certain markets.

Now, Sir, this tax - I think that one of the things which the Government will have to ensure in the administration of this tax that no attempt is made, not to pass on the tax, but to pass on the administrative cost of this tax on the consumer. In other words, we know that this tax must be paid by the consumer, that is, the 5 per cent tax itself; but the question of the administrative cost of levelling that taxation, if We do not guard against it, will be passed on to the consumer.

I have heard in one case that because of the set up where because foodstuffs are exempted, the picture is drawn or painted of persons going to the supermarket where you buy foodstuff and you buy other stuff, cosmetics and various things like that which will carry the 5 per cent, and the problem will arise for the owners of the supermarkets in arriving at the total bill for the items that are exempted and the items that will bear the taxes.

I understand in respect of one supermarket they have said that it is going to cost them a great deal of money to have the sort of cash registers that will at the same time total the items which are taxable. What we have got to guard carefully against is that when the supermarkets go in, as they must do, to buy these cash registers, and having purchased the cash registers, that they do not pass on the cost to the consumer by increasing the price of other foodstuffs, the cost that is involved in the purchasing of those cash registers, Sir.

I do not believe that this is the time when this tax should be imposed. The Government may be in difficulties,; Sir, but perhaps there are other avenues rather than putting a tax like this which will of necessity affect the present cost of living and the steadily increasing cost of living in this country. I would have hoped that rather than impose taxation that would increase it, rather than bringing new charges to the carenage and the port for the handling of goods, for again that will increase it, I would have hoped that the Government would have taken steps to try to lower the cost of living and to try to assist the masses of this country. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that we have had all the information that could be brought to bear in showing the mass of confusion that is to be expected between the business houses and the consuming or purchasing public.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we very well know that unless in another 24 hours the lists are made available to

all and sundry, we do not know where we will stand when the Bill comes into effect on the 1st of next month. Let us hope then Mr. Deputy Speaker, that all arrangements will have been made to iron things out and let it go into effect as smoothly as possible.

Now, there are a few things which come to my mind about this Bill. We see the Government giving the old age pensioners an extra \$2. 00 after promising them that they would give them \$15. 00. We are willing to admit that this sales tax is not applicable to foodstuffs; hut what about an old age pensioner who has to buy a cake of soap to get a bath? Has he got to pay the tax on a cake of soap? He has got to buy himself toothpaste, and the like.

Now, today you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are very few items in these supermarkets and shops that really cost much less than a dollar. So what I believe you are going to find is this: that for the sake of convenience and to make things easier, if an item now costs 95 cents or something like that, the business proprietor might find it very convenient for calculation purposes to have the price fixed at a straight dollar so that he can ease things out.

I do not know how they will run into conflict with the Price Control Inspectors although the presence of them does not seem to mean much in today's business circles; but if we were even to find this state of affairs, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what we are suggesting is that confusion and worry and delay, the slowing up of business can still be brought about because if a customer goes to a shelf and takes up an item that is taxable and it is less than a dollar, all the customer needs do is take up six or seven such items, go to the cash register or whatever means they have of effecting the sale and as one item is checked for 96 cents pay 9: 6 cents. No tax. You have another item. Whatever it is, pay for it. No tax.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER:

Order. Is the hon. member addressing the Chair?

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I appreciate that this is time consuming, but it is money that one is saving. People would have to be fools to go there and have all their items with one total, their taxable items with one total and finding themselves having to pay this 5 per cent.

It is all right. You are going to hear Ministers and others trying to suck their teeth up into their heads and the like. They can afford it because if they had made the tax 10 per cent or 15 per cent some of them would be able to pay it and go ahead. No problem; but it is the poor people that we are concerned with in this exercise. 12. 50 p. m.

It is the poor people we are concerned with in this exercise. The point I was making is this: you give the old age pensioners \$2. 00 but since they are going to be involved in the spending of this extra \$2. 00 in the supermarkets making their taxable purchases as well as anybody else, the \$2. 00 you have given them is nothing.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. SPEAKER took the Chair.

What we feel is that some measure of protection should be afforded these old age pensioners and they should be saved from the tax up to some fixed limit that they should be able to buy so many items in the course of one month without being taxed. This Mr. Speaker, would make the effort of Government's exercise to appear meaningful even in respect of these old age pensioners, and we are confident that Government will be sensible enough to apply the necessary safeguards to see that this could not be abused.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have to ask ourselves whether this 5% sales tax which is being imposed on an already overburdened people is really necessary. We believe, Mr. Speaker, that Government could very well apply its consideration to abandoning many of the projects upon which they have already embarked, and if this had been practised over a period of time, we are maintaining that we would not be finding it necessary now to impose this sales tax. We are confident that Government can find no justification for involving themselves in the purchase of the Spring Hall group of estates. We are saying further that there was no necessity to embark on the monstrosity that is going up in Fairchild Street at this particular time. We very well recall that when the Financial Building was under construction, we were told that it would accommodate so many offices and so many types of business and that all money matters would be transacted there. I am satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that you and I can have a tennis team go on some of these floors in that building and engage each other in games without in any way disturbing the staff who happen to be at work. I am making this point to show how much space there is and how under-utilised the Financial Building is. If this is the case then, Mr. Speaker, why embark at this particular time when we face these crises on this project?

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have learned as if the Government is taking this thing as a joke and just taxing people out of existence that the Government is considering the purchase of Foster Funland in St. Andrew. We have not had any official announcement on this, but we are saying that if Government is thinking in terms of this, this exercise involves very considerable sums of money which are not presently available to the people for feeding themselves, housing themselves or providing themselves with many of the necessities of life. If this is the case, Mr. Speaker, is it not Government's first concern to see that the nation as a whole is given a reasonable opportunity to do something more than eke out an existence? They have a right to live reasonably well. It is not Government's duty to embark on schemes

that impose unnecessary burdens on the taxpayers in these times of crises.

We are willing to admit, Sir, that in view of the fact that we have got to import so much, this in itself will have a very telling effect on the cost of living. We have here in Barbados Health Week, Church Week and so on, and I have not heard anybody decide that next week or any other week would be Productivity Week. If we had Productivity Week and had set ourselves a target that during that particular week each machine, each factory, each worker would produce twice or once and a half as much as he does normally, I believe that we would have seen that all of this would reflect in bringing us a considerable ease in our balance of payments. These are things I have drawn to Government's attention repeatedly.

You have thousands of unemployed people about this place; you also have numerous factories that are producing less than eight hours out of the 24 hours which make a day. Machinery which costs tidy sums is stacked away idling for 16 or more hours out of the 24 hours, and thousands of people are idling at the same time. We very well know that any piece of machinery could be geared to work 23 out of 24 hours. All it needs is oiling and regular care. In the same way, why cannot our factories be ordered to set about a programme for producing more by employing a shift system. The Government has instituted training schemes, and they should call on the employers themselves to do in-service training, though not like what some have been doing - taking mean advantage of some of the young people, because after some people have gone through the stipulated period of training, they have got to go from factory to factory and re-engage in this nonsensical over-training exercise that they have already completed with the first factory at which they were engaged. If all these things were to be examined, we would find, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps half of the young people who are now idle and the not so old who are willing to throw in their lot could be taken off the streets and given if not more than four nights' or days' work as the case may be per week. In other words, they would become involved in the scheme of producing more whether it is for local consumption or for export, but it would be more for export to earn those dollars which we need so badly. 1. 00 p. m.

If this Mr. Speaker, were examined, one would find that he would have a right to feel that all is being done to relieve the unemployment situation about here, to reduce the incidence of crime that must follow on the heels of unemployment. It would reduce the sleepless nights that those of us who work hard and accumulate a bread for our families would have because it would reduce the incidence of fear when we close our windows or doors at night as the case might be.

It means therefore, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has gone off course, completely off course, and that is perhaps why you will find that the tidy sum that is now wasted on a coast guard station at this present time could very well be used to subsidise the high cost of rice or some other commodity or to bring better advantage.

The Hon. Leader of the Opposition in the course of his Budget Reply made mention, I think, of animal feeds, poultry feeds. We at this time need to see that animal feeds and poultry feeds are given a subsidy. We need to see, Mr. Speaker, that all our farmers in whatever field they are engaged in, be given an incentive; be given some sort of encouragement; and we need to see, Sir, that proper marketing facilities are provided for these people who, when they have produced, do not then find themselves being burdened and left to suffer a loss.

If all of these things, small as they might appear to us, were embarked on with care and a measure of precision - in other words, if the Government could give the type of lead to make people understand that they know where they are going, we believe that it would pay dividends in the long run; but if you find a Government with a skipper, the ship floundering and all of these good crew members, economists at Cave Hill now ratting, jumping off the boat now that it is sinking, that is what we have got to look at. All of these things, Mr. Speaker, have a very considerable bearing on the imposition of this sales tax which we now have before us.

The member for Christ Church West was at pains to point out the administrative difficulties with respect to the Ministry of Trade and the Registrar and the Commissioner for Inland Revenue being charged with the responsibility for collecting these taxes. All of this, nobody would deny, throws a very considerable strain upon people who are already choked to their necks with work; and what have we been hearing from the Government's benches?

There is no immediate consideration of the recruitment of individual staff in many respects. It means therefore, Mr. Speaker, that a Civil Servant, a public servant, who has been giving an honest day's work in the past is now to be called upon to do much more than he or she has been doing in the past.

I believe it is true, Mr. Speaker, that whatever one does in the course of a single day must be considered a day's work; but there are some of us - and I have heard the Prime Minister himself on public platforms - although he has around him all, of these Ministers that we see here from time to time - he has told us of the number of files and what not with which he has got to be up until 2 and 3 o'clock in the mornings.

That is what we are suffering from, Mr. Speaker, because the Prime Minister, having to admit that he is overworked, that he is overburdened so to speak, he cannot then in truth and in fact be as able as he should be when it comes to conducting the financial affairs proper of this country. He has given us to understand that he does not have the assistance that he needs despite his complement of Ministers.

Hence he has many sleepless nights.

The taxpayers are paying dearly and they will be forced into paying much more so if this state of affairs is allowed to continue much longer. We have often got to ask how long is too long, Mr. Speaker, when things are so bad that we find ourselves now imposing a sales tax to haul in \$8 million. From whom, Sir?

Remember, Sir, the Prime Minister states that if you are in the building business, no. tax. If you are engaged in one or two other fields, no tax. Where is the \$8 million then going to come from? And it starts at a very peculiar time, the 1st of December, the time when all the poor people from the country districts and around will be setting about with their hard earned pennies to see that their homes, neglected for 11 months, would be made to look semi bright at Christmas time. They will be trying to buy their little curtains and their little drapes, and those mothers who have three, four, five, six or seven children living in a house, when they would come down to buy a little pair of stockings and a little pair of shoes, and a little dress or a little pair of trousers to help get the children ready for Christmas morning Church, the Sunday School clothes, all of these things, sales tax clapped on. I believe, Sir, that the Minister of Finance is desperate, he is hungry looking for money. 1. 10 p. m.

I believe the Minister of Finance is desperate and looking for money, but I feel that he could hardly expect to be spared by the Almighty when he sets about to place a further burden on the poor people who are already saddled with their income tax, because the hawkers about the streets, the little one door shops in Suttle Street and Fairchild Street and in the back alleys are now called upon to pay their taxes, and when you come now to raise \$8 million, we are saying that the Minister of Finance has thrown the people completely overboard in an effort to save the ship. He has ordered all its passengers to jump overboard in an effort to save the ship. We believe that with a little more prudent spending a little more careful consideration of the needs of the people, the Government could have cut back on some of its unproductive expenditure. We have some High Commissioners abroad, staff and what not doing absolutely nothing but having a good time at the taxpayers' expense. We are just playing the possum, so to speak, because an Ambassador is called home and he is put up at the Hilton at the taxpayers' expense. For what purpose do you do this? We have got to set about cutting down on our expenditure. Wherever we have overdone it in the past, we must now ask ourselves whether it is necessary to continue at this rate of spending in this particular field or not. It is time to have mercy on the poor taxpayers. They are good milch cows, and that is why whenever money is wanted we turn to the taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, many a cow has given good milk, but the time comes when the cow, after it has given a pail of milk for so long,, will decide to turn around and kick it over. We believe that the Minister of Finance could have found other avenues to bring in a portion of this \$8 million instead of placing this sales tax on the poor people at this time. We are hoping, setting aside the burden of the actual collection, that we will have these lists available so that the first sales tax day we will not be having much of the trouble that we anticipate at this end. We are entreating the Government not to embark on any more

expenditure in buying any properties at this particular time. Give the people a chance to clear their heads, because too much of a burden has been inflicted on them, and Mr. Speaker, this \$8 million is about the heaviest of all in this single swoop.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Speaker, I shall not be long. I shall not deal with the revenue aspect of this Bill because the Hon. Prime Minister has spoken, but I have never heard the argument that the problems and difficulties involved in carrying out of any piece of legislation should be a sufficient excuse for the non-enactment of that piece of legislation, because my experience has taught me that on the Statute Books of this country there are equally intricate pieces of legislation which the working class man has been called upon to obey and which the business community has also been called upon to carry out. The Income Tax law is another intricate piece of legislation on which the business community relies mainly on their accountants, which the working class man has got to obey and have his deductions made, and I can think at the same time of several pieces of intricate legislation on the Statute Books of Barbados which have got to be obeyed. As I say, Mr. Speaker, the intricacies of the law are no excuse for its non-enactment, and therefore I think the Government is grateful to the members of the Opposition for pointing out to us the problems which we will encounter and the problems which we have got to overcome in carrying out this piece of legislation.

I think we have noted the problems very carefully, we have considered most of them and I can assure them that we have taken steps to make it easier for the business community and for all sections of the community who are called upon to obey this law, and we shall do everything in the Government's power to see that the transition of this new imposition is made as easy as possible. All the arguments I have heard are good arguments and we are grateful that they have shown us the difficulties and problems and what inconvenience the carrying out of the legislation would bring about.

Now I think the hon. member for St. Peter has travelled considerably. He has travelled with me on more than one occasion and he knows that this sales tax is not something which is invented by the Hon. Prime Minister. He has made purchases in the United States and he knows that the United States is a country rich as it is and vast as it is, is not without its poor people, and they have got to pay sales tax in the United States. When you go across to Europe and the Common Market you find some taxes which are bewildering. You have an added value tax, you get purchase tax and a multiplicity of taxes which poor people relatively speaking, because they are poor in relation to the size of the economy, have got to pay; so the argument that this is a wicked imposition or a new invention of the Minister of Finance, something which he in his evil moments have thought up, could certainly not be substantiated, because this question of a sales tax also exists in Canada. I have been to Canada and I think hon. members over there have been to Canada and the hotel tax which is imposed is a common thing. It strikes you at first coming from a country where it does not exist as something strange, but in Canada in hotels and restaurants there are taxes, and in the shops there is this sales tax, and of course you have got to pay it. Canada must have imposed it to raise revenue, the United States must have imposed it to raise revenue,

and in Britain the purchase tax, the added value tax and the other taxes which are imposed must also be revenue-earning taxes; so that while we are grateful to the Opposition for bringing to our attention the loopholes and the difficulties and problems, - I think it was wise of them to do such a thing because this is what they are there for, - the question of the execution is a matter like in all laws of cooperation and of understanding. Naturally it is going to lead to confusion and I think they ought to appreciate the Minister of Finance's attempt not to impose an unnecessary burden on the country by making food and beverages taxable. If he were as wicked as the Leader of the Opposition endeavoured to say - and I shall deal with him when we deal with his speech because he has certainly thrown in for public consumption some scandal and some rumours which will not be allowed to go unnoticed - or if he were just deciding to impose a wicked burden, it would be easy to say 5% or 2% on all goods, and then we would not have the problems that they have shown. Obviously in an endeavour by the Minister of Finance in the present economic position to ease the burden on the taxpayers, he has imposed this type of tax not on food and alcoholic beverages and certain other commodities, but has put it on such commodities as are necessary but are not completely and absolutely essential for the continuance of human existence. 1. 20 p. m.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member aware that this House has already passed a tax on cooked food in restaurants and that there is a Hotel Tax which also affects these matters?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Do not rule, Mr-Speaker. I would not like you to rule at this point. I know there is a tax. That is what I am saying. In Canada that tax exists. I said that earlier; but the tax in the; shops on food is an entirely different thing. You must know that this tax exists in Canada. I am not denying that; but what I am saying is that the Hon. Minister of Finance in his endeavour not to place a burden on the taxpayers resorted to this.

There are going to be problems in administration like in any law dealing with taxes. customs tax, incomes duties, there are going to be difficulties; and therefore I say we are grateful to them for having drawn this to our attention; but that is no reason why this tax should not be imposed if we get the co-operation of the business community. Even if it means employing more staff either at the level of the selection or separation of goods or even at the accounting level -. well of course if they are saying that it will need more staff that is a credit to the Government because it will mean more employment, and of course, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing wrong in that.

There will be a period of course when there are difficulties. If it means strengthening the staff of the Department of Inland Revenue to deal with this matter, then in due course we will have to strengthen the staff of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue. If it is bringing in the revenue that it is intended to bring in, then of course you will have to spend some of the revenue on strengthening the various departments which are involved in the actual collection of the revenue.

And perhaps we may even be able to draw on the expertise of countries who have imposed this particular tax.

Mr, Speaker, I just want briefly to say now that people must understand even in the economic position of Barbados, even in their own personal budgeting lives, for the Government too, the cost of administering the various services - the hospitals, the schools, the parks, the beaches, the sanitation, the cemeteries, - for every aspect the cost for us has gone up too; and we only know - and I do not think that if they were in power they would know of any other source of revenue other than taxes or loans. I cannot think of anybody who is a Rockefeller; because his own personal income is more than the budget of Barbados by more than a few hundred times.

But, Sir, we can only get from the people, and these same people on whom this tax is being imposed are the very same people who are demanding this increase in services, who are demanding increase in services in the hospital; who are demanding increase in services in the Teaching Profession; who are demanding that the garbage be collected; who are demanding that their roads be built; who are demanding that water be extended; who are demanding the very services which are increasing for us as a Government called upon to find the revenue to run the services of this country.

We do not come down, Mr. Speaker, to this Parliament as if we have nothing to do and wickedly impose tax on people because. it has occurred to somebody that this is a good idea. After all, Mr. Speaker, as politicians, these are the people to whom we will have to go in 1976. These are the people who have placed confidence in us for the last 13 years. These are the people who know that their interest is paramount in our minds, and therefore the people of this country must understand that an imposition of a tax like this is not some figment of a wicked Minister of Finance or a wicked Government dedicated to crushing them out of existence but that. the imposition "of this tax is an imposition which, after mature consideration, we impose to enable us to keep the level of services which we are called upon to maintain in a period of grave world wide and international problems in a period of grave and serious economic difficulties for most of the countries of the world.

I wonder what the Opposition would say, Mr. Speaker, when as we read from day to day General Motors has turned off 41, 000. This firm 49, 000. Look at the increase in unemployment in the U. S. A. We get worried when it is 14 or ?15. America gets worried when it is 4. 55 which has gone to 6 now.

This would only indicate - I am not using it to justify unemployment. I am not losing it to justify

anything; but this is one of the greatest arsenals of democracy. This is one of the greatest countries in the world. It is next door to us because we are in the same hemisphere. Can Barbados as an independent country with a limited economy, where international air fares, where international problems must impinge on our difficulties, can we escape the problems which great and stronger nations face in this entire world community ?

Therefore this tax - naturally there are a million and one ways in which an Opposition - even I could suggest a million and one other ways in which the tax could be raised. But one tax in some form or other in any country, Mr. Speaker, whatever you call it, must have an effect on some aspect of your total economy. If you raise something here, it is passed on to the consumer because the imposition of a tax in one area does not stand by itself. You can think of one other form, two other forms. It must have its effect on the total result to the people who use those services or the people who use the commodities or who buy the commodities eventually. It is just like leaves on a tree, Mr. Speaker,

I think that the 24 members of this Assembly can suggest to any Minister of Finance, can suggest to any Government 24 different items or 24 different measures which could raise perhaps the same revenue as this particular Bill would raise;; but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, my experience is that" the 24 or the hundreds of suggestions we make must in the long run have a total effect; and the final person is the person who uses those services.

I am grateful to the Opposition, and the Government is because these are points. In an Assembly which is dedicated to the people's business, in an Assembly which is dedicated to easing the burdens of the people, it is but fair and right that an Opposition should point out to a, Government the pitfalls, the difficulties, the hardships which the execution of a piece of legislation may carry. And we shall bear in mind and we will convey to the Minister of Finance who is not here, the points raised, the good points - leaving out the political points which any parliamentarian, Opposition or Government, is entitled to make; and we, curi give the assurance to the Opposition and to the public of Barbados that this Government will do everything in its power to see that the imposition of this new tax is carried out with the smallest or the most minute dislocation of either the business community or inconvenience to the consumers of this country. 130 p. m....

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

Notes: Mr. MOTTLEY; Mr. HINDS and Mr. FORDE-3.

On motion of Hon. C. E.. TALMA seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill Mr. LOWE in the Chair.

Clauses 1 to 15 inclusive were called and passed.

Clause 16 was called.

Mr. FORDE:

Mr. Chairman, this is the Section that I would like specifically to draw to the attention of the members of the House and to the Minister dealing with the refund of overpayments. You will notice, Mr. Chairman, that whereas in Clause 14 a person who fails to deliver his return in time or indeed to pay the due amount is penalised not only with a penalty

1 payment but also he has to pay interest on the outstanding sum which may be due under Clause 14(2)(b). On the other hand, in Clause 16 where the amount paid by a person as tax, penalty 0r"

interest for a, month exceeds the amount payable in accordance with this; Act by that person for that month, and that parson applies to the Commissioner, in writing, for a refund of the excess within one year after the end of that month, the Commissioner shall apply the amount of the excess to any outstanding liability of that person under this Act and cause the balance, if any, to be repaid to that person. Now under this Clause 16 therefore the Crown would have had die benefit of overpayment and it is not faying the person any interest on the overpayment What I am going to say under this Clause affects a later clause also in the Act, and I think this shows inequity in a taxing statute. I believe that we should not continue to pass legislation in this House where taxpayers are being asked to subsidise Governments and to subsidise Government's delay in dealing with their lawful applications, for money which is rightfully theirs, and on this basis if the Government would have had the benefit of the taxpayers money for a period of time, then it,, is but right that the person should get interest thereon at the same rate that he would have had to pay to the Government had he defaulted in paying Government on time.

I would respectfully move in this Committee

, that the Clause be amended -by adding at the end the words "together with interest on such balance at the rate of 10 percent from the date when the payment was made by such person."

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr, Chairman, if the hon. member would give way, I do not think this amendment would be quite in order in that the hon. member is attempting to "create a charge on the Treasury and as such is entirely out of order.

Mr. FORDE:

With respect, this is not creating a charge on the Treasury. A charge on the Treasury assumes that you are asking the Treasury to pay-out money which. is not rightfully yours, not money that is rightfully yours, and I respectfully suggest that the amendment is in order. There 13 no charge on the Treasury in this instance. What charge is this on the Consolidated Fund? It is not. L40 p. m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

According to the appropriate Standing Order, 63 (1) (£) that motion would be put out of order.

The question that Clause 16 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative the Committee dividing as follows: -

Ayes: Hon. C. E. TALMA, Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, Hon. F. G. SMITH, Hon. P. G. MORGAN, Mr. HOPPIN, Mrs. EASTMOND, and Mr. WEEKES - (9).

Notes: Mr. MOTTLEY Mr. HINDS; Mr. FORDE and Mr. BOLDEN - (4).

Clauses 17 to 22 inclusive were called and agreed to.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report the passing of one Bill in Committee.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

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

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Ayes: Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon G. G. FERGUSON; Hon P. M. GREAVES; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon F. G. SMITH; Hon P. G. MORGAN; Mr. LOWE; Mr. HOPPIN; Mrs EASTMOND and Mr. WEEKES - 10.

Notes: Mr. MOTTLEY, Mr. HINDS, Mr. FORDE and Mr. BOLDEN - 4.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill do now pass.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Ayes: Hon. C. E. TALMA, Hon, G. G. FERGUSON, Hon, P. M. GREAVES, Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, Hon. F. G. SMITH, Hon, P. G. MORGAN, Mr. LOWE, Mr. HOPPIN, Mrs. EASTMOND and Mr. WEEKES - 10.

Notes: Mr. MOTTLEY, Mr. HINDS, Mr. FORDE and Mr. BOLDEN - 4.

BILL TO AMEND THE DENTAL REGISTRATION ACT, 1973

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker the next order which we propose dealing with is Item No. 7 standing in the name of the Hon. Minister of Health and Welfare, and it is to move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Dental Registration Act, 1973.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:

Mr. Speaker, the amendments proposed have been indicated by the desire of the Dental Council to make preparations for the registration of certain people who have been practising as dental technicians and who have proficiency in that area; and also to make sure that people who are coming in here for registration as dentists, dental auxiliaries and dental hygienists have a command of the English Language.

We have had people not only in dentistry, but in other areas, who have been working in Barbados, but whose knowledge of the English Language has been deficient and because of that certain problems have arisen usually in their duties as regards the patients and maybe other professional people seeking their advice or co-operation.

This amendment is seeking to ensure in fixture that anyone seeking to be registered as a dentist in Barbados under the Dental Act should have a very good command of English, and also give the authority to the Dental Council to test such applicants if they so desire, in their level of understanding and knowledge of the English Language.

I move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I beg to second that. 1. 50 p. m.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the words "he can read, write, speak and understand the English Language" which now appear in most of these Bills have been introduced as a result of an amendment I made to the Medical Registration Bill some years ago, and I had hoped that by putting these words in we would have been in a position today where we would have working in this most critical of professions persons who really complied with the letter of the law, I am sad to say that it is still not so as the Hon. Minister has said, At the Queen Elizabeth Hospital today there are a number of practising doctors who cannot speak or understand the English language, and it is causing undue hardship and frustration among the other staff, professionals like myself, and the public who have got to deal with them. I have seen the spectacle of a doctor in court two days ago where you had to interpret to him and from him what they wanted. This is a breach of the law, and I am calling on the Minister now to deal with it. It is no use putting it in the law and then over-riding the law and bringing people here, because I believe they are doing more harm than good in this respect. This is my humble opinion. I have had a case in which a boy died at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital simply because the doctor who was supposed to be operating in the theatre could not understand the other people around him. It ended up with the other person being charged at the Assizes for manslaughter, and when the present Chief Justice heard what went on said that the Hospital Director should be there to hear what was going on in the Hospital. It is no good putting these words in an Act if those in authority are not going to stick to them.

I have not yet met a dental technician with this complaint, but I have had to bring a case against a so-called dental technician who made three sets of false teeth that could not fit the lady's mouth. We refer to them in ordinary parlance as choppers. They could not fit and I had to get a judgment against him. People have complained about this; and dentistry is a funny thing because if you put a set of false teeth in somebody's mouth and they do not fit well, you cannot understand what he is saying as a Bajan because the teeth chatter. The language of the House is English, but when you are dealing with modern day dentists, you do not know what language they are speaking. I am very serious about this, Mr. Speaker, and I hope very much that the Minister will make a check at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Will the Minister institute a check at the Hospital and see which doctors Comply with the law or are in breach of it? If it is the Medical Council that is appointing them or if it is the Civil Service Commission that is appointing them, let them know that these people do not comply with the law, and it is time that something is done about it. At every Assizes you know, Mr. Speaker, that there is a case of somebody being charged with murder or manslaughter and when the evidence comes out, you hear that if the person had been treated correctly at the Hospital there would not have been a charge of murder. You go in the Casualty and meet them and they cannot understand what you are telling them or you cannot understand what they are telling you. If you ask some of them to spell their own names, they cannot spell it in a fashion that you and I can understand. You ask them questions when they are in the witness stand and they are completely lost.

Mr. Speaker, it is no use coming in here and passing laws and putting in all these refinements and they tell you they are going to bring people here who can understand what is going on and then they do not. I

am not discriminating against persons coming from India, Pakistan, Timbucktu or elsewhere. What I want to know is that if they are here that they comply with the law and there is no misunderstanding between doctor, patient, professionals etc. I have a particular case which I am writing to the Hospital Director about and if I cannot get justice, I think I will write to the Civil Service Commissioner or whoever is responsible, because it is certainly not working to the benefit of anybody when you meet cases like these.

The question that the Bill be now read a second time, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill Mr. LOWE in the Chair.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 were called and passed.

On motion of Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDIE seconded by Hon G. G. FERGUSON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE SANITATION SERVICE AUTHORITY ACT, 1974

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, the next item is Order No. 8 which stands in the name of the Minister of Health and Welfare. It is to move the second reading of a Bill to repeal the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board Act, 1969.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I was not here when die sitting began today, but if I recall, last night

there was a motion for suspension of the sitting, and if So, the House stands automatically adjourned in another minute. I just wanted to find out if that is so.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER:

I think this is a convenient point at which to rise for lunch. I deem it to be 2 o'clock.

Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting until 2. 45 p. m. accordingly. 2. 00 p. m.

On resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER:

The sitting is now resumed. Question time, (pause) Private Members' Business time.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 5 under Private Members' Business be the instant order of the day.

Mr. HINDS:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

On a point of privilege, Sir. I just want a ruling. This is a continuation of yesterday's business. Yesterday we had Question Time. Do we have Question time again or does it continue as the sitting having finished? We had Private Members' Business yesterday. Do we now continue with the Government Business which is on, or do we have two Question Times and two Private Member?

Business times in the same sitting of the House?

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, in supporting my colleague, the Minister of Communications and Works, I say that hon. members are fully aware that all the replies were given yesterday to the six questions which were asked and tabled, and that has been disposed of. Private Members' Business has been disposed of too. To all intents and purposes this is Government Business time as such, it being a suspended sitting.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is a good moment for saying what I am going to say now.

Mr. SPEAKER:

On a point of order, or what?

Mr. HINDS:

On a point of privilege. I believe, Sir, that you will find that all that we have done here today is not lawful for the simple reason that we failed to do last night at the appropriate time what should have been done. In other words, what I am saying is this a few minutes before 9 o'clock last night, the moment of interruption, no effort was made to suspend the Standing Orders. Consequently, we were not really and truly in a position to suspend the sitting as we did last night.

I am not trying to reflect on any ruling that you made, Sir. I am only trying to see if we can find a way out to make ourselves to look right. When the moment of interruption arrived last night, all that the Standing Orders permitted us to do was to dispose of any non-controversial matters and fix an Order Paper; and the words "fixing an Order Paper" - the only interpretation that can be brought to it is that you are fixing an Order Paper for a new day's sitting. I am submitting, Sir, that you might reflect on these things to see if the action of suspending the sitting until 12 noon today was a lawful act, whether we were doing right at that particular time.

That is what I think is causing the points now being raised by the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works. He is submitting that this is a continuation of yesterday's sitting; but, having failed to put into operation the machinery that would make today a continuation of yesterday's sitting, I am submitting that what we are doing here today, our meeting here today is not a continuing session from yesterday. What was necessary to be done before the moment of interruption last night was not done. Think on these things.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is probably attempting to blame me as Leader of the House for making any mistakes in fixing matters for today. (Aside No, no, no.) Be that as it may, the answer is simple and straight. In the first place, as the Leader of the Opposition stated clearly, when dealing with a budget, whether the original budget or a supplementary budget, the first two days are allotted for the Reply.

I specifically did not suspend the Standing Orders as such, and the second point is that hon. members claim, and quite rightly, that they must be given proper time to deal with their measures; and I do not want to be found guilty of trying to commandeer the time of the House just for Government Business even though we have a big Order Paper. I gave way. I did not suspend the Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have given this matter some thought.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, I am also on a Point of Privilege. The Leader of the House does not seem to appreciate the point that the hon. member was making. During the five years that I have been here, whenever it was intended that the House should sit from day to day as is done during consideration of the Estimates what happens is that the Standing Orders are suspended. I have never seen during the time that I have been here that you can suspend the sitting from one day to another day without the suspension of Standing Order 6, because according to Standing Order 6 once you reach to the point of 9 o'clock, you have got to the moment of interruption. You can suspend the House at any time before 9 o'clock to the same day. You cannot suspend the House to another day unless the Standing Order is suspended. If you are going to come back another day, you either have to call a meeting under one of the other Standing Orders or fix an Order Paper. I queried what was done here yesterday. I discussed this matter with the Clerk because to me it seems that it cannot be the same sitting; because once Standing Order 6 is not suspended and the sitting starts at 12 o'clock it goes right through until 9 o'clock of the same day. If you want to go beyond that, you must suspend the operation of Standing Order 6 so that you can go on from day to day.

That would be one sitting, and therefore the question of the point of interruption would never arise. That is the way that I know that it has been done in the past. There were occasions in the past on which the Speaker on his own motion - if there is disorder in the House - does not suspend the House until tomorrow or the following Tuesday. The Speaker adjourns the House until another day; 2.35 pm.

Once you go to another day with suspension of Standing Order No. 6 you have got to adjourn and riot

suspend, and that is why Your Honour called Question Time and Private Members' Business. You cannot suspend the sitting to another day unless Standing Order 6 is suspended, otherwise you are in breach of that Standing Order which says that the House shall meet at 12 noon and at 9.00 p. m. you get the point of interruption. If this were not so, all it means is that before 9, 00 p. m. all the Leader of the House had to do was to suspend the sitting until the following day and continue with the Order Paper in breach of Standing Order No. 6. Either you suspend the Standing Order so that you are not governed by the time or you must obey Standing Order No. 6, The question of two days for debate on the Budget would mean of necessity, that the Standing Order should be suspended so that when the Leader of the Opposition is replying he would, get the two days straight. It does not necessarily mean two following days, but two sitting days. You do not even have to suspend the. Standing Orders for that, because I think that would supersede the other Standing Orders dealing with Government Business, If you came a Tuesday and then the following Tuesday, those would be the two sitting days on which you would discuss the reply to the Budget; so that as I see it I think you have gone wrong from last night. What should have happened is that the Standing Orders should have been suspended, You cannot have a suspended sitting until today; it would have to be a new sitting. You cannot suspend from day to day unless Standing Order No. 6 is suspended, and that is the whole reason for Standing Order No. 6. You meet at 12 o'clock noon oft Tuesdays; at 2 p. m. you go to lunch and come beck and do Private Members' Business, and then revert to Government Business until 9 o'clock, the point of interruption. If it were otherwise it would mean that Standing Order No. 6 would have no effect, and you could suspend at, five minutes to nine until another day without suspending Standing Order No. 6, and that has never been done before yesterday.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I have listened to the very interesting views canvassed. My own ruling is that the sitting was validly suspended last evening. It would seem to me that a, motion for suspension of die sitting can be made at any time to any day that the House agrees. If this is so that the House was validly suspended, it would seem to me that this is the same sitting, and where I have erred is in entertaining a motion for Private Members' Business. If this is one sitting, it should follow of necessity that there cannot be Private Members' Business or Question Time.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, to avoid any embarrassment, I would withdraw my motion.

Mr. SPEAKER:

I think that is a convenient and magnanimous Resolution. And so we are still in Government Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE:

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Order No. 8 be the next Order of the day.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, before this motion is put, I would like to object to it on the grounds that it is not really fitting that we should discuss this matter at this stage. We do not object to the other things because we had copies of these from last week, but on this side members including myself only received this Bill late on Monday afternoon and we came here yesterday and we are here again today, and I do not think that members on this side have had enough time to study this matter. To give us a few hours overnight when members are preparing to do certain other work I do not think is right, and I would ask the Leader of the House to postpone consideration of this matter in view of the fact that we only received this particular Bill along with another one which is very involved on Monday afternoon.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I just want to get it clear. The hon. member for Bridgetown intimated that they did not have enough time to look through this Bill. Am I to understand that the same thing holds good for the other matters which we introduced last Tuesday? The practice has been, and this has been adopted not very long by the present Clerk and his Deputies, to make copies of whatever is tabled and give members before they leave the Chamber. It may be a waste of stationery but at the same time it serves a purpose of acquainting you automatically at a very early time of what was introduced on a particular day before you leave the Chamber. For any hon. member to say he is unaware is no excuse. I am willing to go along with the hon. member, but when he examines what he says, it is not really presenting the facts as they are. It is misrepresenting the facts.

Mr. SPEAKER:

That is unparliamentary. All that one needs do is to indicate a willingness or otherwise to do the Bill now or on some other occasion.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

On a point of personal explanation, I did not misrepresent the facts of the House. I am stating as a fact that I did not get this particular Bill and the one dealing with the Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders until I got the Printed Order Paper on Monday afternoon, and indeed the member for St. Peter will support me on this. I got the other Bills from Tuesday last week which were circulated here and the other Bills which we got on Thursday to be dealt with, but I did not get this. 3. 05 p. m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

In other words, as far as I understand the hon. member, by implication he is willing to deal with the two money Resolutions. Do you have copies of these? I have to ask that to get a direct answer. As I understand it, the hon. member is willing to deal with the Resolutions and then deal with the second reading of a Bill to provide for the Licensing, Registration and Control of Businesses etc. If that is the case, I am willing to cooperate. I just want to be clear that that is the case, subject to your ruling.

Mr. SPEAKER:

The Hon. Minister of Health will have to withdraw his motion. If the Minister would be good enough to withdraw his motion, we could have a new one put in its place.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. C ADDLE:

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my motion.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Thank you. There being no objection that motion is withdrawn.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker in view of the circumstances, we will revert to Government Business. We will revert to Order No. 1 which stands in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance and Planning. It concerns two money Resolutions, and I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

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.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker this is a Resolution for the sum of \$141, 808. As shown in the Resolution, there are several Heads, Sir, like Head 2 - Services Commissions. There are several Items under this Head. The first is Personal Allowances. This money is to be paid for extra substitutes etc. The next is National Insurance. This is in connection with the increase in the rates since the first of July. Payment of Passages

- that amount has been increased. Travelling - the rate has been increased from the 1st of July. Office Expenses - the additional sum requested is caused by the energy crisis etc.

I beg to move that Head 2, stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

The next is Head 16 -Prime Minister's Office Item 9 - Office Expenses

- the increase is for similar reasons. Item 14 - Communications.....

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member would give way I would draw something to his attention. We need to clarify the note, in the Schedule it is Head 16 and in the note it is Head 15.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

I have the relevant file and the request for Supplementary provision is under Head 16 - Prime Minister's Office. Under Item 4 National Insurance, the sum of \$57, 470 was provided in the Current Estimates to meet the cost of National Insurance contributions of the staffs of the Prime Minister's Office under Civil Aviation Division, the Seawell Airport development project and Colloden Farm during the Current Financial Year.

Contributions payable by staff were increased from the 7th January, 1974, by approximately 100 per cent. In addition there has been an increase of 32 to the staff of the Civil Aviation Division during the Current Financial Year. So as a result, expenditure at the 31st August, 1974 was \$51, 290. 30 as compared with the expenditure for last Financial Year which totalled \$48, 889. 41. An additional sum of \$45, 175 is required to meet contributions of staff etc.

As I have said the correct Head is Head 16. I therefore beg to move that "Head 15" be deleted and "Head 16" substituted therefor.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES:

I beg to second that the question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

The question now is that Head 16.....

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Chairman, our chief concern with the matters under this Head is really in connection with Item 14 ' - Communications. The notes thereto make specific mention of the Port Management Division in the Prime Minister's Office. 3. 15 p. m.

It is a matter of very considerable concern to this whole country that you will find that there is now a Minister responsible for the Port. We well recall Government's promise to take over the Port at some given time, but we were never told that it was a case not that the Government had found it necessary so to do in the interest of this country with a view to effecting a saving or providing cheaper food or cheaper commodities to the consuming public. What has really happened is that it is on account of the interest that the Canadian Government has had to take in the financial affairs of this country that we are

seeing today a Minister poised for having responsibility for the management of the Bridgetown Port and perhaps a little more merely to satisfy the demands of the Canadian Government, because if the Canadian Government is pouring money into this country, they want to feel that they have a controlling interest at some point in our financial affairs.

The Bridgetown Port is a tremendous money earner, but we are going to see in the not too distant future - in a matter of days - increased charges which are going to considerably affect the cost of living. We are going to see very many changes brought about in the Bridgetown Port, but there is hardly anything to tell us that these changes, the hiking of landing charges and what not would be reducing the cost of living in this country. I believe, Sir, that sooner or later we in this country are going to realise that we no longer own ourselves and our country, and that the Canadian Government has taken us over lock, stock and barrel. This is nothing for anybody to laugh at. The moment the Canadian Government can say to the Government of Barbados that it will lend money for this and for that - we have an airport development through Canadian Government loans, we are to have the Harbour extension and what not - the Canadian Government is going to say that they do not want to be dealing with private individuals. In other words, they will not be financing any project whatsoever or financing any further loans if you are going to have the Bridgetown Port managed by the Port Contractors Ltd. or any other private enterprise. This has never been said by Government in this House, but it is so. Somebody would like to question my source of information. If a Minister happens to talk I would not say so because his other colleagues may come down on him; you may hear a Cabinet secret has come out; but what you will find is that a lot had to be said to the Trade Union in negotiating new wages and salary increases for people who work in the Port, and it is true, Mr. Chairman, that the Bridgetown Port is now placed under the management of a Minister of this Honourable House to satisfy the Canadian Government authorities. (A VOICE: Untrue.) We are hearing what is true and what is not true. The Minister who is trying to say so has an opportunity to get on his feet and set the records straight, because when a Minister rises to set the records straight, everybody understands what he is really saying; he is only saying it for the sake of the records. He does not have to speak the truth, because that is what they always preface their remarks with, to set the records straight,

not give an accurate description of what is being discussed or what is the true position.

Mr. Chairman, what has taken place between 1961 and now that you must now place a Minister in charge of the Port, and what is expected to take place in the future? I believe in every development. I believe too that the pocket of the Minister who is in charge will not develop during the course of development- But while I say so, that does not mean that the development of other people's pockets will not take place, and I am sure that this particular Minister would not be in this.

Mr. Chairman, what is all this development we are going to hear about at the Bridgetown Port? The only development we want at the Bridgetown Port is for Government to so exercise the management of affairs there that we can effect a saving at some particular point, a reduction in the various costs when

cargo is landed here and is eventually reflected by reaching down to the very last consumer who makes a purchase here and there about the stores. From 1961 this Port was built and declared open and one of the expressed purposes of building that Port was in the hope that we would see commodities landed and brought into the country at a cost much less than under the old system of lighterage and pilferage that has caused so many headaches to so many people in the past. Until now it has not been proven that we have had a single commodity pass through the Bridgetown Port to cost us less than had been charged under the old regime. We are looking forward now, Mr. Chairman, to this new development of the Bridgetown Port, to these new ideas of management. Port Contractors were people who were compelled to have an interest in what was taking place in the Port.

You will find, Mr. Chairman, that they have effected an experience of considerable losses from time to time. Every sort of thing has gone on in the Bridgetown Port. You very well know when people are placed in a position to say that all of this belongs to us and the people, what is going to take place. We are going to hear that a Minister is not a police or a detective, which is true, but with what result? If an importer imports 100 dozen or 100 gross of something, despite the fact that his losses might be covered by insurance, you are going to still find that the portion of the cargo which he or she receives has got to bear the full cost of the order which he had place, and the consumers have got all of this to bear. I cannot be convinced that you are going to have the Port more efficiently managed and that operations there will be smoother by having a Minister of Government charged with the responsibility of managing the Bridgetown Port 3. 25 p. m.

They are setting up a division of Port Management but the Ministers are saying that no Minister is charged with the management. If they establish a Port Management division in the Office of the Prime Minister,. is not that Minister charged with the management? He is charged with the responsibility for it all-(Asides)

Mr. CHAIRMAN:

I would admonish hon. members on my right to adhere to Standing Order

23(6).

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we are going to regret the step which is now being taken. The taking over of the Port as has been mooted is not an inexpensive undertaking as some would perhaps entreat us to believe. And you will find, Sir, that the measure of vigilance which used to obtain in the Port in the past will be remarkably absent in the future even if you were to appoint additional staff to the vigilantes in the port. Even if there is an increase in staff it is not going to make for a more efficient functioning of the operation of the Bridgetown Port.

Let us hope and pray therefore, Mr. Chairman, that you will not under the present Government and its Port Management see an increase in the cost of the commodities which come to these shores for consumption in any particular respect. We all hope and pray that a newer vision will come to those who braved the seas in years past and will never now have the opportunity to prove their worth on land as they were able to do when they roamed the seas.

Nevertheless, Sir, if as we know all this is at the request of the Canadian Government, we are willing to wait and see what fruits it can bear.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for St. Peter seemed to be pretty well perturbed about the cost of shipping and he is of the opinion that the cost of commodities passing through the Bridgetown Port should have shown some reduction since 1961.

The hon. member knows the trend of rising cost, and I have said on several occasions in this Chamber that did we not have the present deep water harbour, the cost of these commodities would be far higher. If we had to do as we did prior to 1961, and load cargo in Carlisle Bay, bringing it ashore in lighters, having it alongside the Careenage and storing it in warehouses in Bridgetown, the cost would be far higher today. In other words, if we had to revert to Carlisle Bay and lighters, the cost for the handling and storage of goods would be a lot higher than it is today. The expense alone for maintaining and keeping lighters in these days would be so high that that in itself would put on an extra charge, to say nothing of the congestion which is now experienced in the Careenage.

The hon. member mentioned the expansion and future development of the harbour. One can easily see by passing alongside the wharf the size of the ships there and the congestion of traffic. Part of what the expansion of the harbour would do would be to remove all of this shipping coming into the inner basin. No harbour should be a throughfare, and alongside the wharf is a throughfare and it causes a great deal of congestion. With the size of ships and the amount of ships that come into the inner basin today, I do not know how they actually manage without accidents and collision taking place.

Development of the harbour will also give us the opportunity to keep pace with the outside world as having a first class harbour for which Barbados is already known. The cleanliness of the Bridgetown Harbour is something more than we can see in any part of the world today, and I have always complimented them on it. I hope that it will always remain in that condition.

Another point is that the whole trend in shipping today is changing. Cargo, like stock feed and such things, is no longer shipped in jute bags. All of that is practically out of the question, and most of this stuff will be shipped for bulk handling in the future. The modern trend is containerised cargo. Containerised cargo is shipped in 20 foot containers 8x8. That is the modern trend all over the world today, and if we are to keep in tune with the trend of modern shipping that is what we will have to be prepared for because most of the ships which will be calling at Barbados from Europe, the USA and Canada will be equipped for containerised cargo and we will have to have the necessary equipment to prepare for this type of operation as well as for shipping our cargo out.

It will also eliminate pilferage and stealing. These containers are sealed and it is not easy to pilfer from them unless as has happened in some parts of the world, the whole container goes. These are 20 foot containers, eight feet long and eight feet high, and we could reduced considerably the amount of pilferage by using these containers.

The hon. member must remember that countries have to change with the times. If other countries go forward, we will be far behind unless we do the same. Trinidad, Jamaica and some of the other countries in the Caribbean are presently preparing for this type of cargo, and we have to do the same thing.

With regard to handling rates, I still maintain that the rates in Barbados today are lower. We have a good geographical position for receiving transshipment cargo and shipping it to other countries in the area, and we have got to keep in tune with modern trends. 3. 35 p. m.

I can assure the hon. member that he needs not worry about anything around there. We keep our eyes out and it is the best thing for the development of the country.

The question that Head 16 - Prime Minister's Office - stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 17 - Establishments Division - was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 17 - Establishments Division, stand part.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Resolution for the sum of \$141, 808 do now pass.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON:

I beg to second that.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1974-75 No. 12

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Chairman, this is a very simple Resolution. I can promise the Opposition that I am not, however much provoked, going into any argument about the Transport Board. This is a Resolution to enable the Transport Board to place an order for twelve chassis to modernise and bring the fleet of the Board up to date. In the Development Plan every year we have been ordering twelve buses. The bodies are being made by Mr. Butcher and in order to keep Mr. Butcher who is doing an excellent job as a Barbadian manufacturer in employing a lot of people in a particular skill, this Resolution is just introduced as a token vote to enable and give authority for the ordering of twelve buses to keep phasing out the old buses that we do have and to bring the fleet up to date, and consequently to meet the schedules and improve the service.

I think hon. members will agree that one of the drawbacks of the present Transport Board was that there were a lot of old uneconomical buses that were forced to meet the schedules and prior to the

energy crisis I was gratified to find that the Board was turning the corner. At one time we had \$500, 000 in Treasury Bills as a result of our prudent operations. Of course with the increase in petrol, tyres, parts and what not, it has been eroded, and of course in the new year we have a big negotiation with the Workers' Union, and I would like to assure hon. members without going into any big argument that although I am not prophetic, I can see that in due course I will have to come to this Honourable Chamber with an over-all plan for the complete running of public transport in Barbados in the new year. I have been meanwhile adverting my mind and I have set up a Committee of the Technical Officers in my Ministry together with the concessionaires and together with the Chairman of the minibus co-operative to organise the cooperative on a proper basis, that is, to appoint inspectors of minibuses, to have proper bus stops for them to prevent them stopping in front of traffic, to lay down proper fare rates for them, and as at present advised, my view is that the minibuses should be better organised in cooperatives rather than to have a loose connection of sixty or seventy people who are all individualists. These are matters on which without any firm decision being taken I have been adverting my mind to organise a necessary part of public transport system for the moment.

On the question of the bus service in itself, as I say, we have this big negotiation with the Workers' Union coming up. We have heard the rumblings of the concessionaires, and this debate or my expatiations on the organisation of public transport in Barbados would take me a whole day and several hours, but I can promise the Opposition that when the time comes, which I can see coming, if not a White Paper, I would have to come to this House with some detailed explanation of how Government proposes to run public transportation.

When I heard the hon. member for Christ Church West talking about all these millions from sugar next year, I am very glad to hear him prophesying. I do hope it comes through because public transportation, if that does arise, will have to get its share of this amount of money that the member for Christ Church West talked about.

The purpose of this Resolution, Mr. Chairman, is basically to give us the authority to keep Mr. Butcher supplied with bus bodies in a first attempt to modernise the fleet; the organisation in the light of the King Report and in the light of another report on the Transport Board will take place but I want hon. members to understand that that is an entirely different kettle of fish; it is going to involve millions of dollars and in due course I will come to the House either at Estimates time depending on whether the negotiations have been completed with the Union, but I can foresee in the new year that Government will have to take drastic steps to organise public transport on a firm footing.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD:

I beg to second that.

Mr. HINDS:

Mr. Chairman, this is a token Resolution of \$100 to permit the Transport Board to place an order for twelve chassis to be delivered in the 1975-76 financial year. Now the Hon. Minister just touched on the hem of this matter of public transport, because let us look at it, there are four operators so to speak of public transport in this Island plus the taxis making five operators of public transport.

Now let me dwell for a bit on the taxis. Now the Minister of Communications and Works and the Minister of Tourism both know that there is presently in operation at Seawell Airport in public transport a vehicle No. X - 710. It is operating and doing the same work as our pick-ups and it should have the permit from the Ministry of Communications and Works and have its seating capacity and what not properly arranged. Nothing like this has happened, but the vehicle is in operation. I repeat that the Minister of Communications and Works knows much more about it than what I have said, - I mean about its illegal operation, - and the Minister of Tourism knows even more, and it is still in operation. You do not find the police hounding it down as you find those minibus operators being hounded down from time to time and being prosecuted. I am not saying that the two Ministers are conniving in anything; I would not say this at all about them, but they are in full knowledge that this particular vehicle is operating illegally, and we would like to hear from them what steps have been taken to put it right.

Now, Sir, today we find that out of the taxpayers' pockets must come the ultimate cost of these twelve chassis, plus whatever Mr. Butcher's foundry will do to make them completely operational units, but you will also find that there are also the Rocklyn and the Elite who are also operating buses proper. There are no taxpayers as such for them to turn to to get twelve or even six or perhaps three chassis each to assist them in bringing their fleet up to date. They have got to employ conductors, drivers, inspectors, secretaries and so on in the same way that the Transport Board has got to do. They have got to sit down around the table with the Trade Union and argue from time to time what will be the wages in the coming year or years in respect of the workers employed by these two companies, but there are no taxpayers whatsoever for them to turn to; they have got to bear the cost of it all. They have got to replace their units and try to bring them as up to date as possible, they have got to try to render a service just as the Transport Board and the taxpayers are not saddled with the cost of supplying these units, employing staff and keeping the units up to date as we find in the case of the Transport Board.

Mr. Chairman, in spite of the fact that the Minister must have in his possession a Report of the King Commission that was set up to investigate public transport and to make recommendations and what not,

we in the Opposition have not been supplied with any copies for our perusal, but we are asked to vote money to pay for twelve chassis. We had to vote money to pay the Committee for working and submitting a report, and Heaven knows if it will ever be brought; to light for us in Opposition. (Asides) Mr. Chairman, a Minister is there sitting void of his senses and telling us that we read it in the newspaper. Is that what he is reducing hon. members to? When the hon. member wanted money to pay to the people who sat on the Committee he did not go to the newspaper; he came to us. The Minister must not be so insulting to the Opposition. What we are saying is that if the King Report cannot be implemented at the moment, either in part or in whole, we have got to examine the Transport Board in its original form in the absence of the King Report, and relate it to the operations of the Elite and the Rocklyn who are in a similar field. 3. 45 p. m.

Now we have to say that the Transport Board has the best routes to itself. The Elite and the Rocklyn, and moreso the Rocklyn, have terribly back breaking hill work, and what do they operate on? Their rate base is the same as that of the Transport Board and they have to keep their fleet up to date. They have to cut and contrive and face the banks etc. They do not have the taxpayers to underwrite their losses.

So, Sir, if you find that the Government is operating its service at a loss and that every now and then you have to call on the taxpayers to underwrite their losses we need to have the whole system placed in the hands of the Government who can provide better supervision. We will not have to continue taking advantage of concessionaires who have been eking out their existence all this time. It is unfair and the Government must decide to take over the whole transport system. I would tell the Minister that both the Elite and Rocklyn concessionaires are willing to hand over to the Government tomorrow morning. Let the Government stand by with some hot cash.

There is no subsidy for these concessionaires; and the Government must consider now that it is time that you will have to increase the bus fares to the Elite and the Rocklyn or provide them with some subsidy. They are still operating spine gasolene units, and you have got to provide some sort of rebate because you cannot expect them to pay \$2. 00 a gallon for gasolene, receive the same old bus fares and keep their fleet up to date.

Sir, we need a complete review, and this is a matter of urgency. It is becoming more and more urgent because this Resolution here is a discriminatory Resolution in the sense that one fleet can turn to the taxpayers and the other two have got to turn to themselves. They are left to be paying high bank charges and to be refused at times by the banks; and yet they are all providing public transport, or are trying to do so.

Mr. Chairman, the Elite and the Rocklyn did not come on the scene yesterday. We know that they have gone through very, very lean years in the past. They have made considerable sacrifices in trying to measure up to the semi-standard that they have reached in recent times; but, Sir, what are we doing to help them?

Mr. Chairman, no operator can plan his business on having a number of duty free chassis for two years. If a private company tomorrow had to take over the whole operation, the Government would have to give them a minimum guarantee because it would take them at least three to four years to find their footing and get themselves implanted in the operation. Then you would have to give them time to recover some of the capital that they expended in establishing the fleet.

So, Sir, when in dealing with the Elite and the Rocklyn you talk about so many chassis duty free for two years are you not making mock sport of them? What is the Government doing here now? They are not telling us that the Transport Board has got a similar concession. You are buying them out of the taxpayers. They are telling the Transport Board that whatever is the cost of these chassis it will go through the House of Assembly and the taxpayers are behind you. 3. 55 p. m.

We are not saying that we are bringing in twelve chassis at the taxpayers' expense, giving the Transport Board six and the Elite and Rocklyn three each and giving them a long term on which to repay for their three even if you tell the Transport Board to take their six free. We have got to bring our human consideration to bear on matters of this sort, because it is not a case where the Elite and Rocklyn are catering to people that the Transport Board would not be catering to at some stage. They all go to make up public transport and you cannot continue, if you really and truly want to see progress and any improvement in the service as such for the benefit of the travelling public, to single out the Transport Board and see to its every need and leave the others to be battling their own canoe.

I am urging upon the Government to re-examine the whole system as quickly as possible. Do not let us subtract the hundreds from the millions and give only to the Transport Board. If you can only find hundreds now, we are willing to tell you to give the Transport Board half of the hundreds and divide the rest between the Elite and the Rocklyn. You should exercise greater supervision over them. (Asides). It is not a matter that it does not work that way. You should seek to appoint somebody to their directorate. In other words, let Government have some sort of interest more than just receiving what they do by way of taxes. (Asides). I am hearing nonsense from people who ought to know better, who, if they were on this side would cut loose the Government for what it is attempting to do. Even on that side they will still do it; they still cut loose the same Government; but I am going to wind up, Mr. Chairman.

We are satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that public transport is now operated on a very unfair basis, and when the Minister tells us that we are going to have Government official recognition of the operation of taxis

which we considered as pirates in the past, it is not going to make it better for the Elite and the Rocklyn or even for the Transport Board. However you try to regulate these minibuses, it is not going to make for better. You know, Mr. Chairman, as I do that people get into these pick-ups because they will take them to a point that the buses very often do not reach. You will understand that there is not really this amount of comfort drawing up in these minibuses, but people prefer for some reason or other to stop the minibus and get in rather than get in the Transport Board buses, and the Government must investigate all this. This is what I have seen for myself. We believe that the King Report had carried out some sort of survey, and they should have found out what is responsible for all this, why people are patronising these minibuses to that extent. We know that more human sympathy seem to transcend from the minibus operators to the passengers than to those who go in the other sections of public transport and perhaps this in itself goes a long way; but we are urging upon Government to see to it, not that the Elite and Rocklyn and any others who may be operating have got to bear the cost of all this out of their own pockets. And do you know what the conductors are telling you? They are telling you that the buses are making money, but it is the administrative costs and administrative losses that are responsible for what we are witnessing in public transport with respect to the Transport Board.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Chairman, my experience with these token votes has not been one that has been happy. We come here and are asked to vote \$100 as a token vote to permit the Transport Board to place an order to Seddon Motors Limited for twelve chassis for delivery in the financial year 1975-76. Even though we are being asked to vote \$100 as a token vote. I think the House is entitled to a little more information than this, because we would like to find out the total price to which we are now committing ourselves. We have heard in the past when matters come before the House and we are asked to vote a token sum, and when the real price is given to the Opposition and we find it necessary to vote against it, that we agreed to the token vote. For this reason we would like to find out from the Minister responsible what is the full extent of the cost of these chassis and what is the full commitment in relation to these buses.

Mr. Chairman, I do not understand why Statutory Boards such as this find it so difficult to file their reports and to have their accounts audited. As far as I am aware the last audited statement and report from the Transport Board was for the period ending 30th September, 1972. Surely a Report for the year ending September '73 should be in the hands of the Minister, because nobody can tell me that any responsible Minister would seek to come to the House of Assembly for a vote in relation to a Statutory Board when he does not know how that Statutory Board is operating. If the Report and Statement are in the hands of the Minister for the year ending September 1973, I think these things should be laid in the House for the benefit of members. We should not be asked just to vote for this token sum, because we are concerned with the financial aspect and the operations of the Transport Board, and we are not going to sit down in here and just vote money because the Minister comes up with these Resolutions that give absolutely no information at all. We are not told about the projections for the coming year. Even if he could not have an audited statement I do not see why an interim statement for the year 1974 should not be in the hands of the Minister if he is going to come to Parliament and ask us to vote money for the operation of the Transport Board. At least an interim statement should be presented to us here today, not only an audited statement for the year 1973, to show this House how the Transport Board has been

operating this last year and what are the projections for the forthcoming year in respect of which he wants to order these twelve chassis.

Sir, I have heard a lot about the King Report and I believe the Minister adverted to it in introducing this Resolution, but what is the point of adverting to the newspaper about the existence of the King Report that we do not have before us in order that we would be in a position to have a proper debate based on the findings of the King Report? At least, even if the Minister does not intend to implement any of the King Report or he only intends to implement part of it, I think that the report should be laid in the House for the members of the House to see what were the findings of the Report. What is the benefit to the public of using taxpayers' money to set up commissions to investigate the operations of Statutory Boards and to make recommendations for the improvement of those Boards, and then the Minister asks what is the purpose of having the Report? I do not think the Minister is serious. I would have thought that the whole purpose of having the King Enquiry was to let the public know how the Transport Board is operating, and what are the recommendations contained in the Report even if the Minister does not accept the recommendations, or even if the Cabinet has to consider what portion of the recommendations they accept. I still think that the public of this country is entitled to know what is contained in the King Report, because, as I say, I do not believe that we should entourage Statutory Boards to operate in this fashion by keeping back their reports and not bringing them here. The Minister should show greater respect to the House in coming here for money, and let us know how the Board is getting on financially. 4. 05 p. m.

I do not know, Sir, if the ordering of these chassis is really necessary expenditure at this stage, because I believe that the whole reason why the mini buses have been so successful in their operations is that the mini buses can go into areas which are thickly populated and where the Transport Board buses do not or cannot go because buses of the size of those they have cannot go into these areas.

It was suggested some time ago that the Government should look into the system of using smaller buses - I believe 36 seater buses which could give some sort of competition to the mini buses. In the last Report of the Transport Board - for 1972 - the General Manager complained about the operation of the mini buses and he said that the mini bus operation was one of the reasons why the Transport Board was losing money.

I think that it is a lucky thing for the public that you have the mini buses operating. Obviously the mini buses have only got a foothold in the transport service of this country because the Transport Board and the other two major transport companies were not operating successfully; and it may very well be due to the fact that the type of buses which the Government has purchased for the past years are unsuited to the needs of Barbados. That was also found out in relation to Sanitation - the big trucks that were brought in were found to be unsuited to the small streets of Bridgetown.

Take the housing areas. Here again these large buses are unsuited to operating in these areas, and you find that the mini buses can go into the housing areas and the people in those areas use the mini buses.

What is the use of having buses running on roads where people will have to get off and walk home when the mini buses can go into the areas? Commonsense will tell you that the people are going to take the mini buses which will take them closer to their homes.

That, Sir is why I think that these things should be taken into consideration before decisions are made to order these chassis and consideration should be given to whether this is the sort of bus that is suited to meet the needs of the people who live in the areas and who use the buses. I will ask the Minister to seriously consider this.

Mr. BOLDEN:

Mr. Chairman, I have had the privilege of working with the transport system and I have said before in this House and I will repeat it, that the whole transport system of Barbados when it comes to buses is totally inadequate in this modern time.

I was hinting to the Minister or asking him if he could tell me the size of the chassis that is being ordered in this exercise. The Minister himself has said that the Transport Board and the two other concessionaires are suffering from serious competition from the mini buses. 4. 15 p. m.

I have no quarrel with the minibuses. As a matter of fact I am very glad that the minibuses are operating because, take for instance in St. Joseph where several people have written me letters, they have written letters in the press and complained about the infrequency of buses in the bus stand, buses which leave other than at the times designated. I wrote to the Minister who promptly wrote to me saying that he had put his technical officers to investigate, but one knows the dishonest attitude of many of these technical officers or the method of investigating, because if they wrote the truth, when I asked the Minister to consider licensing at least two more minibuses to alleviate the hardship of the people in St. Joseph, the reply could not have been that they did not find any evidence for increasing the minibuses there. The position is that they know full well that if they increase the minibuses in St. Joseph to help the people, the concessionaires would suffer more. This is a basic problem. The concessionaire has buses that run in the morning, at midday and at 10 o'clock if he finds it full and it should leave at 11 o'clock, the bus goes and that is the end of that. This is why I say that the transport system is wrong.

I have worked in the transport industry for at least three or four years, and I have said in here before that you cannot run a transport system as the Transport Board and the other two concessionaires run it in this day and age. London Transport found this out and they have changed their system, but the Barbados Government and the other concessionaires in Barbados are like the age old Englishman; you have to bring God from the Heaven and put the writing on the wall for him to change his attitude despite the fact that everything else is changing.

What does the transport system in Barbados need in my humble opinion? You need to move people from all over the country districts to Bridgetown at two specific periods: morning peak hour and evening peak hour. The roads in Barbados have all been designed on one-third of a circle like a spider web, all coming into Bridgetown. London found the same thing and London had to change. At peak hours in the morning you need large buses that would carry capacities of 30, 40, 50 and maybe up to 90 people, because everybody is moving into town, and that goes from between 7. 30 a. m. to 9. 30 a. m or 10 o'clock. The same thing happens in moving people out in the evening between 4. 05 p. m. and 5. 30 p. m. where you have the same exodus of people moving from the city back to the country. After 9. 30 or 10 o'clock in the morning you have to draw in your big buses and put them in your depot and you filter out your smaller buses which can make more frequent trips to carry probably 20 to 25 passengers, and these use less fuel. You go to the single operator buses where you have a driver / conductor and that works during the off peak hours. From 3 o'clock in the evening you start pulling in that small bus and you put it on your intermediate routes, and that system again comes into effect from 6 p. m. to 9. 00 p. m. or 10 o'clock when you put a few large buses out to take your late travellers back to the country. That is the system that is needed in Barbados, and that is where you can defeat any minibus. You take the small buses when you have them and put them in the areas where the big buses cannot run at given times, but the whole system is bad, and you cannot tell anybody in the Transport Board this because they are all experts. They know how to run bus routes from the 1930s and they are not changing their methods.

Mr. Chairman, I will guarantee you now that the chassis that will be on order will be the same big chassis, and they will tell you that they cannot run the buses too frequently because they will run from Bridgetown to St. Joseph or to Bay field with only ten or fifteen passengers in them. How are you going to get rid of the minibuses then? Why complain that the minibuses are offering you competition? There are serious things wrong with the transport system in Barbados. Let us look at Bridgetown. I have complained about the checking of buses in Barbados. I said in here and I will repeat that there are grave rumours knocking about where bus drivers and conductors still run big meeting turns and collect everyday in the bus stand. I repeat that this is because of the archaic system of checking that exists in Barbados from the time I was a boy going to school. You can try tomorrow morning and check it and tell me if I am wrong. You come up Roebuck Street and when you get just below Fix-It-Right by a man called Sawh you will find a bus inspector standing up on the pavement. When the bus comes, he stops it and the driver stops about three feet from the. side of the road. The inspector starts from the top and goes right down checking, and traffic is held up back up to Government Hill and it does not worry him that everything is held up while he checks the bus. If you follow this bus up to Two Mile Hill you will find

that it pulls up next to the bus coming from die opposite direction and the conductors whisper to each other. When the bus gets down Roebuck Street opposite the school, there is another checker standing next to the Supermarket and he steps up to check again and again traffic is held up right back up Roebuck Street. When that same bus gets to Crumpton Street near to Harrison College gate there is another checker who will check again. That is die age old system that was going on from the time I Was a boy and it still exists with the Transport Board today, and this happens all over the Island. In developed countries you have inspectors checking on inspectors who are checking on inspectors. In one case an inspector gets on a bus, say, in Blades Hill in St. Philip, and rides on the bus until he finishes checking land then gets off, and you get an inspector who is getting on to check the inspector who is checking the conductor, and then you have a plain clothes inspector whose job is to ride like any other passenger and report on the conduct of the inspectors, the bus driver and the conductor. You have a fool proof system. I went through it for three or four years; so I know it, but you cannot bring this into Barbados at all.

The next point I have to stress is this. The Government throws away money daily, but because they have taxpayers who are good milch cows they come here and milk them all the time. You go to the expense of building lay-bys but the drivers take pride arid park in the middle of the road. It is a waste of money because you should only build lay-bys if you are going to make the buses use them, and if you have inspectors to check on the operation of the drivers and conductors, then they will know how to drive the buses. As far as the Minister is concerned, it is their policy to build lay-bys, but the. buses have not got to use them. The Minister talks about coming in here for money, but what is the sense of underwriting the transport system year after year? You are creating unfair competition between the Transport Board which is able to take taxpayers1 money as against the private concessionaires who have to go to the bank and borrow money at 12, 15, 16 and 18 per cent, 4.25 p.m.

We hear about the King Report. It would be infra dig for the Opposition to be treated with such courtesy as to be given a copy of the King Report. You will hear that the King Report will be put into operation, and the Opposition and even the backbenchers will only read as much of the Report as appears in the newspaper, and then the Government will come here and expect us to vote for any scheme that is brought into Parliament, as the Leader of the House did a couple of weeks ago when he came in here with the Agricultural Development Corporation Bill. He has a full report, but he will only tell you what he wants you to hear. You must pimp and find out. That is why embarrassing questions are asked in Parliament and that is why you are treated in this manna: when you come in here.

The Minister talked about millions coming from sugar. All that I would like to tell the Minister is that they should come here and use the money coming out of sugar to provide services appropriate to those people working in the Sugar Industry. Let the benefit of the money from sugar be reflected mostly on those people who are involved in the Sugar Industry, that is, the people in the country districts, the people who are suffering most for transportation.

As I have said already, Mr. Chairman, most of the Boards in Barbados are saddled with or suffer from party political supporters who have no knowledge of what they are there to do. They sit down at Board meetings probably because they draw \$25 or something of that nature per meeting.

The Minister talked about the energy crisis which is eating away the reserves of the Transport Board. I think that what the Minister should see is that if that Board realises that expenditure is rising and is not competent enough to shift its operations as much as possible and keep some of the reserves, something must be wrong. If the price of fuel has overtaken the Board's ability, then we have to give in to that; but in my humble opinion I have not seen any change in the transport operations, in Barbados to show that they have been able to shift their operations in such a way as to make money.

(A) As I said before, the public transport system does not run frequently enough to satisfy the travelling public in Barbados, and that is the reason why we must have mini buses. (B) I believe that the whole system has got to be reorganised. If you have 80 big buses you should cut that number in half and put in smaller buses so that you can alternate them. You could have single through buses that can run more frequently instead of big buses that you have to put on a two-hour schedule with people kept waiting in the sun and the rain; because that is where the mini buses come in.

Another thing that the Minister must understand is that Barbados has no transport system which can take you across country. Everything is funnelled into Bridgetown. It is about time that you look at these routes or these areas where people want to move across the country rather than from the country to town and back.

This raises the question of the Courts in this island. I have been asking for a reorganisation of the Courts and I heard people in here get up and say that it would be a load on the transport system, without realising what they are talking about.

Sir, let us take a quick look at the Courts. If you take District C, people come from Four Roads in St. John and from the Crane in St. Philip and there is only one bus that passes by District C Court. To get there you have to come to town and then go to District C. If you take District B, people come from as far as Seawell Airport and from the other end of St. George to get to District B. In order to get there they have to take a bus going to town and then take one going to Boarded Hall. When you come to Speightstown, people come from Pie Corner and then walk up the hill, and when it comes to District D in St. Thomas, you have to go to town and then come back to District D.

That is how Barbados has been set up road wise, and therefore it calls for a serious study into the road system, and for a transport system which is adequate enough to serve the travelling public in line with the sort of road system that has been established. Until the Government does that you will not get a proper transport system.

You talk about the West Coast and the South Coast and the Minister comes here and talks about granting special concessions to certain people running mini buses. The Minister got up and said that people had applied to use the Transport Board buses to move people from Seawell.

Here again, Sir, nobody is looking at the transport system of Barbados. What better could you want than a beautiful transport system made up of small buses owned by the Transport Board which would take that whole coast road from Seawell right down through Bridgetown and from Bridgetown right down through the St. James coast?

On the South Coast where you have all these hotels people want to get into town, and if you had these small coaches which could carry 25 or 30 people - decent looking coaches - do you not think that the same tourists in respect of whom the Minister is now striving for his little group to get coaches for them to travel in would not travel in the public transport? That is what we have to watch.

I have been to Martinique. Martinique has a sort of large motorcar that carries 10 to 17 people and they run all over Martinique. Why could we not do the same? Why must we keep on building big buses? I have no objection to Butcher getting the job. I am very locally orientated. I like to see local people get a job. As the Jamaicans say, "Let him get a little wuk too." I still think, however, that we should take a look at what we are doing in transport, and do not keep on building these big buses and running them at 9 o'clock in the morning, at 11 o'clock, at 2 o'clock and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and then complain about the mini buses robbing you.

I believe that you should reorganise the system. You could start by introducing smaller buses as you withdraw the big ones when they become unserviceable. In that way you would be better able to take up the traffic,

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

Mr. Chairman, I really am particularly amused. I owned my first car when I was 28, and for the 28 years before that I travelled by bus coming from St. Andrew mainly when I was going to school. The hon. member has said a lot of things. It is all right to talk about solutions. The solution to the bus

problem in Barbados is a colossal infusion of capital.

We know about the Rocklyn. Mr. Coward and Mr. Lucas started with one bus, a fly bus. Let me give you a brief history. It was these small people who came together in a kind of loose organisation and got a tender. The transport system was taken over by the Barbados Labour Party without any socialist planning. It just dropped into their laps. They refused to give an increase to the concessionaires and the buses were taken over then and that is what I am saddled with today.

When we advertise for concessionaires we do not get any big firms running. I know that it is not fair to have transportation in a little island like Barbados run by three concessionaires. One should do it, either one private or one public. 4. 35 p. m.

It is my job to find a solution to it more than yours. You talk about it one Tuesday, but I am constantly faced with it every week. I receive complaints too, so until I have the money, how can I bring pressure to bear on people who alone tender for a concession like the Elite and the Rocklyn? How can you tell them to buy six or eight buses when they are doing the public a favour, until the Government is in a position to buy enough buses to run a proper public transport system? They are there helping us out and all you are talking about is the future. I agree with you that it is not fair that I can come with a Resolution for money for the Transport Board and the Elite and Rocklyn cannot come. All of that proves what I was saying - the unsatisfactory nature of the public transport system in Barbados. My view is that the Government should run the entire transport system and subsidise it if needs be, because transportation in Barbados can never pay unless you are going to make the fare range from 55 cents to 90 cents with the present fuel crisis. Even with the request from the Union, when we cost it the minimum bus fare would be 55 cents. Can you charge somebody 55 cents as a minimum bus fare to meet wages and fuel costs? Transportation in America and in England does not pay. Transport in no part of the world pays. If you are motivated by the socialist knowledge that the public transportation is the poor man's car, then subsidising transport would enable the poor man to keep some of the wages in his pocket. I know what it is for a maid coming to me to have to pay 70 cents a day; so I give her bus fare. A maid who is getting \$35 a week cannot afford to pay 70 cents a day depending on where she is coming from, and therefore a Government that is a socialist Government has got to accept that subsidising public transport is part of its socialist policy, and I am convinced that that is what is to happen.

Mr. Chairman, we can never in Barbados run a bus service that would be economically viable. Besides, these twelve buses have been voted for already by hon. members. I do not want to deal with that because if you look into the Capital Estimates that were passed by the House in April they will see it; so it is not something new I am coming to them with. I am just trying to order the buses so that Mr. Butcher who is producing one bus a month will have a constant flow of chassis. If the hon. member for

Bridgetown wants to know the quoted price for a chassis it is \$25, 464 with nothing on it; so he can see what the buses cost. It is all right to talk about taking over the transport system and running it with big buses and small buses.

Mr. HINDS:

On a point of order, I believe the Japanese people would supply a light bus for \$25, 000 to accommodate us.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

We know that the small bus is a possibility, but we have first got to get big buses to move the peak period people. It is not a question of not having small buses. We have gone into that.

Mr. Chairman, all I am saying is that I know you can get a small bus, but let me first get enough big buses to move the bulk of the people between peak hours morning and evening.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

If the Minister would give way. The Minister talks about big buses and small buses. What is the projection in terms of big buses and how many small buses would he need? Or is it the intention of the Government to supply purely big buses and then turn to small buses, or will it be done alternately by getting so many big buses and then so many small buses; and what would be the price of the small buses to provide a service in the St. Michael area?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

The minibuses came mainly into effect after the floods of 1970 when a lot of the buses were damaged. (Asides) The minibus influx started in 1970 in truth and in fact, not that they were not there before-

Mr. HINDS:

On a point of order, I wonder if the Minister would tell us how many minibuses we had before 1970 and how many we have now! There are about 76 now.

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

I said that the main influx came after the floods when the fleet of the Transport Board got damaged, not that they did not exist before. When I came into the Ministry we had buses in the Transport Board fifteen and 20 years old. We even had a Mercedes Benz bus that my predecessor the Hon. R. G. Mapp got from Germany which was still running. What we are trying first to do under this present system is quite simple. We have looked at the bus routes but with three concessions it means poaching and

crossing lines. We have carried people from Bridgetown to Speightstown, and from St. Andrew & Speightstown; so this is nothing new you are coming up with; but until you get one public transport system in this country, you cannot run it properly anyhow. I am doing first things first and I will not be rushed into anything. You heed first to get enough modern buses to move the people and to give a service between peak hours to get people to work on time. I say I need 140 buses; and you need proper buses because if half are in the garage because they are breaking down, you do not want to use that type of repair service. You want to have a service where you have a certain number of buses that you can take a bus into the garage, service it and not have to wait until it breaks down.

The cost is \$25, 464 for one chassis and a bus when completed costs another \$20, 000; so a bus today costs nearly \$50, 000 to put it on the road. (Asides.) It is not expensive because at peak hours you have got to move people fast and in great numbers. I am not saying that a case cannot be made out for smaller buses; but first let us try to get the main buses to get people to the stores where they work in as large numbers by the time they are supposed to get there, and we have not got that yet. So how are you going to go in for this fandangle of a pretty Japanese small bus to rival the pickups? If I had enough buses I would take the firm decision and recommend to Cabinet to move the pickups off completely, but pickups will have to be on because with the cost of buses and spare parts, pickups will be with us for same time.

Mr. HINDS:

On a point of order, since the pickups have got to be with us for some time, will the Minister proceed right away to register those that are already in operation and give them an opportunity to ply legally?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

All I am saying is that minibuses will be with us for a long time, because with the cost of buses at \$50, 000, minibuses would not have any reason to run. The ideal solution would be to get rid of them, but in our Barbadian context they will have to be here because we have not got the money for buses. You cannot run a bus service with a lot of fringes on it. All this talk you hear is nothing new to me. I personally would like to see one public transportation system run efficiently. It would have to be subsidised, with enough big buses to move the people to and from work during "peak hours; then as the hon. member for St. Joseph said, after peak hours you put on a smaller bus, and instead of having to come to town you can take people from St. Andrew to Speightstown.

This calls for organisation, and it calls for money, and therefore.....

Mr. HINDS:

How much did the King Commission say it would cost?

Hon. F. G. SMITH:

The King Commission did not go into figures. As a matter of fact, the King Commission said there should be one concessionaire. If I had buses like Mrs. Rock and Mr. Coward I would sell them and put the money on a fixed deposit, because at 60 years do you think that these concessionaires are in their right mind to go and borrow money to buy buses when they are getting down the hill? I am sympathetic to them. I read the public criticising them but they have carried this country in transport for years and they are not young people any more. When we advertise for a concession the big six do not tender; so let us get this thing straight. Public transportation will always be a basis for criticism but our system is not as bad as it is made out to be. It calls for money, and until we can find the money we will have to put up with this system. We will modernise it and bring in buses in due course.

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

On motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA seconded by Hon. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 4. 45 p. m

Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA seconded by Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA. Mr. Speaker, this concludes Government Business for today's sitting. Before moving the adjournment I would like in the first instance on behalf of my colleagues on both sides - hope that I have colleagues on the other side also - to express our appreciation to the Reporters who have worked under great strain here today, who have stuck to the burden of the day and have done their part.

Hon. members will recall that only two of our Reporters are available. One is ill and others have gone abroad on leave, but two have been able to hold the fort, and we express our appreciation to them for their wonderful work and their dedication to duty.

Secondly, in view of the Standing Orders re the Reply to the Budget, I do not know if there is any expression which the Acting Deputy Leader of the Opposition would like to make. There are two days which they would like set aside, but they have not said which days. I do not know if he would like to settle it now and let us not have any errors as it was said there were yesterday. Now is the time before I move the adjournment. I would like some indication as to what days they want set aside. Probably he will have to be instructed again.

Mr. MOTTLEY:

Mr. Speaker, first of all I would like to join with the Leader of the House in expressing thanks to the Reporters. I also wish to say that I think that next Tuesday would be adequate to deal with the Reply.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker, on the undertaking given by the apparent Acting Leader, the ostensible Acting Leader of the Opposition, is my understanding that Government Business will be granted some concession in the morning session. I take it that by the time the lawyers, the Attorneys-at-Law get here -

Mr. FORDE:

There are no Attorneys in the House. Only, members of Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER:

Point well taken. Thank you.

Hon. C. E. TALMA:

Mr. Speaker I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday next at 12 o'clock noon,

Hon. P. M. GREAVES:

I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 4. 50 p. m.

