THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 1971 - 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 4th February, 1975.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.05 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

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. L. S. CRAIG; 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); Hon. A. MORRISON, (Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology); and Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport).

Prayers were read.

DOCUMENTS LAID

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

The Customs (Amendment) Regulations, 1975.

The Petroleum (Amendment) Regulations, 1975.

The Rum Duty (Manufacture or Preparation in Bond) (Amendment) Regulations, 1975.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTICE PAPER

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am craving the indulgence of the House and of Your Honour, Mr. Speaker, to lay a Supplementary Notice Paper which contains two items dealing with Supplementary Estimates. They are on the way. They have not got to me yet. They are two Money Resolutions. In view of the fact that the House is being prorogued from tomorrow, and that will be adjourning *sine die* later today, I am asking for leave to deal with these Resolutions in all of their stages today. Copies will be laid in ample time and opportunity will be given to hon. members of the Opposition to study them. I will be asking for leave to deal with these at a later stage, in another few minutes, I hope.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I cannot give the Leader of the House the assurance that this side will be in a position to study whatever Resolutions they are coming in with in detail so as to be able to make a worthwhile contribution. We have had this problem here repeatedly. I do not know the magnitude of the Resolutions, and I am quite sure my colleagues do not know. I would not like to give the assurance that this side will be in a position to deal with them in all their stages today. I want to make our position very clear.

Mr. SPEAKER: Leave has been asked by the Hon. Leader of the House to lay this Supplementary Notice Paper; but we will hold that over until the time that they arrive and are distributed. The question is whether permission will be granted to deal with them in all of their stages today.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is quite out of order. Please take your seat.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On what grounds?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is quite out of order. We are having Government Business and there is no debate.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I can speak now, Mr. Speaker. I beg to give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 271 asked by the hon. member for St. George North is now ready.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 283 asked by the hon. member for St. Thomas is now ready.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 129 asked by the hon. member for St. Andrew is now ready.

Also that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 152 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph is now ready.

Also that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 155 asked by the hon. member for St. George North is now ready.

Also that Replies to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 231, 239, 284, and 288 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph are now ready.

Also that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 158 asked by the hon. member for St. Andrew is now ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42, 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I would like the Hon. Leader of the House to give this side the assurance that we are allowed time for any of our Private Members' Business.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Yes. I apologise for omitting that. I wish to assure the Opposition that subject to any matter of urgency, if there is any matter that the Opposition wants to deal with we will stay here and consider their matters.

The question that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42, 43 and 44 be, suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I wonder if we should continue this practice. This is now Government Business time. Move the first Order of Government Business.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I remember on one occasion not too long ago when I failed to do that because I felt the same way as you do, Your Honour, and somebody made a fuss about it. I do not see that there is need for making a motion when Government Business is the instant Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is before the House now? What item of Government Business?

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply to deal with the three money Resolutions on today's Order Paper.

Mrs. EASTMOND: 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.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1974-75
(CURRENT) NO. 25

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, this is a Resolution for the sum of $1,143,455. Under the Head Governor General there are four items which are being supplemented – National Insurance, Operating Expenses, Communications and Furniture and Equipment.
12.15 p.m.

In the case of the furniture it is better to replace the refrigerator than to repair it. The note is quite adequate and explanatory and I beg to move that Head 1 stand part.

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

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

Head 29(1) – Ministry of Health and Welfare, General Administration – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(1) stand part.

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

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

Head 29(2) – Health Services – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(2) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Head 29(3) – Maternity Hospitals – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(3) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Head 29(4) – Lazaretto – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(4) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Head 29(5) – St. Michael's District Hospital – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(5) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, under Office Expenses it is stated that the increases in utility charges and in the prices of domestic fuels – approximately 100% in the case of electricity and 300% in water rates – account for this supplementary request for $23,000. Quite recently it was made very clear that the Barbados Government had acquired a number of shares in the Telephone Company. I am wondering if since they have acquired these shares if it would not be Government's duty at this stage to try to relieve all the people in this country from the high telephone rates which they are now paying. There is a lot of talk about nationalising the utility services of this country, but that is a matter of opinion and I do not agree with that aspect of it. As long as the taxpayers of this country have to put money into the telephone company or into any utility service I feel it is the duty of the Government to relieve the people of this country of some of the burdens which they now suffer at the hands of some of these companies.

We know that the telephone company rates have been jumping sky high. Every year they have been escalating, and since the Government has undertaken the responsibility of putting the taxpayers' money at the disposal of continental and the Barbados Telephone Company, I think Government should do everything in its power to relieve the people of this country of some of the burdens which the utility companies put upon them.

Take water rates. I recall the Minister of Communications and Works saying that it was not wrong to pay for water. I agree with this but not when you are jumping the cost up by 400%. We on this side must be the watch dogs of the public purse and we must be in a position to draw to the public's attention where we think Government is spending money in the wrong direction. I think this is a good opportunity, since they have idly boasted of having shares in the Telephone Company, to see what they can do to reduce the telephone rates. This is my submission to the Minister who is in charge. He is a reasonable man and a man who is always willing to help poor people. In these days you find a number of people in the low income bracket using telephones out of necessity, and people like the taxi drivers are crying out about the high telephone rates, and now the Government has put money into the Telephone Company it is their duty to do something about the rates.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I was drawn into this peripherily but I am not, like the hon. member for St. James, going to make political capital out of a Resolution for supplementaries. Obviously Barbadians must pay

for what they get. All over the world the cost of telephone equipment and services is going up, and only yesterday morning I passed by a pay telephone, then I rode around the Garrison about six times and the lady was still on the telephone talking to whoever she was talking, for only 10 cents. We have a reasonably good service and this is not an occasion for the hon. member to endeavour to prove that because the Government has made some arrangement with the Telephone Company that an automatic reduction is due. He must tell the people of Barbados that they must pay for all the services they get.

The question that Head 29(5) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 29(6) – District Hospitals – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(6) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I think there is something wrong here, there is no note. I might as well deal under this Head as under any other of these Heads with provisions. I would like to know why it is that the present system which was brought into being some time ago whereby by Government instructions the institutions of this country, including the ones we are discussing now, were ordered to purchase their provisions and various things directly from the Barbados Marketing Corporation.
12.25 p.m.

Anyone looking at this would think that it is a very good idea. On the face of it, it is a good idea because the function of the Barbados Marketing Corporation, as I understand it, is to control the cost of living and to provide proper marketing facilities in order to make sure that adequate produce will be available at all time, but I do not believe this is the way it is operating at the moment. When these institutions purchase things through the Marketing Corporation they are, in fact, paying a higher price to the Marketing Corporation than they would have paid to the agents or other sources if they purchased the things directly from them. At the same time the Marketing Corporation instead of making a profit, as one would have expected when it has a guaranteed market such as the institutions, is not doing so well. I do not know whether it has made a loss because I have not seen any Report recently. The whole purpose of introducing a Government Order was an instruction that provisions and certain things should be purchased directly from the Marketing Corporation. What is the position with the Marketing Corporation?

Mr. Chairman, you have to pay, as I understand, the mark-up which the Corporation is putting on the provisions, and yet the Corporation is losing money. The whole purpose of having the Marketing Corporation was to enable things to be sold to the institutions at a lower price so that the cost of running the institutions would be reduced, but that is not the position. I think that the Government should investigate this whole matter. It applies to the Prisons, the various Hospitals, and all Government institutions because there is an Order that they must purchase from the Barbados Marketing Corporation. They have to pay the mark-up price to the Corporation, and I think it is wrong. They should not be purchasing from the Corporation at any retail price or mark-up price. They should purchase things from the Corporation at the same price the Corporation paid the farmers, or the merchants, as the case may be. The Corporation is not doing a successful job, and it is not doing the job for which it was set up.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister concerned to investigate this matter because this item shows an increase of 50%, and another item shows an increase of over 50%. I know we are going to be told that the cost of foodstuff is going up. What is the Government doing in relation to these Institutions to see whether it can lower the cost of the foodstuff they are now purchasing? What is the point in subsidising the Marketing Corporation this way at a time when the Corporation is still losing money? I understand that if fish comes into this country on cold storage, whether or not the Marketing Corporation has something to do with it, the Corporation gets a cut from it and the cut is added to the price of the fish. If the Institutions have to buy that fish they will have to pay the mark-up price on the fish. If it were a question of the Marketing Corporation getting a cut that would be all right, but the mark-up price should not be passed on to the Institutions. I would ask the Minister responsible to investigate this matter.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, I do not intend criticizing the Barbados Marketing Corporation at this stage. All of the wrong doings, to my mind, cannot be attached to the B.M.C. as we call it. What the Minister could do is to make comparisons with various institutions with respect to the purchase of provisions. Now, I am in a position to tell the Hon. Minister that during the months of December and January the Queen

Elizabeth Hospital purchased, or took in rather, as much as 5,000 lbs. of pumpkin. There is a pumpkin called "Belly Pumpkin", and another firm, hard, pumpkin called the "Garden Pumpkin". I should like the Minister to have the books checked with a view to proving us on this side to be wrong. I would like, if it were possible, for him to cause the check to be carried out immediately. When the Belly Pumpkin was retailed at 26 cents a lb., it was supplied to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and charged at 72 cents a lb. because there is a racket going on there. Somebody at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital is accepting Belly Pumpkin and charging it at Garden Pumpkin price. Mr. Chairman if this sort of thing is engaged in in all of the exercises at this institution, you will understand the position. The same thing applies to oranges. Oranges were being supplied to that institution for some time now at 12 cents each, but a supplier has found it possible to have some taken into the institution at 25 cents each. We appreciate that somebody must have a friend somewhere, but, when it is a question of spending the taxpayers' money and catering to institutions so that they will get the best from the money voted by Parliament, we will have to go into the matter. If you find a situation such as this obtaining at an institution, then you will have to take a serious view of the matter.

Mr. Chairman, if the Minister were to go to this institution, he will find that there is a big notice set up saying that no unauthorised person will be allowed to see any of the purchasing books at the institution. There is a reason for this because, to my mind, any Supervisor, Catering Officer, or anybody connected with the Food Section in the institution ought to be in a position to know what is going on there. Of course, at these institutions the system for placing orders is such that one officer requires X number of pounds to serve so many patients, but that is not the officer who is placing the order to the B.M.C., to an agent, or whoever it might be. It is known that Store Clerks, Storekeepers and others do the actual placing of these orders. We often hear Ministers say: "I am no policeman to go into this and that." You will find that the patients at the Mental Hospital compare favourable with some of the other institutions.
12.35 p.m.

What the Minister will be able to find out from figures is that at the Mental Hospital an amount of 350 pounds of ham were ordered which never reached the patients. In other words, the persons who were to look after the patients proper knew that there were 700 patients as the case may be and placed an order for X number of pounds of hams, but somebody else directs it somewhere else whether for their own private use or to cater to some other part of the institution. In other words, if an order is made for 300 pounds of chicken or 200 pounds of ham, somebody says that 200 pounds would not do, make it 250 pounds, but only 200 pounds go to the kitchen because the person in the kitchen orders 200 pounds as the case may be. That is the type of thing you will find is carrying up the cost of these provisions. We agree, Mr. Chairman, that a lot of prices have been skyrocketing in every field, but we are still maintaining that the Minister has got to find officers, – I do not know how trustworthy or honest, but perhaps as long as they are in office and they are discharging their functions, one has to accept that they are doing of their best – to investigate these matters. I am not saying that they are not doing of their best, but I still believe, Mr. Chairman, that if greater attention could be paid to some of these matters that cause us to have to vote these tremendous sums of money from time to time as we are called upon to vote for these institutions, that there could be a considerable reduction and saving. But this we want to lay stress on, Mr. Chairman. If the patients at these institutions are really and truly being fed with the provisions that are ordered, we have no grouse or complaint, because they are there and they are not responsible for themselves, and others have got to cater to them and we employ persons to look after them, but if it is a case, and I make out it is a case, where commodities are ordered and are not reaching the patients at all, that is where our concern must rest, and we are urging upon the Minister to see if he can set up some Committee to investigate these things to find out if they can be true or whatever it might be that is going wrong. We are satisfied, Sir, that all is not well and that these commodities could be supplied to these institutions for far less than they are now being charged, and these things have got to be gone into if the sick, the aged, the infirm and people in these institutions are to be fed and served as Government or as all of us would have them served.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I am not entering into the discussion on the number of thieves that are in the institutions, because the sad thing about it is that I would not like to be a Minister of this Government because I would be a Minister of a country of thieves. Now I have never yet heard the hon. member for St. Peter say that there is any honest

thing whatsoever in public institutions. He is a very lucky man to have people come to him day after day, because the whole gravamen of his speeches is that he seems to be the repository of all of the grievances of persons who have seen all the thieves in Barbados carrying away Government property. Now it is a sad thing for a country that you have, whether it is at the Hospital, whether at the Lazaretto or in the Police Force, one person in this Island who receives all of the information about the thieves in Barbados, and that is the hon. member for St. Peter.

Now it is true it may be a common vulgarism.....

Mr. HINDS: On a point of elucidation, the Nation Newspaper receives these reports too. You defend them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of elucidation.

Mr. WALCOTT: The Nation is soon going out of business. What I mean is that it is a wonderful thing to call the other fellow a thief. Any of us can call the other fellow a thief. I can come in here and call the hon. member a thief if I do not want to prove it. It is all right to say that the woman next to the woman in the kitchen is a thief, but I do not think that this is really doing justice to people in a general way. If I am going to call the hon. member a thief, I am going to say why he is a thief and I am going to prove it lock, stock and barrel and bring the evidence; but it is no point each time you make these open general statements that you cannot identify any person, and you mean that every person is a thief. If the hon. member says that someone at the Mental Hospital told him that somebody carried away the hams and they were not given to the patients, then that person must have been in the ham business, because if he was not in it how would he know that there were 300 pounds and not 299 pounds. It means, Sir, that some of the aggrieved persons who did not get some of the hams are now saying that they did not get any of the hams and therefore they are going to report the matter.

It is amazing to hear who is calling people corrupt. All these people are being accused, and I am not holding up anything for a person who is a thief; it all depends on the level of stealing that you are dealing with. Some is petty and some may be major, but it is no point asking the Minister to carry out an investigation into who carried away the hams at the Mental Hospital or who carried away something from the General Hospital. I do not think the Minister could be asked to investigate this kind of loose ragged trousers statements. If you ask the Minister to carry out any aspect of public impropriety, you have to come clean and clear. What is the kind of impropriety you are asking the Minister to investigate? You have to be able to say that on 27th November so many hams were to go to the Mental Hospital, so many were entered in a book, but none ever went to the storeroom. That is the sort of thing you can put down and investigate. There is too much of this idea of thinking that you can get at some political opponent.

I remember some time ago in this House a member from the Opposition raised a point even about the Hospital, and when it was discovered that the person they were hitting at was an old time inveterate of the Barbados Labour Party, they had to drop the matter, because they thought then at first blush that it was some juicy thing against a Minister or against somebody, but it turned out to be an innocent person without any malice. Too much of this is going on thinking you are gaining something. I do not think that any hon. member of the House with the privilege that members of the House have has to be vague. If an hon. member of the House knows that I am a thief, he can come in here and state it categorically because he is protected; but he should not worry to make any vague statements about me. He can come and say this is what I have done, because if any man is in public life and cannot stand up to the glare and light when it is shone on his honesty, then he has no right in public life.

12.45 p.m.

If any man is in public life and he cannot stand up to the glare and light when it is thrown on his dishonesty, well then he has no right to be in public life, but there is no point in any man in public life hiding; there are those who say that all politicians are liars and thieves and that they only enter politics to get what they can out of politics and therefore it is a dirty nasty game. If we perpetuate this kind of low-down, low-brow system of accusing people.....

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member throughout his speech has been referring to my speech, and if he is now saying about this low-down and this low-brow this and that, obviously he is reflecting on me, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I could not interpret it that way.

Mr. HINDS: Well, if you do not interpret it that way, Sir.....

Mr. WALCOTT: The hon. member knows he is too far off. I am not afraid to say specifically to the hon. member – I am making a Parliamentary speech and I am not to say what I am saying? Outside of Parliament you get a lot of people making a lot of low-down, low-brow statements about politicians in public life and they are not the kind of people who are capable of making those statements because they cannot stand up to light. People who make those kinds of statements about people cannot stand up to any light but they like to make vague and general statements about people's character, and you get some of them taking about character assassination and the only person whose character they can assassinate sometimes is that of a politician. Your life and your character and your family's life and character are subjected to assassination by people who cannot stand up to you for one split second.

Well, I do not think we have any right as members of the House to make unspecified statements in this general way about people when we are not willing to come to prove the veracity of the statement that we are making. If a man is stealing or people are stealing in any department and you say it is so general that you cannot identify the thieves, come in here and say so. When the hon. member for the City in another capacity goes into a court, ask him if that kind of general statement would ever hold water. What is the use saying 'all politicians are liars but I do not mean you.' Who do you mean? Nobody? But all? This sort of silly way of talking.

I do not think it is fair to people who work – because if the hon. member is speaking about people who are working at any institution and you make a general statement and not a specified statement, what kind of character are you putting up for such people? When you go to the electorate you go to the electorate to tell them that if you are elected, you are an honest man, but when you get back to the House of Assembly when you are talking about the Minister you say that all those the Minister is in control of are thieves. I feel, Mr. Chairman, that this general tenor of making up that people are thieves without in any way being willing to prove it is horrible. Any hon. member who attempts to show that a man or woman is a thief should be prepared to take the full responsibility for so doing. That is my view.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution, has brought a bit of discussion as one would have expected, and I, of course, agree with the member for St. Michael West when he says that there is a feeling outside that politicians are the worst people in the whole world, and that you are subjected to character assassination and all this type of thing. Well, I believe, Mr. Chairman, that as long as you enter public life you have to take and you have to also give.

Now I like taking. I believe in getting some punches because I am one of the people who, I feel quite confident within myself that I am capable of giving. So it was never a one way traffic with me.

After hearing the member for St. Michael West defending the Government out of what my colleague for St. Peter said, to me it does not hold water, Sir.....

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of explanation. It was not any defence of the Government. I was in defence of persons who are working; not the Government.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I understood from his statements that he was defending the Government; that he was asking if a Minister of Government is to go down and have an alarm clock to find out when somebody – this is the general view; that the Minister must be pinned down to a specific statement and say exactly what is what. This is how I understood it; and it is not the Minister's duty to make sure he goes up at the Transport Board and watch to see that nobody takes off a part of a car. Surely you would not expect a Minister to do that; but, it is in this very House, Sir, that we drew it to the attention of the Government since 1969 – between 1969 and 1970 – that the Housing Authority was in a complete mess, and we asked one simple thing in here; one single simple Resolution we brought in asking 'would the Government have an inquiry into the operation of the Housing Authority?' That was all we asked for, and we drew it to the attention of the Government that it was involving.....

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to draw to your attention, Mr. Chairman, that we are dealing with Head 29(6).

Mr. CRAIG: This is a money Resolution. This is dealing with money, and anything that is dealing with money I can talk about. I can talk about the Airport on money, the St. Michael Infirmary or anything at all. This is a money Resolution and I am dealing with the Government's expenditure. That is what I am dealing with. Sir, let me draw this to your attention, that we came in here with a Resolution calling on the Government to have an inquiry into the operation of the Housing Authority. Now

this is what we were told; that the wrong people brought the wrong Resolution into the wrong place at the wrong time. Now where are we to go and to whom are we to go? (ASIDE) And for the wrong reason. So here is it, the member for St. Peter is drawing to Government's attention again about certain irregularities at a particular institution. This is all he is doing.

Now who are we to go to then? Are we to go and meet the Minister in his office and tell him 'well look, go down there, somebody has just moved some pumpkin or somebody has just carried away a car!' Oh no! This is the place where we are to draw it to your attention; but when we draw it to your attention we get defences such as the one from the member for St. Michael West. I agree that we have a lot of character assassination, but it is the politicians who are responsible for this, because if the politicians are to lead the way and you get irregularities in places like the same Housing Authority where the former Minister of Agriculture was involved, and we drew it to the attention of Government, and it was only the Accountant General brought out his report, that we saw the discrepancies and the irregularities in it, but we were told all along that we were the wrong people, that we had brought the wrong Resolution in the wrong place at the wrong time and for the wrong reasons.

Now what are we to do? If we are supposed to be the watch-dogs of Government and the watch-dogs of the public's purse, anything that we see going wrong it is our bounding duty to draw it to the attention of the Minister; but we do not make an appointment and go into the Minister's office telling this. This is a different thing. If I have to talk about Spankey I would meet you in the road and say 'I hear Spankey is not with you now;' anything so I may say; but this is a different thing. This is the people's business.

12.55 p.m.

"Spanky" is a different story; but what we are doing here is drawing to the attention of the Government certain irregularities at the District Hospital, and you get this useless defence in favour of the Government. When we came in here and talked about the Housing Authority we were wrong. On public platform it was defended by Mr. Frank Alleyne and Mr. Wendell McClean. All the giants said no, that we were talking nonsense. It is a different story now.

I am saying here is the place where when there is something wrong at Governmental level or at the public level it is the duty of backbenchers to draw it to the attention of Ministers and it is the duty of the Opposition to draw it to the attention of the front bench.

That is what we are doing, Sir, and I am in favour of supporting any of my colleagues or members on the other side drawing to the attention of the Government any irregularities in any department of the Government in this country; because it is the taxpayers who have to carry the burden.

I agree with the hon. member for St. Michael West that people feel that politicians are the worst things, but we have created that image. It is politicians who do this sort of bad things. You are selling something to somebody who is dead. Somebody is getting four houses and somebody else is getting three and somebody has gone to Halifax.

It is the politicians who are responsible for this. If you would only listen to the Opposition at times you would do a good job; but you are doing such an indifferent job that you are too ashamed and do not want to hear anything from the Opposition, but you will have to hear from the people, and I hope that it will be very soon.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: I would like to point out at the very outset that the Barbados Marketing Corporation does not fall under my responsibility, and therefore I cannot give a breakdown of the day to day operations of the BMC.

I would like to state quite emphatically that my Ministry has no complaint against the BMC as far as dealings with the BMC relate to institutions coming under the Ministry of Health. I would also like to state clearly that we have made a survey of the various feeding systems in the different institutions which fall under the Ministry, and we can point out in the case of the Old Peoples' Home in the Pine that they are able to feed their people a lot cheaper than some of the other institutions under the Ministry and that they order food from the BMC.

So, Sir, it is not a question of people. You are talking about the problem of ordering food from the BMC, and that ordering food from the BMC seems to be affecting unfavourably the operations of these institutions; but here you have an institution which is able to show that it can feed people quite economically. Therefore the question or the problem which arises at these institutions cannot be laid at the door of the BMC.

We are aware, Mr. Chairman, of certain problems in the Ministry and these problems cannot be eliminated overnight: because when one comes down to the question of disciplining members of the Civil Service, that discipline does not fall under the Minister. We can complain, as we have done, against inefficiency in members of the Public Service. We can complain against insubordination or any other aspect of bad behaviour; but this is a matter entirely for the Public Service Commission, and very often when the Commission gives its verdict we are not satisfied; but what can we do about it?

I am not prepared to give instances of the various people whom we have complained about, but the point is that this is under the authority of the Public Service Commission, and when they make their decision that is the end of it. The Minister cannot appeal. In fact more often it is the person against whom a decision is made who appeals.

The point is that making allowance for some of the irregularities which go on, we all know that they go on because we are dealing with human beings, and no human being is perfect. That has been so from time immemorial.

You get irregularities but the reasons for the increase in the high cost of feeding people at the various institutions are tied up with the financial problems which this country is now facing, and that relates to the high cost of many commodities which are produced locally. They also have high prices and when we think in terms of charges being made by the BMC, compare that with when we are ordering materials from sources other than the BMC. They are also at very high prices.

Very often we hear in here and outside that the Government should run their business efficiently, like a commercial enterprise. So I see no reason why in this particular instance when such an organisation is attempting to put its business on a sound footing we should say that we should change this or change that.

It is unfair to the organisation, and all in all I would like to reiterate that we in the Ministry have no complaint against the Marketing Corporation as far as the operations of that corporation relate to the servicing of the institutions falling under the Ministry of Health.

The question that Head 29(6) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 29(7) – District Medical Services.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(7) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I will be brief on this, but I just want to raise a question which has exercised my mind for a long time and which is of some concern to the people of St. Lucy. We have heard that the Government was contemplating constructing a district medical centre or out-patients clinic in St. Lucy, to be precise, around the Benthams area.

Sir, since the announcement was made a lot of water has passed under the bridge and maybe the bridge has been washed away; but the fact remains that the centre has not been constructed and there is no sign or no evidence as to when it is going to be done.

Almost every year since I came into this House I have been pleading to get this matter straightened out and it would seem that one is butting one's head against a stone wall. I know that the usual answer which was given in the past and might probably be given again is that there is no money and until there is money it cannot be done; but it would seem to me that the question of priorities must arise and one has to look at the situation from the point of view of need also.

I do not think that anyone would dispute that there is need for an out-patients clinic in St. Lucy. As a matter of fact this need was seen years ago, and as a result of this it was incorporated in the manifesto of this Party. But it beats me to find out what is the position as regards this, and whether in truth and fact an out-patients clinic will be constructed in St. Lucy, and if so, when the construction will take place.

1.05 p.m.

I think these are important questions, because I would not want to go over the arguments which I have advanced in this regard since, as I said, I had been a member of this Hon. Chamber. I think that we will all agree that when you have the situation where the people have to travel such long distances in order to have access to the kind of medical attention which should quite naturally be available to them as near as possible to their residences, then I do not think that one can consider that this is fair to a large number of people. I said that the people in St. Lucy are also taxpayers and are entitled to have

access to this kind of facility without any undue expense. It is all right to say that we have an out-patients division at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and that the hospital is there, but when you take into consideration the fact that people have to travel such long distances, and when one takes into consideration the long wait which is occasioned at the hospital, then I am sure you will agree, Mr. Chairman, that something should be done as early as possible. Not only would a hospital of this nature serve St. Lucy, but I am sure that the people of St. Peter would make use of it also, and I would therefore hope that the Hon. Minister would be able to throw some light on this matter. We heard the talk about money being short and what not, but at least some indication could be given about when and where this hospital, the out-patients clinic, will be built.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, in reply to the hon. member I would like to assure him that subject to the release of funds there will be an out-patients clinic in this calendar year. I would also like him to be aware of the fact that the Ministry is well aware of the problems of the people not only in St. Lucy but in other parts of the Island, and we are embarking on a scheme to carry the services to the people in all parts of the Island because we accept that it is over-burdening the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to have people travelling from all over the Island to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We have proposals in the Ministry to remedy a lot of these problems. As I have already pointed out in here part of the problem in St. Lucy is that the area of land which has been earmarked for this purpose is too small. The Prime Minister has indicated that he would go into it, but whether or not we get that land we may very well have to go ahead and put the out-patients clinic on the small area of land adjoining the District Hospital. I appreciate that the people of St. Lucy need this facility.

The question that Head 29(7) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 29(9) – Welfare Department – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 29(9) stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

Head 31 – Mental Hospital – was called.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 31 stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I was somewhat surprised to hear the reply from the Minister on the question of the purchase of provisions and the relationship with the Barbados Marketing Corporation, where he assured the House that as far as the BMC is concerned he is satisfied with the service given by the Corporation. I am not concerned with the operations of the BMC, what I am dealing with is the whole relationship between Government buying from the BMC for the Institutions. I did not hear the Minister say that when they buy from the Marketing Corporation they do not have to pay any markups on the goods they purchase; I did not hear the Minister say that the Government gets a better price than the ordinary individual. If he had said these things then he need not have said that as far as he was concerned it was all right. The point I made was that there is an order that the Government institutions must purchase from the BMC and you have to pay the same price as an ordinary individual. These are Institutions buying in quantity, and therefore I feel that they should be in a much better position in relation to the BMC and the money that they have to pay for these things than an ordinary individual who purchases two or three items or a supermarket who purchases two or three thousand pounds at a time. The Minister has not answered this, that the Institutions are paying the same price as the public outside and at the same time the BMC is not really benefitting from it because they are not showing the profit they should be showing. If they were showing a profit that would be a different thing, but you cannot say you are buying from them in order to assist them and at the same time they are not doing as well as they should be doing, so you cannot put this forward as a reason for continuing to purchase from the BMC. I would like to know from the Minister when and by whom were any studies done in relation to the prices of the commodities purchased from the BMC in relation to the prices from a farmer directly or from a wholesaler. He blamed the high prices coming from overseas, but I would have thought the Marketing Corporation the last place to claim this. I would have thought that they would not be affected by the high prices in the commodities because they are selling ground provisions which are grown locally. The Minister does not understand what he is saying when he says that.

The other point is this, Mr. Chairman. I would like to find out what studies have been

made to see whether the Institutions can purchase from sources other than the Marketing Corporation cheaper, or what arrangements have been made between the Institutions and the Marketing Corporation to see that they do not pay the same price so that they will not have to come back here for more money. This the Minister has failed to deal with, because when he says he is not concerned with the day to day running of the Marketing Corporation that is his business and his collective ministerial responsibility. If he wants to deny any responsibility for that, that is a matter for him.
1.15 p.m.

What I am now dealing with is the operations and dealings of the Barbados Marketing Corporation with other Government institutions such as the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the Mental Hospital, and so on. You will find in another Resolution that the sum of $800,000 will have to be provided for the School Meals Centre. There must be some arrangement between the Government and the Barbados Marketing Corporation to see that the institutions are sold things at a special price. The Minister did not give the House that assurance just now, and I can only come to the conclusion that there is no special price between the Corporation and the Government institutions. *(Asides.)*

Mr. Chairman, everybody knows that a lot of things are being carried away from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and so on, but I am not dealing with that now. We will deal with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital later. I know for a fact that the prices here will amount to about $1.1 million and, when we come to deal with the Estimates in a few month's time, the prices will be higher than those mentioned in the Supplementary Estimates here. *(Asides.)* Now listen to what the Hon. Minister is saying. That is what I call reckless irresponsibility. What is the point of giving the Corporation a big subsidy when the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has to pay a lot of money for fish which does not even pass through the Corporation at some times? You are giving the Corporation a big subsidy. You are subsidising the Corporation one way, and then you come back and vote more money under the Capital Estimates to subsidise it in another way.

Mr. Chairman, I should like to know from the Minister whether any arrangements have been made between his Ministry and the Corporation with regard to the purchase of foodstuff from the Corporation? I am not concerned with whether the Minister feels that the Corporation is being run efficiently, but I am concerned with the money spent on the Corporation while knowing that it is not being run properly. The ministries are still purchasing things through the Corporation because of some Government Order. Has the Minister investigated the matter to see whether or not he could obtain eggs, fish, meat and other commodities at a cheaper price than what obtains at the Corporation to feed the people in the institutions?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I would not be long. I am an advocate, and I am one of those who supported the order that all Government institutions, without exception, must buy certain things from the Barbados Marketing Corporation. I make no apologies for that. It is an excellent Order and when you consider the purpose for which the Corporation was established to stimulate agriculture, to buy from the farmers, and to help the farmers to keep producing things, why must Government institutions take money from the Consolidated Fund, say $X million a year, and spend it in town with private enterprise and leave the Barbados Marketing Corporation high and dry?

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. The Minister says that the Barbados Marketing Corporation was set up to purchase from the farmers and the institutions should buy what they want from the Corporation. Why cannot the Government allow the institutions to buy things from the farmers directly and save money? Why should the Corporation be allowed to put on a mark-up price, similar to what DaCosta or any other firm would put on, and then sell the items to the institutions? Does that make sense?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, the Mental Hospital is not a whole-sale or retail shop. The Corporation is a Government institution, and whether or not it fulfils its purpose in its entirety is an entirely different matter. The Government is trying to stimulate agriculture. Very often the Corporation is called upon to buy second-rate goods when the farmers themselves have sold their first-rate goods at the supermarkets all over the Island and the hotels, be that as it may. The Government is taking millions of dollars from the Consolidated Fund to spend on provisions for its institutions. Where must this money be spent? When the Corporation needs a subsidy, where does this money come from? It comes from the Government. Why must the Government take up money to spend on provisions for institutions, spend it with private enterprise, leaving the Corporation not even to get the bulk of this business, and when the Corporation is in trouble to come to Parliament for a subsidy? After all it is business. If the Barbados Marketing

Corporation buys cucumbers from a farmer at X cents per lb, does the Corporation not have overheads, other expenses of labour, cost and spoilage to contend with? How can the Government expect the Corporation to sell the institutions the cucumbers bought from the farmers at 32 cents a lb? The Government would just be crazy or stupid, neither of which we are. The hon. member is not quarrelling with the Order that the institutions should purchase from the Corporation, but he wants them to purchase at a special price.

I say to him now that if the Barbados Marketing Corporation had to buy produce from a farmer at a price higher than any supermarket, then, even if the institutions paid more for it then they would pay to another supermarket or in Town, the money would be well spent. The moment the Barbados Marketing Corporation loses money on a subsidy it comes here. All the Government is trying to do is to let the farmers know that they must sell their produce to the Corporation because we have so many outlets and institutions that need the produce. If we, as an institution of a Government, ignore the Barbados Marketing Corporation, what would be the incentive to the farmer to sell produce to the Corporation when you have the School Meals, District Hospitals, the Public Hospital, the Children's Homes, the Old People's Homes and so on spending millions of dollars of Government money on provisions and so on? If the Government were to say: Let us shop around and see if we could save a penny here, a farthing there, we would be making a mockery of a Government's institution which is established not only to stimulate agriculture, but to save the taxpayers' money and prevent us from coming to Parliament for a subsidy. *(Asides.)* Certain things may be due to stealing and so on.

Mr. Chairman, I cannot see how any member of the Opposition can get up and criticise the Minister of Health, the Minister of Education, or the Minister of any institution who instructs his officers that priority must be given to purchasing things from the Corporation in order to stimulate agriculture. If fish costs 6 cents per lb. more at the Corporation, I would prefer to buy it there than to buy it from Seafoods for less.

1.25 p.m.

If fish cost six cents more at the Marketing Corporation, I would prefer to buy the fish at six cents more from the Marketing Corporation than from Seafoods. I say so because when the Marketing Corporation loses money, right here in our laps, Mr. Chairman, it is going to land. Very often since the Government is committed to the stimulation not only of fisheries and the improvement of fisheries, but is committed to the stimulation of agriculture, the Marketing Corporation is called upon to purchase commodities which in truth and in fact it should never purchase; but since the Government is conscious of the fact that there is a break down in marketing intelligence or in communication and certain farmers only produce in a certain period of the year, the Government in order not to dampen the ardour and enthusiasm of the farmers takes in the produce, and therefore the Government in order to enable the Marketing Corporation if not to be economically viable at least to perform one of the functions for which it was established, must issue these particular instructions. What is all this harangue about? Can anybody in his right mind suggest to this Parliament that instructions from a Government to its institutions spending millions of taxpayers' money and spending that taxpayers' money with a Government Corporation which buys produce from taxpayers and which in case of economic difficulty is financed by subsidies from the taxpayers are wrong? Let us work it out in a circle. This does not call for a Solomon's logic. You do not have to be a Solomon to understand the wisdom of this provision. You do not have to be a genius of any sort, but because criticism is easy or because somebody may want to push somebody's interest, you get the criticism...

Mr. MOTTLEY: I object to this, Sir. I am the only person who spoke in here on this matter, and I have no interest to push. I object to the Minister saying that somebody may want to push somebody's interest. He is replying to a speech I made and I object to that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am going to rule. The remark did not apply to any hon. member in this Chamber. That is my ruling.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am not going to argue with him. I did not intend to refer to him, but I am that generous today, that if it is offensive to him, although I know your ruling is right, I will still withdraw and assure him that I was not referring to him. I do not want to say anymore. I am satisfied that if the Government had made any other order and had given its institutions freedom of choice to buy from stores in town, from supermarkets or anywhere else, the Government would be throwing more money down the drain and nullifying the purpose for the establishment of the Marketing Corporation, and the second state would be worse than the first.

I can tell him that the Government gets a reasonable price if they buy in bulk; they get mark-ups and they get discounts from any purchases. I know this. As a matter of fact I personally would get a discount as a Minister. I do not want it, but I know if I wanted it that they offered it. They give it to Civil Servants or to anybody who produces a card. I do not want any discount, but I know that the Government gets a proper discount in purchasing from the Marketing Corporation, and the prices are cheaper. When the hotels purchase in bulk they get a better price, and all the large institutions other than Government, if they purchase in bulk, get a wholesale price and a better price than if they purchase retail. I would invite hon. members of the Opposition since they talk about the Marketing Corporation being always expensive to go down there on a Friday afternoon and see if they can get in with the housewives who realise that the Marketing Corporation is offering a better price than the Fairchild Street or Cheapside markets, than Goddards or a lot of the other wholesale institutions in this country.

Mrs. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I think I should add a little to this debate. I do not think that we in the Ministry are credited with much common sense from what the members on the other side seem to be saying. I would like them to know that the Ministry of Health is run on a very businesslike manner. The Minister of Health makes sure that every matter is investigated, and I have investigated the matter of buying produce from the Marketing Corporation as against buying produce from private persons. I am in the fortunate position of wearing two hats. I thought it might perhaps have been cheaper to buy from other business firms than from the Marketing Corporation, but this is not so. The Marketing Corporation bends over backwards to please the Government institutions. The people at the institutions order nearly every day. Who in private enterprise is going to take up a lorry to send to St. Lucy, St. Peter and all over the place whenever these people are ordering. Transport costs money and only the Marketing Corporation can ably do this to accommodate us. We are indebted to the Marketing Corporation. I have gone into every avenue, I have looked at all the institutions, and I can say that the money spent on food at the Marketing Corporation so far, and this is up to last year because I have not made any investigation yet this year, has shown very good results. If the Marketing Corporation is losing money, they would have to look at their internal management, and this does not come under the Ministry of Health. We in the Ministry of Health make sure that every penny of taxpayers' money is well spent and we will continue to do this as long as the Minister is there and I am there.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I will be very short. I had not intended to speak, but I really have heard the most remarkable disclosure here in the House this afternoon, namely, that Ministers get a discount upon their purchases at the Barbados Marketing Corporation, a discount which is unrelated to the question of purchasing in bulk or otherwise, but is related solely on a man's position as a Minister. I distinctly heard the hon. member for St. Michael South Central say that as a Minister he has refused a discount which they offered him and which he can get. I think this is a matter which should be cleared up. Why should a Minister have any more privilege than...

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of explanation, I cannot stop people from offering, but I know the Ministers have refused it. I am only saying it is offered; I am not saying that any Minister has accepted it; so do not harp on this because I want the facts straight. Do not think that is a big highlight of my argument, but any Minister is offered it, for what reason I do not know.

Mr. ADAMS: I hope the Minister will speak for himself in future. They are several other Ministers who are capable of saying whether they are offered, have accepted or refused. I am only dealing with the Minister saying that as a Minister he was offered. Whether he accepted I care not because I am not complaining at him, I am complaining at the B.M.C. Why should they offer a discount to a Minister anymore than to the Chairman of Committees, members of the Opposition, the Clerks of the House, the Marshal of the House, the Reporters, Mr. Joe Broome or the general public? Why should any individual as such have such a position with an institution of Government?

There is a lot of good sense in what the hon. member for St. Michael North East has said. I do not think that her encomiums of the low prices at the Corporation would allow her to put up a notice at Gertz Supermarket saying "you will be advised that all the goods sold in here can be purchased cheaper at the Marketing Corporation". I do not believe she would go so far as to say that.

1.35 p.m.

There was a lot of very sound good sense in what she said – that the Government should look at the internal workings of the BMC to

understand why it does not make money. If it has a preferred market in the form of the very large-scale Government expenditure, and if an experienced operator of a retail outlet such as the hon. member who has just sat down – the hon. lady – says, that in her judgement this supermarket has a volume which even at the prices it charges should be able to show a handsome profit, then the Minister who is responsible for the workings of the Barbados Marketing Corporation should give serious consideration to every word or her argument. As far as I am concerned, it would be a perfectly good policy for the Government to deal as it has been dealing if everything is working well; but on the basis of what we have heard it is clear that everything is not working well, and on these grounds I would support the arguments put forward by the hon. member for Bridgetown.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: Mr. Chairman, one of the responsibilities of the Marketing Corporation losing money would be – there is more produce lost at the Marketing Corporation than I have ever seen in any supermarket – the amount of stuff that actually goes on the dump.

The hon. member for St. Michael South East mentioned just now about second rate goods and third rate goods. One of the problems as he has mentioned is that the producers of agriculture usually sell a lot of them as first grade stuff in the supermarkets and hotels and then they expect because it is a government institution that the remnants and the second and third rate stuff should go there, thereby causing a lot of spoilage. This is definitely one of the reasons that they carry heavy loss in spoilage.

With regard to the Marketing Corporation having the sole right to supply the institutions, the custom prior to the Government's decision in making the Marketing Corporation the sole supplier to Government's institutions, was that all of the stuff used to go by tender and often people who we know purchased the commodities from the Marketing Corporation tendered lower – it is surprising to say this – lower than the Marketing Corporation did, and in the midst of, say, a school term or very often in the midst of the season or during the contract a lot of the commodities would break down in these institutions. School meals and hospitals were suffering from not getting adequate supplies of goods, and one of the things that I happen to know that happens in a lot of these institutions is, not only the price that some of the outsiders tender, but it left us in Cabinet very often to wonder if these institutions really received the quantities of goods that they were supposed to be supplied with. This is sometimes what we have to study, and the Government decided that in order to make sure that the institutions received their quantities that were supposed to be delivered and the quantities that were paid for, that it went through the Marketing Corporation.

With regard to fish, I would like to tell the hon. member for the City that there is a small charge on fish for the Marketing Corporation being the sole importers of fish, and, I think it is something like one cent, but is practically negligible.

Another question that he asked was with reference to getting a better price. Certainly the institutions get a wholesale price, and not the price at which it is sold over the counter to every day buyers. The Institutions get a better price than the retailer. The person buying retail over the counter would always have to pay more for it than the institutions pay for it. I am sure about this.

We went into it very carefully bearing everything in mind before Cabinet did make a decision to make them the sole suppliers to these institutions.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, I believe you will agree that the Hon. Minister who has just sat down has thrown a very considerable light, a light of some depth into the discussion which has gone on here this morning. Now we have had enough to make us believe that all honest persons deal with all of these matters that came before us this morning – No dishonest person at all was associated with them; but we have heard from the Hon. Minister that Government has to concern itself with trying to find out whether or not the quantities that these institutions ordered from the various suppliers, whoever they might be, if they were really being delivered – in other words, if the Institutions were getting exactly what they were paying for or if they were getting less than what they ordered and paid for a full order, and all that kind of thing.

I do not believe the Minister should have stopped there because the Minister could have given us their own experience as related to them through the School Meals. They have had wonderful experience; people's vouchers have been held up for more than a year in some cases. People threatened to shoot and do bad if

they did not get their money, and it was all based on the fact that the supplies that had reached certain institutions – certain schools – were not as ordered, to the quantities ordered, and you were expecting people to receive less and still initial vouchers for having received the full amount, and all that kind of thing. The best friends of the Cabinet stood up against all of this and the Ministers of the Cabinet must know about this; but the point is this, Sir; we have got to be very, very worried about the whole trend of things Island-wide today.

There is no denying the fact that people placed in key positions in Government today and persons placed at these institutions to be in charge and what not – to be the Chief Executive Officer responsible for this and that – they are people we must admit are in key positions at these institutions; in other words, they can make or break. They are the people; they control the expenditure, and if they write a certificate to the effect that this has been expended, this has been received and what not, the person is paid for it.

But, Sir, there is a feeling that is running through this whole country; that as Ministers are getting rich they seem to think they should get money as quickly as possible. Now you will be surprised to know – sorry, Sir, I do not think you would be surprised – but, there are some members of Parliament who are satisfied that the Prime Minister is a rich man. Members of Parliament say this and genuinely believe it, because, a member of Parliament goes up to the Prime Minister and asks him to lend him $10,000; evidently he asks because he genuinely believes that the Prime Minister can make the loan.

So if that is the situation, we have got to relate all of these things, Mr. Chairman, to these persons who are employed in this particular avenue, persons who are employed elsewhere, and remember, there is the case of the suppliers; if the supplier can get anymore of his commodity to this institution at a price that is profitable to him as against somebody else's – the keenness of the competition, Mr. Chairman, is what opens avenues, I do not want to say for bribery, but, some people would like to make gifts to certain people at certain times.

I believe I am right in saying that the Prime Minister stood on the floor of this House and made out cases where some of the civil servants had been receiving drawbacks from some of these business houses in Bridgetown through placing orders for this and orders for that; and that is the reason why he then suggested that the purchasing powers, more or less, should be taken away from these various departments of Government, and he established Central Purchasing with a view to reducing the possibility of any sort of corruption among the Civil Servants.

We believe, Mr. Chairman, that enough has been said here this morning as to make each and every one to feel beyond a shadow of a doubt that there is something wrong at some point, somewhere, at some institutions with respect to the purchasing of these provisions and what not. Something is wrong.

1.45 p.m.

We have heard the hon. member for St. Michael North East giving us to understand that she has been following the trend of things in certain respects. That she has been walking closely behind the heels of the Minister of Health and trying to see that things go right in these institutions.

But, Mr. Chairman, it is the health of the people in these institutions that we must talk about, that we must look at. We see in these very notes the information which tells us of the skyrocketing of prices, the steep rise of prices and what not; but what we are maintaining is that because these prices are rising, and because it is widely known that they are steep, opportunities are taken by some people to make them steeper yet. In other words they feel that now that this steepness has to be paid for, somebody will get some sweetness at some stage or other.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that in all of these institutions the patients or inmates could be served; and if the Government were to seriously approach this matter of supplying all these commodities to all these institutions and give directives it would bring about the desired result. We honestly believe outside of the House that in these institutions people could be fed and other services met; and especially with respect to supplying provisions and clothing, all of this could be met for less than two-thirds of what we are asked to vote from time to time.

As regards the question of the quality of clothing, we may hear that the quality has been changed. Mr. Chairman, what quality? The quality changed when the first two bolts of cloth were delivered. It is a question of following up to see that the particular standard for the new prices you are charging is maintained throughout the rest of the order.

I am sorry that it has been suggested as in the case of the BMC that they are buying second rate provisions from farmers, because I believe that that in itself is a reflection on the good work and ability of the experienced agricultural officers who are attached to the BMC and charged with the specific duty of selecting what is good for purchasing for resale through the resale outlet; because I believe that if an officer is going to see that the quality of commodities is so inferior that two or three days before a reasonable amount can be sold off you have to put them in the dump, I do not think that the officer would be discharging his duties conscientiously to the institution or to the Government.

I believe that these officers are rigid in the exercise of their duties. I know that some of the rules are adhered to in the choice of these commodities; but there may be an opportunity, however strict an officer may be, for something to slip through, and as a result this institution may lose money.

I personally believe that the officers who are charged with that type of responsibility for selecting commodities from growers or the people who offer them to the BMC are people with a full knowledge of their responsibility, and people who would discharge that responsibility in the best interests of the institutions and the country as a whole.

You will find, Mr. Chairman, that there are lots of little bits of arguments here and there which, when taken together, make us satisfied that all is not well. We have got to let these institutions check up and see that they are getting their money's worth, and we in turn should be given some assurance by the Minister responsible so that we can know that the taxpayers' money is being well and truly spent as we would like to know that it is spent; because when we vote money we vote it in the hope that it will be spent on the particular institutions so that the people at the institutions who are benefiting by the services we are rendering by the voting of money are getting the best for the money that is spent. We hope that the Minister will see to this in no uncertain terms.

The question that Head 31 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that a Resolution for $1,143,455 do now pass.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
(CURRENT) NO. 26

A Resolution for the sum of $7,638 was called.

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

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: Mr. Chairman, the Port is like other departments of Government where the price of electricity and water etc. has increased over the amount estimated.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order. Is this correct? The Resolution is for $7,638 for the Ministry of Communications and Works – the Annual Estimates for the Port Department – is this done in Committee or in the whole House? 1.55 p.m.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, the Addendum to this Resolution for the very meagre sum of $7,600 is there. The note explains the reason for the increase, and the note on Item 11 – Furniture and Equipment – also explains the reason for the increase. I can anticipate no argument on this problem, so I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES
1974–75 NO. 27

A Resolution for the sum of $120,800 was called.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: Mr. Chairman, the sum of $40,000 was provided under Item 3 – National Insurance to purchase National Insurance stamps. The cost of stamps was increased in January 1974 and at that time the Estimate had already been exhausted. No provision therefore was made for the increased cost and the amount now required to supplement this Item is $20,000.

Item 9 – Utilities. The amount of $92,200 was provided under this Item to meet the cost of electricity. This amount is the same as was

provided in 1973–74, but the cost of electricity has increased since this estimate was approved and an additional amount of $54,800 is now required to meet the increased expenditure to 31st March, 1975.

Item 10 – Maintenance of equipment. The sum of $180,000 was provided under this Item to meet the cost of maintenance and equipment, the cost of docking and fuel for the tugs and barges. Since the preparation of the Estimates the cost of dry docking and fuels which accounts for the major part of the expenditure under this Item has increased, and it is estimated that an additional amount of $46,000 is required to meet the anticipated expenditure to the 31st March, 1975.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Mrs. EASTMOND, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of three Resolutions in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: At this stage, Sir, I will ask for leave to give notice of two Resolutions on the supplementary Order Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is asking for leave to give notice of two Resolutions contained in the supplementary Order Paper. If there are no objections leave will be granted.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, it is disgraceful that a supplementary vote for $1 million of which $850,000 seems to relate to one Item should come down to be done in all its stages today. I think the Leader of the House must be in fact hanging his head in shame, and I hope that he has sent the necessary number of rockets, for on the eve of prorogation he is faced with this situation when perhaps this could have been projected 8 or 9 months ago. If the Leader of the House wishes to force it, no doubt he has the battalions to force it, but we do not want school children not to get the meals and if it is a question of purchasing from the BMC the BMC can give credit until the Resolution can be passed and the money granted. There must be some limit on what the House is called upon to do, and I would expect support from the member for St. Lucy, the member for St. Michael West and the member for St. George North on such a motion as this. Just to come down with Resolutions like this and ignore the Standing Orders is not good enough.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I share the anxiety of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and I would like to assure him that this was the view of the Hon. Minister of Finance when this Resolution came to Cabinet, but this is not governmental. I think he knows that the Accounting Officers in the Ministries are the Permanent Secretaries, and only on the 14th December we came to Parliament with a big Resolution for Education. His strictures are justified, but I hope as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee he knows that the financial controllers are the ones who should advise their Ministers at any point in time of the need for a supplementary, and I am asking him not to press his objections too far because tomorrow is prorogation.
2.05 p.m.

He is perfectly right; he is entitled to object; he is entitled to criticize the Government for its responsibility for the civil servants for this type of Resolution, as he says, for $850,000 for provisions which should have been predicted. Mr. Speaker, since December or November, but I am appealing to the sense of responsibility which the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has displayed to allow us to deal with this, since he knows what will happen by the beginning or middle of March. *(Asides.)* It is not a question of using numbers, Mr. Speaker.

I agree with his strictures. The Prime Minister expressed it when this Resolution came. We accept the strictures in the circumstances, and I am asking the Leader of the Opposition to permit it because the prorogation will break. If it could have been done next Tuesday, we would never have done this. I believe he agrees that the School Meals system should go on, and I am asking him to accept not an apology but that he was right in his criticism and to agree that this Resolution should be dealt with in all its stages.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let me make this clear. The Leader of the House is only asking for permission to give notice of these two Resolutions. He is not asking for leave to deal with them in all of their stages.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Your Honour will recall that, earlier in the day, I made it clear that there was a Supplemental Order Paper which I intended laying and to ask for leave to present it and to deal with the two items in all of their stages. I did that. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition could not give any assurance, as he said, but later on, in the absence of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition, I got some sort of assurance. Of course, the position is that the Leader of the Opposition is now here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you now asking for leave to deal with these two Resolutions in all of their stages?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: But this you did not ask for when you got up. You only asked for leave to give notice of the two Resolutions and the Supplemental Order Paper.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I have already said all of that, Your Honour, and I intend doing that now.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is before the House is whether or not leave is granted to deal with these two supplementary Resolutions in all of their stages.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what the Minister of Communications and Works has said, and, in going along with him, I will only say that I do not agree that it is only the fault of the civil servants. There is too much of that. The Minister of Education had a right to ask his Permanent Secretary if he did not need a supplementary vote for School Meals. As the person who initiates policy, every business in the world would ask that. It is a matter of common sense, and I am not agreeing with this constant business of blaming civil servants.

I know that, apparently, the best way to get the civil servants' political allegiance is to abuse them and tell them that they are an army of occupation and behave like the disciples of Dr. Massock and they appreciate a good whipping. It whips them into line at the Poling Station, as far as I can see. I am not seeking the easy way out, and I am not abusing them. It is the Minister's responsibility. On a fairly practical point, I would respectfully submit that we should have lunch before dealing with the Resolutions.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: As Your Honour will recall, I said before suspending the sitting. I just wanted to give notice of these items so that they would be dealt with, but I had no intention of dealing with them now.

I beg to move that the sitting be now suspended for one hour.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the mood of the House is, regardless of what strictures have been made against doing these two Resolutions now, that it is the feeling of all hon. members that these two Resolutions be dealt with in all of their stages today. That is my interpretation of the feeling of the House. That being so, leave is now granted to deal with these two Resolutions in all of their stages today.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

On resumption–

Mr. SPEAKER: The sitting is now resumed. When the sitting was suspended we were on Government Business.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I have been granted leave to give notice of these two Supplementary Resolutions and to deal with them in all of their stages.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of $1,312,498 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. 28 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, Sir, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of $36,344 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. 29 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

We will deal now with the first Resolution in the sum of $1,312,498 in the name of the Hon. Minister of Education.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are now out of Committee of Supply.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply to deal with these two money Resolutions of which notice was given and leave granted to deal with them in all their stages.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: 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: The first Resolution, Mr. Chairman, is for the sum of $1,312,498 and it stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1974-75
No. 28

A Resolution for the sum of $1,312,498 was called.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Head 27(1).

The CLERK: Head 27(1).

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, before the Hon. Minister of Education speaks, I believe we have had numerous arguments in this Chamber to decide that certain things must be done correctly. I do not see the Clerk just calling an omnibus sum of $1 million when the items are divided under separate Heads. I believe that the Clerk should stick to the Rules and call the Heads as they appear on the documents circulated here, otherwise there may be a ruling that we will have to speak on all of these Heads in a 15- minute or a 20-minute speech. I want it to be done in the correct way and that each Head be called as it comes up.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to inform the hon. member that it is always the Chair who must decide the order. I stated that it must be done according to custom. Head 27(1) must be called first.

Mr. BOLDEN: The Clerk called Head 27(1), and that is not good enough.

Head 27(1) – Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport – General Administration – was called.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, this particular supplement of $314,800 for Item 4 of Head 27(1) arises out of the increased rates for National Insurance which were dealt with, by this Honourable Chamber recently. It is as a consequence of the increase in those rates that I beg to move that Head 27(1) stand part.

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

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

Head 27 (2) Primary, Adult and Special Education – was called.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, under Head 27(2), Primary, Adult and Special Education, there are supplements that are required for Item 6, 7 and 8. Items 6 relates to the need for continuation of the programme of maintenance of premises. There are certain essential works which must be continued including plumbing works and cleaning of wells in order that the schools can continue to operate under as hygienic conditions as possible.

As far as the rent is concerned, this is a small sum of $26 required for Item 7 in order to pay the rental for lands used for gardening and playgrounds.

As far as Item 8 is concerned the required amount for $85,100 arises specifically out of the need to pay arrears of some $60,625 to the supervisors of approximately fourteen adult education centres, and this is with respect to the period 1st April, 1969, to 14th June, 1974. That amount of money was paid during the month of December to these supervisors, and it is therefore now necessary to see this supplementary in order that the programme may be continued.

I beg to move that Head 27(2) Primary, Adult and Special Education, stand part.

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

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, dealing with Item 8, what the Minister has just said presents a

very sad picture relating to Government's operations and manoeuvres. If what I have recorded is correct, the Minister said that this results from the payment of certain fee from 1st April, 1969, to 1974. It now casts a reflection on the Minister of Finance and the whole Government Department as to its accuracy of accounting, because if you are telling me that $69,000 is outstanding from 1969, it means that we have had at least five Budgets since 1969 and you are now paying by supplementary estimate sums which should have been paid out in previous years. It is not good enough in my humble opinion for the Minister to come in here and just pass it off by saying that this is something which was outstanding from 1969. It is usual for the Minister of Communications and Works to say that inflation has hit us and this is increased prices, but certainly this is not a question of increased prices. There has to be some sort of negotiations; so there has been some slackness somewhere in some Government Department that in 1975 you are making provision for the payment of money which was due since 1969. This is something which I believe the Minister should be fair and frank to Parliament about and explain why in 1975 he should now be seeking this amount of money to pay something which is back-dated to 1969. We have only one year to go through which it would become statute barred. I go further and say that claims against Government are statute barred after one year, and therefore there must be some logical explanation why in 1975 the Government should now be seeking to pay a sum of money back-dated from 1969. It creates a peculiar precedent at this particular stage that if certain people are entitled to money after four or five years when there is a general Act that says that claims against Government must be made within one year otherwise they become statute barred, but here is a case where four or five years have passed and they are now seeking to pay this money.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, if I may explain to the hon. member, I think the premises on which his arguments are based are not on all fours with the facts, and I am certain that if these were known he would not have made this error. It is not that this money was outstanding since 1969. What happened was that in 1974 an agreement was reached on an increase in the rates paid to the supervisors at the centres, and these were increased for the period 1st April, 1969, to 31st March, 1973, from $5 per hour to $7 per hour and from the period 1st April, 1973, to 14th June, 1974 from $7 per hour to $9 per hour. This decision was taken in 1974 and the amounts payable should be back-dated to 1969. It was not that these amounts were outstanding as such or that they were known from 1969. This is a decision taken in 1974 to increase the rates payable to the supervisors and that the new rates, should apply back-dated to 1969 on the two levels that I have indicated.

I would just like to point out that it is not a case that these were rates which were extant from 1969 and that these rates were known in 1969 and 1970 straight up to 1974 and were not paid, but as a result of a decision taken in 1974 to increase the rates payable to supervisors in the adult education programme and that these should be back-dated as I have indicated.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, this is what I call election padding up because there is no negotiator who will tell me that in 1974 he would know of an agreement to back-date wages to 1969. This is similar to the bonus paid to workers which you made and then you come back and back-dated it and said you abandoned the 220 days and reduced it to a lower figure so that you would bring in everybody. That is what you call election padding up and you might as well say that you are making good with these people so that they would say you have been kind and gracious to them. I hope the hon. member for St. Michael West will adopt the same principle when he starts to negotiate for the postmen and such people on the basis that if Government can back-date from 1969 and increase wages, he should be able to do it for all others because this is no more in my opinion than election padding up.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, what I would like to know is whether you have changed the Rules that the hon. member is allowed to speak twice. He made two speeches. I am not questioning the Chair. All I am asking is how it is that the hon. member was allowed to make two speeches on the same item.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to inform hon. members that I was under a misapprehension. When I saw the Minister get up I was of the opinion that the hon. member had given way.

Mr. WALCOTT: All right, Mr. Chairman. I am very glad you came to his rescue.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation, the hon. member was in the back and he did not know that the Minister was beckoning me to sit down. I do not want him to be under any illusion that I stole a march and spoke twice.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And you must also sit now.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, what I would like to say is that I do not think the hon. member was clear on this question of back-dating because this is a principle that is adopted on more than one occasion. If I am not mistaken it did not go back as far as four years because I do not think they are so generous, but I think members of the House received emoluments that had been back-dated; so you have to be clear that if it is agreed that you are going to increase the fees or rates that were in existence for two or three years, because things like rates for adult education sometimes have remained fixed for maybe five, six, seven, eight or nine years, not related to the salary increases. They are like pensions where you come along and agree to increase them. It is not an arbitrary decision you make; it is a negotiated decision.
3.25 p.m.

What I notice is that the Ministry of Education has advanced money for the schools generally and I am concerned about the fact that the conditions at private secondary schools are not satisfactory. The Government is subsidizing these schools and when I read about the fees that these schools are charging and the conditions which people are complaining about, I think it is time that the Ministry of Education should investigate these institutions because you have deplorable conditions existing in an Island where you make a lot of fuss about sanitary conditions in the schools where there are 500 or 600 children lumped together and where the parents are called to pay high fees, and that being so I say that these conditions should be examined because when I come to deal with the Estimates I will have to question how can the Government justify subsidizing any school when these schools are not meeting the required standard.

What is the point sending a sanitary inspector into a private place where you have hundreds of children when conditions are not what they should be and people are running the schools as a business. Is this a system of social development? We should not continue to allow these institutions to have substandard conditions and be providing conditions that are not suitable for any modern society.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I am glad to hear the hon. member who has just sat down speak as he did because this is a matter which I have raised in this Chamber before and which I have been asking questions about. I have been saying that the question of subsidizing these private schools should be reviewed and the whole system of subsidizing private schools should be reviewed and given some consideration because a lot of them are not making any contribution towards the education of the people they should be educating. In fact, we have a system whereby the children at these schools are the ones who are in need of free secondary education. These are the ones from the lower income homes – lower income groups – and they are the ones who are in need of the free secondary education, and these are the ones who are not getting it.

From time to time in here, Sir, I have been asking questions and complaining about this system, and I would like to know from the Minister having granted the okay for the school or having approved the school what checks if any are made to see that the requirements that the Government would lay down before a school can be designated as an approved school – what checks were kept to see that the school maintains these standards.

Sir, the member for St. Michael West talked about private schools, but it is also shocking to learn that in dealing with the same question of the health of the children, that at one of the Government secondary schools you had to close a canteen because the canteen could not satisfy. *(Aside)* At a Government Comprehensive school or secondary school, which ever you choose to call it – that the canteen had to be closed, one of the reasons being that the canteen could not satisfy the requirements of the regulations of the Ministry of Health in respect of food service and things like this; and this is shocking. Not only in private schools now, but this is a Government-owned school where this happened, and it is worse when it happens in schools that the Ministry and the Government are responsible for, and I sincerely hope that immediate steps are taken to remedy this situation.

I see here that money is being spent here on maintenance of premises. I sincerely hope that some of the money will be spent to ensure that the canteens, if they are provided at these schools, are such that the Ministry of Health would not have to step in and close them down because of insanitary conditions.

The question that Head 27(2) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 27(5) – Housecraft Centre – was called.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, these are relatively small items for Head 27(5) – Housecraft Centre, and I beg to move that Head 27(5) stand part.

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

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

Head 27(9) – School Meals Department – was called.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, under Head 27(9) School Meals Department the amounts provided under this particular Head have proved inadequate in respect of Item 3 – Office Expenses, Item 5 – Travelling, and Item 6 – Provisions.

Then Items 3 and 5 are relatively small Items, and unless members have any questions to ask on this I do not propose saying very much. It is for the continuation of existing services, as indeed is Item 6 – Provisions. However in this case the supplement being requested is $850,000 and I should explain that the sum of $1,903,625 has been provided in the current Estimates to meet the cost of the feeding programme at our schools.

The expenditure to date is $1,671,034.34 with commitments totalling $182,679.81, leaving an available balance of $49,910.85. It should be realized that when the draft Estimates for this particular department were being considered, a sum of $2,318,400 was requested and this included an increase in something like 20% on the 1973–74 figures for cost for food-stuffs.
3.35 p.m.

That amount was in fact reduced to the sum of $1,903,625, so it was less than what was requested; and in addition to that, over and above the sums requested in the Draft Estimates there was an even greater increase in the cost of foodstuffs. This has therefore resulted in the need for this particular supplementary vote.

I would point out that the provisions for this particular department are obtained as far as starches are concerned – yams, potatoes etc. together with the fresh vegetables – from the School Meals Department; and I am certain that the hon. member for the City will be pleased – well I am not certain that he will be pleased – but I would like to inform him that these commodities are obtained at wholesale prices, and that when items such as tomatoes and such are in glut, items which are used in the programme, my advice is that a special price is given on these particular items. I know of the hon. member for the City's interest in these particular matters, and I just give that particular information to assist him in his understanding of the situation.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to state that the request for supplementary provision originates with the Accountants and from the Heads of the several departments or divisions. In other words, they have responsibility for the day to day operations of the services for which they have been given responsibility; and if, arising out of that responsibility they discover that the sums provided are proving inadequate, there is a clear responsibility on these accountants or Heads of Departments or Divisions to request the necessary supplementary provision.

This, Sir, is day to day management, an operational function. It is not in the area of policy as such. So supplementaries normally arise from the particular department or division which is responsible for the day to day operations of these services. I would certainly expect that when this need becomes evident, such a request for the necessary supplementary provision would be indicated.

Mr. Chairman, at the present moment, I would indicate, some 25,330 meals are prepared daily, that there is an average of 190 days a school year and that the cost of the meals has been estimated by the Chief School Meals Officer at 61 cents a meal.

I would also point out that there was a shortfall in the supply of commodities from the World Food Programme – the cheese, the flour, margarine, cod fish, split peas and powdered skimmed milk, and this arose out of the general shortage of food commodities. Therefore because of this late shipment, alternative provisions had to be made by the School Meals Department amounting to some $39,332.11.

Mr. Chairman, this particular provision is required in order to ensure that the programme which has had the endorsement of this Hon. Chamber should continue without interruption. There is no new programme involved in this. It is an on going programme. and I therefore beg to move that Head 27 (9) stand part.

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

Mr. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, before you put the question to the vote, there is one point that I want to draw to the attention of the

Hon. Minister. I thought that the matter would naturally fall under this particular Head because Item 6 deals with Provisions, and quite naturally we are concerned not only with provisions in the raw state, but as they reach the children in a prepared form.

The point that I would like to draw to the attention of the Minister concerned relates to the St. Clement School Meals Centre in St. Lucy. I am not sure if he is aware of this, but what I have been able to discover is that conditions in the kitchen are fairly difficult for people to work comfortably in, in that there is a tremendous amount of heat being generated and not enough is taken off.

I am drawing this to the attention of the Minister because I feel that he is concerned not only with getting the meals prepared, and in as efficient a manner as possible, but also with the welfare of, and the conditions under which people are forced to prepare these meals.

I would hope that the Hon. Minister would give this matter his urgent attention because I believe that there can be a means of taking off some of this heat, maybe by means of special extractor fans. I submit that the matter is urgent because it causes a great deal of discomfort which I feel could naturally reflect on the quality of the food which is prepared for the people who have to use these services.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I regard school meals as a social development and I think that we should turn the public's attention to these matters. In a community like Barbados with 250,000 people, in a community where we talk about so many people looking for jobs, and not having enough for the children leaving school to do, I think that the Minister and the public must turn their attention away from the old conventional nonsense of thinking that social development can take place within the context of an economic profit making plan.

Indeed, Sir, I am very concerned that the cost of the school meals programme should rise as it has. We must have people with new ideas, and not the old horse and buggy concepts. Some people start one way and feel that things must go on that way; and they do not have the motivation to revamp when it is required. I think that a complete revolutionary thinking must take place in the schools themselves.

What you want to do is to take some of these children who are at the age and who are using some of these services and utilise them in the School Meals Programme, and so learn the children to do something for themselves so as to reduce the cost.

3.45 p.m.

There is no point pretending that the school meal is going to be an avenue for productive employment. It is not an avenue for productive employment because you do not have the means to turn this into a productive area of employment. It has to be a social development. It is done to give poor children a meal. You have a population of nearly 40,000 children, therefore let us have some idea of examining this population and making it use some of its time not only in the growing of food, in the reaping of food and in the preparation of food, but take some of these things and make them the training ground for some of these people to do something that is essential. All boys and girls in Barbados should be able to cook. You cannot live in a poor community and say you cannot cook. It is a basic element in home economics because you have to eat food every day. If they made a mistake with me let us start it over, and therefore every boy and girl should be taught the basic elements of cooking in schools where the food is being eaten. There is no point in making them believe they are star babies and the food given to them. My idea about it is that it is a social development and the best social revolution should start with the young people. This is the best way for you to utilise their talents by making them do something for themselves.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, on 3rd October 1972 I asked the Hon. Minister of Education how soon would school meals be made available to the St. Matthias' Boys' and Girls' Schools. With his usual promptness to reply the Minister on 17th October, 1972 informed me then that the school meals service was going to emcompass all primary schools and that as soon as the Country Road Centre was available it would be extended to St. Paul's Girls' School, and as far as the St. Matthias' Boys' and Girls' Schools were concerned the service would be extended to these schools as soon as practical. I would have thought that two years having elapsed that it should have been fully practical by now to have extended the service to the St. Matthias' Boys' and Girls' Schools. I was happy to admire the Minister's picture and that of the Minister for Information and Tourism in the newspaper recently showing the extention of the service to the St. David's Boys' School, and since of course some of my constituents send their children to the St. David's Boys' School I take this opportunity for saying thanks on their behalf. I feel that the St. Matthias' Boys' and Girls' have a crying need for

this type of service in that area and I hope the Minister is in a position today to tell me that it is practical to do so before the elections. I should like it done as soon as possible.

The reason why I say this is that I am not shining in the light of my deceased mother, but I know that her enthusiasm for the young people in that area extended to lead her to being the first person I believe in this country to provide hot meals for children attending schools, particularly in the St. Matthias' area and more specifically in the Christ Church area. I would like to think that some tribute to the foresight of women in this country, in International Women's Year, the Minister would look at it as part of his duty to recognise her foresight by bringing St. Matthias' into the ambit of the school meals service.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, there is one thing which worries me on this matter of school meals. Government seem to feel even now that as soon as a child reaches 11 plus he no longer requires the meals. Even thousands of children who have not reached 11 plus have not been able to benefit from the scheme although it has been in operation for so many years, but this in itself, Mr. Chairman, goes to show the rate of progress, if progress it must be called, or the pace at which it has been moving. There are still to my mind too many children in the secondary schools – and when I say the secondary schools I mean the Government secondary schools – and in the Comprehensive Schools, and I cannot then turn my eyes against the vast numbers that are attending some of the private schools of this Island. What we have got to look at, Mr. Chairman, is that the majority of these children come from the same type of homes, so to speak, and one must look at it that the little children who are below 11 plus and those who have gone on to the secondary schools coming out of the same homes of the same parents with the same limited means to provide for both, and this type of situation continuing to exist. We are not expecting that bricks must be made from straw but we still believe that there is enough food available which can be made available even from local sources to help promote this programme and to expand it without costing the enormous sums of money we are asked to vote from time to time. There are enough lands available, even Government's own lands, which can be used for producing much of what is required for the extension of the school meals programme and to involve the feeding of many more children at a reduced cost.

My view is that Government's approach to the whole problem of school meals from its inception was not sufficiently broad based, and that is one of the reasons why we are still channelling here and there and extending the service at this slow rate as if it is somebody's gift to a school and not to let it be understood that it is the school's right to be receiving the meals. Hon. members on both sides of the House ought to be calling on Government to lay before us a comprehensive scheme whereby as from 1st April next year every one of the primary schools will be served with the school meals, and give us an undertaking whereby Government will look into the necessity of those children who are attending the various schools and seek ways and means of assisting them.

3.55 p.m.

He should let us understand and give us an undertaking whereby the Government would look into the necessities of those children who are attending the various schools and seek ways and means of assisting those children. Mr. Chairman, one must look at these things. If we saw the need for providing this type of service in the schools, then we have to see the need from the very beginning to the end. In other words, it should reach the very last child who needs such assistance and we should not be allowed to continue as we have been going on in the past. We should assist the private schools and so on. Let the Heads of those schools give a list of the children under their charge who are in need of the service and let us find some means of getting the meals to them at their schools. Perhaps we should have a meals-on-wheels service to cater to the children at the various schools. Now, I feel that that when we have a number of secondary schools, private and others, centered in the parish of St. Michael, it would not prove so difficult a task if we approached the matter broadmindedly, bearing in mind that we are doing it for the children and particularly for those who are in need of such a service.

Mr. Chairman, the School Meals Service is costing money. An expansion of the service is going to cost more money. I have remarked on this already but, Mr. Chairman, there are children who have spent as much as 10 years in school and have never tasted a school meal – they have only heard about it. This is not good enough Mr. Chairman. If you are satisfied that children at all of these Primary Schools need it – in other words, we must feel some sense of guilt that we are denying the schools that are not getting this School Meals Service of something which they are entitled to and which they ought to have been getting from the inception of the Service. It was started as a pilot scheme – *(Asides.)*

Mr. Chairman, I am hearing nonsense from the other side about what Mr. Freddie Miller said and so on. Mr. Chairman, do you know what surprises me? There are some people who did not want to see a cane blade grown in Barbados, and they are now going about fighting for the money for sugar! If Mr. Freddie Miller said something, he has said it and we are finished with that. The children attending these schools all come from the same type of homes. The child at 11 plus, who goes to a secondary school, is the same child who leaves a brother or sister attending the primary school. They all come from poor families, underpaid families, and so on. It is very remarkable today, Mr. Chairman, that the Ministry of Education is now admitting that since 1969 it had underpaid people working in the School Meals Service.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. Neither I nor my Ministry ever admitted underpaying any School Meals workers from 1969.

Mr. HINDS: They were supervisors, whether at the School Meals or any other service. *(Asides.)* They were supervisors employed by the Ministry of Education and it is that Ministry that now admits that these people were underpaid from 1969. I wonder how many other Departments of Government are looking over their employment list, or employment roll, to find out in what categories they have been underpaying their workers from 1969 until now, because I would be the first person to vote for these people to get their money.

The point I am making with regard to this programme is that I am sure the Minister feels, as you and I do, that it is high time, since it was launched as a private scheme, it should have covered at least all of the primary schools and by this time we should be looking forward to encompassing the Comprehensive Schools, the Private Secondary Schools, and the children in those schools who we find in need of such a service.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I would not be very long. For one thing the Barbados Labour Party, through their Spokesman, said that they would sell the pots and pans to Victor Chase. I am not blaming the hon. member for St. Peter for that, but any kudos for the School Meals Service belongs to the Democratic Labour Party. The other side said that it was not possible and made a lot of excuses until we introduced it, be that as it may. Today we hear, and I share his view, what he is asking for from a bankrupt Government with no money in the Treasury. He is asking that Private Schools, Secondary Schools and every School should be involved in a scheme which is costing nearly $4 million right now. He is asking for an extension which we have planned. When the people return us here we intend to extend it. In the same breath they are going to remove the 5% sales tax, increase the revenue and extend expenditure by $1 million! If the people of Barbados put on their thinking-caps they would never listen to them at all. The moment they get in they will remove the 5% sales tax, and yet we hear them in the same breath asking for an increase in a scheme which will cost the country millions of dollars. From where would they get the money? Would they pick some lime leaves and turn them into money? When you really analyse some of the arguments of the Opposition, you will really wonder if Barbadians are fools. They are going to cut down the revenue by this vicious 5% sales tax as soon as they get into power, and they are going to extend the School Meals Service to Private, Secondary and Comprehensive Schools. I am very amused at these monkey arguments that I hear from time to time.

Mr. Chairman, the people must be told the truth. We are committed to extending the scheme, but you cannot do it overnight. There are several demands on the national cake. Do you think that they could argue for the extension of a scheme which we ourselves initiated over their opposition, and which we initiated when they said it was not possible? Can they get up in this Chamber and argue for it more fervently than the Government that initiated it and is committed to its extension? Do they want the public to believe that they argue for its extension and we are the ones who did it over violent opposition, when they said when we were dealing with free secondary education that both schemes were impossible? Do you know when the people of Barbados will understand what life is all about? When you hear that bell ring, and you are coming down the straight cantering, a lot of horses will start out hot and sweatily leading the field and the public – and I have absolute faith in the Barbadian public – will realise which Party and which group of people have been fooling them, and which Party and which group of people have been working in their interest

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, if I may reply –

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for St. Joseph caught my eye first.

Mr. BOLDEN: It grieves me to think that the hon. member will talk and then walk out of

the Chamber because the more I hear from him the more I am convinced that old age is taking over his brain before it has taken over his body. 4.05 p.m.

If it has been alleged and proved that a member of the Barbados Labour Party said that we would sell the pots and pans of the school meals service to Victor Chase, I am not seeking to deny that. As he said the scheme now costs $4 million. I did not hear the remark, and if he knows it is true and the public knows it is true, let us admit that a member of the Barbados Labour Party said it. But I want to put that statement against the statement of the Hon. Prime Minister that he would like to drive around Barbados and not see a cane blade standing. How much is the sugar industry of Barbados worth in relation to the $4 million which we are spending on school meals? Let the Minister who has now gone outside try to acquire some of the brains he once had and work out that calculation, because he likes to get up and talk about the people of Barbados having sense. The people of Barbados have sense, so why is it that the very party which says that they were against agriculture is now preaching agriculture and sugar cane cutting day in and day out?

I do not know if the report is right, but I heard over the last week a report which says that the Minister of Agriculture will join with any organisation who wants to go and cut canes, and I have seen in the newspapers of this country the Hon. Prime Minister in association with the Minister of Agriculture in a cane field cutting canes when they are the people who said that agriculture was *infra dig* in this country. You cannot have it both ways. If we made a mistake about school meals at the time or made a statement which was proved wrong, they have made an even greater mistake in respect of the sugar industry in which they have now taken over the marketing of sugar in order to salvage what is left of this country. He must not talk this foolishness, because the people of Barbados will realise who is honest and who is dishonest, who speaks with sincerity or those who believe in bandying political words to fool them outside. The recently used word in all circles is "prevarication" in politics.

The hon. member talks about the school meals service which costs $4 million and what an expansion of the scheme would cost. I would like to see the Government if it is really serious about agriculture, if it is not only now paying lip service because we are in the grips of a situation where the price of food is rising day after day, institute a policy whereby he encourages particularly schools in the country districts to utilise the lands which surround the schools and get the children to grow more food as was done in the 1930s and 1940s and supply the school meals service and help feed themselves. I would like to see also that this question of getting children involved in agriculture extended to the secondary schools which are also located in areas where there is agricultural land attached or closely related to the schools, and let us start to look at it now.

Mr. Chairman, Combermere School is at Codrington. Sun Farms vacated Codrington leaving a few acres which are growing nothing but grass and a few yams after somebody wrote a letter to the Press about Sun Farms and the fields doing nothing. What is wrong with a system or a programme whereby these children at Combermere School can be encouraged to go across the road and be taught the fundamentals of agriculture? We in Barbados have got a belief that as long as you go through the doors of what is called a secondary school, whether it be Government-aided or purely Government, that you are withdrawn from anything called agriculture, and therefore it is *infra-dig* and dirty for you to put your hands in the dirt. I would like to see the Minister forthwith call those in authority and instruct them to let us utilise the land at Codrington that is lying idle. It is an indictment against this Government that the ex-Minister of Agriculture can now be holding press conferences and saying that he is now going to ask the Government and these international organisations to assist his group NAYFAM to use the unutilised or under-utilised land of Government, some 500 acres which is lying around this country. It is an indictment against that Government because it means that they have no agricultural policy. If you want to feed the school meals programme, I contend that Barbados is capable and able to grow at least 80 percent of the food it needs to feed the school meals programme only if you had a policy and a structure for doing it. Let us go into the country districts and look at the Lodge School. The Lodge School is surrounded by land. It is a boarding institution and I have not yet heard the Minister or anybody say that they are going to ask Guinea, Society or Colleton to give them the use of one of the fields right next to the school in order that they can start a programme of growing some of the food we need and at the same time educate these children in the fundamentals of agriculture. You come out of secondary school and go into University and then at that age you hear people talking about agriculture and community development where the land is right there other than in cities like New York,

Washington or Toronto where you have to travel miles and miles before you can find an open space of land where you can involve yourself in agriculture.

You talk, Mr. Chairman, about the high cost of the programme. If the Minister who has just spoken and went outside knew what he was talking about, he would stop criticising and look at a policy and see what he can do rather than get up and spout words out of his mouth that have no meaning whatsoever. If you go to St. Peter, you will see that Coleridge Parry School is on a hill surrounded by land, but you do not hear anything about them getting involved in agriculture. The new St. George secondary school is built in an agricultural community, but in spite of that they are putting up fences to fence the whole area at a terrific cost to Government. In St. Philip the Princess Margaret school is surrounded by land. As a matter of fact the Government is planning, if hon. members do not know, to get rid of the sheep breeding station at Six Roads to turn it into an industrial estate, and you have thousands of children pouring in and out of that school daily and living in an agricultural district, and I doubt whether any of them have had the opportunity or guidance of going outside and looking at one or two of these sheep to see how they develop. The schools themselves can be made to provide the bulk of the produce they need and cut down the actual cost of the taxpayers of this country.

I would like the Hon. Minister to think in such terms that where schools get involved in producing the food they need in the school meals programme, that those schools, provided they are in an area where they have the land, should be given the priority of the benefits of the school meals programme. Now the Minister got in here and talked about Freddie Miller saying he would sell the pots and pans to Victor Chase. Policies change from year to year, customs change from decade to decade and people's views change as we go along. The Hon. Prime Minister held a meeting outside Government House, but when he came into Parliament his party moved a Bill through this House which prevents anybody from going in front Government House and keeping a political meeting, and the Minister was a member of that party at the time when that was done.
4.15 p.m.

What would he say to that now? As we go along in this world, Mr. Chairman, our thoughts, our views, our intelligence develop. I have sat in this Chamber and heard Mr. Cameron Tudor when he was leader of this House said that when they were in Opposition they opposed the building of the Deep Water Harbour despite the fact that they knew it was the salvation to Barbados, but, because they were in Opposition and they wanted to get into power they said what they thought the people would have liked. But the Honourable Minister, he could not stand the brunt of being in Opposition. He left and he ran to Jamaica. He came back when the pickings were sweet; so he does not know anything about what the Opposition says. He has second-hand knowledge. He is not like those who sat over here when we were over there and took the licks until they got there. He enjoyed the sweets; and his habit is to go outside and make his pronouncements and then come back and get annoyed when you remind him of them. That is his position; but he should first develop in his own mind, a policy for Barbados. He cannot do it.

Time has proved that when he should have sat in Opposition and develop a policy for Barbados, he left and went where the grass was greener, and he came back when rain had fallen on this patch and the grass seemed green, and he picked up then. He is not accustomed to green grass. He is not like the country mule that eats dry grass in the hard time and enjoys the green blades in the crop season. He likes the green grass all the time.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of explanation, Mr. Chairman. Why did not the Opposition send some of their own people abroad? I came back, ran away, came back, walked in here like I own it, and their people who stayed here are still outside looking in. Why don't they plan sending some abroad where the grass is greener, let the rain fall, and hope that they come back and give them a majority.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely no point of explanation.

Mr. BOLDEN: He walked in here like he owns it. He walks in here in such a position, that he is an Attorney General and did not know until he sat down in his friend Boxill's house and heard that he was relegated to road-building. That is the position he enjoys. His position of prominence and his ability are such that he was removed from an Attorney General of Barbados to a road-builder, the graveyard of politics. Those who have taken the brunt and those who have sat down in Barbados and helped developed a policy for Barbados deserve to talk in here. I will listen to them; I will take what they say. They have developed a policy.

I want him to sit down in his own political party and work out a policy for Barbados, and

stop criticising, criticising which when the bell hit next time – I have told him that I do not expect to see him back in here next time. I have told him so, and I put it on record because I believe, Mr. Chairman, it is a constructive policy in these times of inflation that matters to people outside. No longer political shilly-shallying is going to matter.

As I told the Honourable Minister, look carefully at the schools in Barbados; look and see that the whole tenor of occupation in Barbados is changing; look and see that Barbados will now have to depend on agro-industries, and feed itself, rather than the so-called industrialisation which has been advanced before; look and see that your training has got to begin in the schools, and the best way to do it is by an incentive. Let the schools know – if you can get people back in the gardens, not as a punishment, but help them to help themselves, and give them incentives, I believe we will go further than where we are going now.

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Chairman, I should just like to reply to some of the remarks made by the hon. member for St. Joseph, as far as food production is concerned in Barbados. Now when we think of the history of Barbados and its peoples, and the fact that young people do not work the land today, this is something that you have got to trace from the very beginning; and Barbados has been pursuing a course of education, has always prided itself of educational facilities and all the rest of it, as well as our class system in Barbados tends to operate against the man in the street and the common man.

There are very bad things being said about poor people in this country, and they are being looked down upon by various members of society. With this background you are expecting us now to motivate young people to get back on the land. Now this is a big problem. How do we do it? We are all very much aware that we should have young people involved in agriculture. We have been trying to pursue the 4-H movement and from my inception into the Ministry of Agriculture I have paid special attention to the 4-H movement; I have been able to get the vote increased from a mere $2,000 when I first went there as a Parliamentary Secretary, to now $45,000; and we have been giving increasing emphasis to the 4-H movement every year. This year it will have an added incentive.

I have held talks with the Minister of Education about having school lands planted all over again; we have made very pertinent plans so far, and we are trying to include more provision in the new Estimates, to accommodate school gardens and to have more activity on the land around the school. We agree with that; but the attitude with which I am confronted now and which I have inherited as Minister of Agriculture over fifteen months ago is none of my making. *(Asides.)* I have inherited all the problems of agriculture today. I get all the blame for agriculture; get this straight. For all this time I have never had anything for agriculture; I have never been provided with money to work agriculture in this Island. Look at the financial institutions. The Agricultural Credit Bank has a bare grant of $167,000 from this Legislature, and that is the one which cares for small farmers' loans.

Now in this year, with the food crisis and all the rest of it, when you want to stimulate farmers into producing more food and there are no long-term loans available what must be done? But we know that the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank has always had over the years, proper money to help farmers to grow canes.

I have, I will repeat, inherited a host of problems. I have not made the Ministry of Agriculture's staff what it is is. This has started years ago, and there is all kind of conspiracy and intrigue in that Ministry. There are problems with which I have to grapple, and I have spent a lot of time trying to sort out staff problems. People are more loyal to individuals in the Ministry of Agriculture than they are to the money they draw from Government for doing a day's work; and as long as you have people attached to individual people, whether they are the Chief Agricultural Officers or Deputy Agricultural Officers or whoever they are, or if they are former Ministers, I do not know, but once you have this kind of attachment it would be difficult for an individual like me to come on the last fifteen months, and to make the kind of break-through that you all would like to see; and I have been beseiged by various problems in the Ministry, which have always been related to proper financing. The whole social attitude to agricultural pursuits and the high class Barbadian society which looks down on people because they plough the field or do agricultural work, this is the thing with which we are now faced.

4.25 p.m.

It is my conviction that agriculture is the ground work on which we should build our stand today. I also know that Barbados now has middle class aristocrats as far as the intelligentsia are concerned. You have a big top base with all

intellectuals and a small base. Therefore the whole island is upside down.

What we should do is pursue a gradual development. If you base your development on agriculture you should go in for agricultural expansion with the emphasis on agro industries. I agree with the hon. member for St. Joseph that we should have agro industrial development rather than just industrial development, because you use the raw materials from your agriculture towards your agro industries, and you provide employment. Go above the pyramid.

We have enough intellectuals in Barbados. If you have a society that is now plagued by all intellectuals and there are no men to bring the water and to cut the wood, you must have a poor financial basis on which to work. We have made people great intellectuals, and at the same time we have not been able to produce the kind of incentives that would keep people on the soil.

I have put up a whole set of incentives to the Ministry of Finance which have been receiving their attention for the last three or four months, and which I hope to announce to the House when they are ready. I am eagerly awaiting the outcome of these proposals.

I have tried in my own way to get the land at Codrington started again. I have got a half acre of it planted and we have been able to reap yams, potatoes, corn and okras. I have had some very interesting figures from that land at Codrington by way of production costs, because when I asked about working the land at Codrington I was given an estimate by the experts that it would take $29,000 in order to get the land back into operation. I spent $4,000. I figured it out between myself and an officer. I have been able to make a start for $4,000 and we have made money.

The kind of advice which is being given to the Ministry nowadays by professional people is not always the highest advice. That is the background and the framework within which we have to operate. I must rely on my technical staff. If they have other loyalties, and their advice is effective, what do you expect me as a layman and a Minister to do? What am I to do when you have got people working for the Government's money who are more prepared to go outside and tell people about the defects of the Ministry of Agriculture? There are things that I do not know myself. I am never told that so and so is happening at such and such a place. I am told by other people.

It is sabotage and conspiracy. That is what Barbados does to poor people like me, coming from my particular background, from among the common man whom they now want to go into the cane fields and work the land. That is what they have in store for people like me. They do not feel that people like me should be in the House of Assembly or be Minister of Agriculture. That is what I have to tolerate because people are not going to be honest enough and loyal enough to give good and honest advice for the money that they earn from the Government or to report matters that are bad for the Ministry so that I can take appropriate action.

What I do not know as Minister may be well known to other people. How in the name of God can a man operate? So it goes back to the same thing that because of Barbados' Class society, the forces of evil will combine in the dark and try to bring chaos.

I have treated every officer in my Ministry as a man working for Government's money. I do not have any favourites in the Ministry of Agriculture. I tell you what I feel about Government's work. I do not have anybody to pet. So it is difficult for me to break the stranglehold that has come over the Ministry for the last eight or nine years.

As far as the lands in St. Andrew are concerned, we all remember that we okayed a Resolution last November for $4 million for the Agricultural Development Corporation. It is that land that has been causing the Government no end of losses, and we decided that we would take those lands from the ADC because they kept on bringing out losses every year for the last five or six years.

When I first took over the Ministry I tried to get the ADC accounts to some kind of reasonable standard and to bring them to the House of Assembly. They had not filed a return for the last three or four years. I did that because I did not want to have a situation where there were losses on Government plantations and this Chamber was not aware of the situation. (ASIDE: You have not changed the ADC Board) You do not change a Board just like that. That will happen in due course. I have passed one hurdle.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. The Hon. Minister brought in the question of the ADC. I think that he should be able to tell this Hon. Chamber if he still has the same Board and that it has been growing crops

on this land and has been losing thousands of dollars.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of elucidation at all.

Hon. A. MORRISON: We have taken the lands from them which they said were unprofitable. That happened when we approved the Resolution last November. We are now instituting the new programme. We have to see how that works before we change the Board. We have to watch it because we have passed one hurdle, but we have got plans for those lands which will appear in the new Estimates. We plan to have livestock development at the lands in the Sedgepond and the Scotland Districts. We have planted some grass and we hope to plant some orchards in the area. We will intensify our programme in this Financial Year, and plant other orchards depending on what seedlings we get from the Haggatts nursery. You will hear about these plans before long.

We have been trying to do a job under these conditions, and as far as the diversification programme is concerned, we have made a lot of break through in research done between 1965-68 by Dr. Evis, the OAS expert. It is a very big problem in Barbados. You are aware that I am charged with production and not with marketing; and there has been a lot of talk today about supplying vegetables to the Marketing Corporation and the high cost of this and that. I would like to say, however, that all that we have grown at our estates and plantations and at our research stations we have supplied to the Marketing Corporation at a very reasonable cost. 4.35 p.m.

We have supplied BMC at a very reasonable cost, but the BMC has no proper storage facilities. They cater to a few farmers by way of guaranteed prices but when they are able to get these supplies there is nothing wrong with making contracts because they are able to secure the contracts. It is the other people who are not in a position to secure a market that dump a lot of produce at BMC so there is no reason why the BMC should not make money. There is the question of the marketing facilities being upgraded, and I know that Government is now considering that. A lot of good produce goes through BMC and they have done a very good job in distributing it to the various public Institutions, but still we hear they do not make money. According to the system therefore it means that something is going wrong down there that they have to incur all these losses. You get a lot of spoilage and wastage because of inadequate storage and packaging. Some of the things are condemned when they could still be sold but in a Government Institution people do not take all this into consideration.

Mr. Chairman, I will reply at another time when I can hammer out the agricultural policy for the information of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, if I may reply briefly to the points made during this debate, and I would like to take the points as they were raised.

As far as the St. Clement's School Meals Centre is concerned, I am grateful to the member for St. Lucy for drawing to my attention the situation at that particular centre. I would like to inform him that we are aware of the problem at the centre and that indeed measures to alleviate the problem have already started. The roof of the St. Clement's School Meals Centre was raised, I believe some year or two ago, and we are also now contemplating the installation of the type of system which would take off the heat to which the hon. member referred, so I would like to again express my thanks to him for drawing this matter to my attention and to assure him that it is one which we are giving consideration to.

As far as the St. Matthias' Schools are concerned, I would like to place this matter within the context of the total expansion of the school meals centre. I am not going into the whole matter of who would get praise for the establishment of a school meals programme or not, this is a matter of history and a matter of fact, and the people of Barbados know that that programme was introduced by this Democratic Labour Party Government and that that Government is therefore in the best position to determine the pace and the nature of any expansion in that particular programme. We are indeed pleased to see that the Opposition Barbados Labour Party has moved from a position of vehement and violent opposition to that particular programme which has social, educational and economic benefits as far as this country is concerned.

Mr. FORDE: On a point of explanation. I do not like to interrupt the hon. member, but I heard represented in here that the Barbados Labour Party was violently opposed to the school meals programme and I want to get the record straight because I have gone into research on the reports of speeches made on this matter and there was no opposition to the programme. What the Party said was that it did not think it could have been introduced immediately because we

were told then that the school meals would have been given to everybody all the time and that the economy could not stand it. We must get the facts, Sir.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Obviously the hon. member for Christ Church West did not do his research thoroughly enough. I do not doubt that he did some research but it obviously was not thorough enough, but I am not dealing with that particular matter. What I would like to say is that it is the policy of this Government subject to the availability of the necessary funds to expand the school meals programme to all of the children in the public primary schools of this country. That is the objective. We cannot expand that programme faster than the capacity of the country or the resources that are at our disposal. This is a fact. Sometimes you live in a house and you want to carry out an extension, whether it is to provide an additional room or improve bathroom facilities or some particular amenity to improve the conditions under which you live, but you have to wait until you are able to do it depending upon your income and access to funds, to materials and to the personnel to carry out this work. It is the same with Government's projects, and we have to expand this programme in accordance with the availability of the funds and the economic climate, and our capacity to carry out the expansion. We are going to expand to all the primary schools; this is the immediate objective. The next expansion we have in mind, I would like to assure the member that I refer to St. Paul's. We are currently working on the plans for including the St. Paul's Primary School into the programme, and we are also at the same time looking at the facilities necessary for including the St. Matthias' Schools into the programme, and I would expect that this could be done within a short period of time. I see the hon. member for Christ Church West, my very good friend, across there asking when, but I would like to tell him that when it is done it would not be of any benefit to him so I do not know why he is pressing it.

Mr. FORDE: If the hon. member is trying to say that it is after the next elections when I am already gone I can understand that.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I would like to say that this school, like all the other public primary schools, will be included in the programme. As far as the expansion of this programme for the provision of meals to children of secondary schools is concerned, I would like to say that at this present time that is not a possibility.

4.45 p.m.

For those children in the schools who, because of financial difficulties, or other restraints, find it a handicap to obtain meals, there is a provision under the Ministry of Health and Welfare for educational assistance whereby the parents can make an approach to that particular Ministry to obtain necessary funds to assist them with school lunches, the purchase of uniforms and other things. That is a vote which is under the control of the Ministry of Health and Welfare. It is not within the Ministry of Education, and that particular source would have to be used for the time being to assist those persons who find it difficult to obtain the assistance which would enable them to attend school in as dignified a manner as possible.

I would also like to add that there are certain schools which, without the assistance of Government or any other agency of their own volition, organised assistance for pupils who may be in need in their schools in this regard. These are unheralded areas and concern for pupils which take place within our schools and which the general public does not normally know about. Some of them actually prepare meals and provide meals either through the school itself, through the Parent Teachers' Association, or some other arrangement within the school.

I should like to express my own personal view, and it is that, if there is any expansion of the programme beyond the primary level, this expansion should be in terms of those children who are under 5 years of age as a supplement to the meals provided by the home. It is my view that that type of supplement should go to the younger children who are in need of building up their body tissues and other resources of their body. I do not have to wait until the hon. member for St. Joseph says that we have no plan for the expansion of the programme. We did a costing of this in 1974. I should like to say that to extend that programme to the Secondary Schools would cost an additional, at 1974 prices, $2,123,700 for the school population of 1974. To expand it, again at 1974 prices, to the additional schools – I believe there were 19 schools at the time – would cost an additional $2.792 million. It is at the primary level that we are concentrating to implement that phase of our programme.

I should like, as far as agriculture is concerned, merely to say that our schools are placing more emphasis on agriculture and that we are recruiting persons to work at one school, or more than one school, in the area of Agricultural Science, and that Agricultural Science is, in fact, on the programme not only of some Primary

Schools, but also at some Secondary Schools as well, and we are expanding this including the St. George Secondary School where the hon. member for St. Joseph, apparently, believes that that programme does not exist. That sort of thing will be found at the West St. Joseph School and at the Princess Margaret School to which he has referred as though you would have to wait until some sheep farm is moved there in order to get the programme moving. It is already there. I think I have dealt with most of the points that have been raised, Mr. Chairman, and I think I have already moved that this Head stands part.

The question that Head 27(9) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 27(11) – Government Industrial Schools – was called.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 27 (11) – Government Industrial Schools – stand part.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Chairman, I see here that the note to Item 4 – Livestock – states that there has been an increase in the cost of livestock and poultry feed and the additional provision is required to offset the increased costs. I wonder whether this is a true and accurate note. On the last occasion when I visited the school in late October there was no poultry there at all. I do not know what this vote is to offset. The problem at the time was, as I explained last week, that the residents of the school raised chickens, sold them, and the money had to be placed in the General Revenue. In the circumstances, it was necessary for them to make a new application in order to get money to buy new chickens. This note should have been written along this line. They do not want poultry feed, but they want new chickens. That is why I asked the Minister last week to look into the system whereby something can be done to improve things.

Mr. Chairman, we hear a lot of talk about agriculture. A lot of land in that area is owned by the Government, and some of the land that has been given to the Tutors at the schools should be taken away and given to the people in order to encourage them to go in for agriculture. The main point I want to make is that this system of having the revenue from the sale of the produce at the Industrial School being paid into the Treasury should be reviewed and a Board of Trustees established so that the money could be used to replenish the chickens and so on which may be needed from time to time. This is a classic example of what I was speaking about last week.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not unmindful of the fact that the hon. member for the City spoke last week on this matter. I am, indeed, looking into the matter which he raised then and has reiterated on this occasion. There is nothing wrong with the note on this particular Item. It is in respect of a supplement for the feed requirement of the livestock and also because money will be needed to supplement the cost and upkeep of chickens in this particular area of the operation. There is a net profit of something like $2,073.42 from the poultry operation. The revenue is paid into the Treasury, like all other accounts, and therefore when you need additional funds we have to keep things in this particular way. I will certainly investigate the suggestion which the hon. member for the City has raised.

The question that Head 27(11) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

4.55 p.m.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Resolution for the sum of $1,312,498 do now pass.

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1974-75
No. 29

Head 9 (2) Planning Division – was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, in moving the passing of Head 9(2) for the sum of $14,000, I would like to give a little additional information. On Item 2 – Research, the Planning Division of the Ministry is seeking a supplement of $14,000 for expenditure to the end of the financial year. This is for final payment to an energy consultant in connection with petroleum and natural gas – $5,000; (b) an actuarial consultant in the Ministry of Planning – $4,000 and (c) additional research activities in the sum of $5,000. As far as Item (b) actuarial consultant is concerned, the Planning Division has acquired the services of an actuarial consultant for the insurance section of the Ministry. He is presently carrying out a comprehensive study of the insurance activities for the Standard Insurance

Committee and other matters under the Insurance Act, 1970. Subsistence and travelling allowance payable to this officer is $800 per month and the services will be required for five months in the first instance.

The information on the I.D.C. research activities is that the amount of $5,000 is being sought to meet expenses to enable the Ministry to carry on the survey of the industrial activities and economic development of the Island.

I beg to move that Head 9(2) Planning Division, stand part.

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

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, before this matter is put to the vote there are a couple of points I would like to make. The comments will be specifically related to the second section of the note on this item of Research which says "and to enable a survey of the Industrial activities and economic development of this Island to be done." I am in total agreement that some kind of survey and assessment should be made of the industrial activity which is taking place in the Island, and indeed some kind of assessment should be made of the economic development such as it is which is taking place in this country.

I must say, Mr. Chairman, that I would be failing in my duty if I did not draw to the attention of the Honourable Chamber a number of problems which I have raised in this House on more than one occasion and which quite naturally have exercised my attention for a number of years. On the question first of industrial activity and the whole operation of this, I think this is something which you have got to take a very serious look at. Naturally from the point of view, Mr. Chairman, of the kind of industries which we attract into this country of ours and the fact that the industries seem to be so brittle in that at the slightest bit of difficulty which confronts any of these industries they seem to run into a lot of trouble, and having presumably spent a lot of money in getting them here and allowing them tax holidays and what have you, then one must call into question how much we are getting, if any, out of this kind of activity. As I have said in here on more than one occasion, we need to take a serious look at this to examine what has happened in the past, to assess what contribution industrial activity has made to this country and to the people of this country, and having done this, I am sure that we would get an opportunity to look at the matter in as wide a perspective as possible, and then examine whether we have fallen down, for indeed we have fallen down, in any area, and this would give us additional information which would enable us to move on and at least get a firmer foundation on which we can build our industrial development.

In spite of all that has been said about the industrial programme of the Government, I think that there is need for some diversification in economic activity, for instance, diversification in the job opportunities which are offered to people, and there can be no doubt that a broadening of the base of industrial activity will satisfy this need. As I have said, we have to examine this very carefully because it would seem to me as if we are not getting back in return what we are really putting in or what we should be getting back from the amount of money that we are spending in our industrial programme.

Now another point I would like to raise on this matter is the fact that when one looks around Barbados one would see that there is a concentration and it is becoming more and more so of industrial activity in the urban and suburban area, and this causes some measure of concern to me on a number of fronts. In the first instance, I think you would agree with me, Mr. Chairman, that this is going to lead to a development as indeed it has already done, of a number of pressures on a number of our services. Take transportation for example. When you have industries and industrial activity concentrated in an urban area, you will see the amount of confusion which will be caused at certain hours, particularly the peak hours, and this in itself can lead to a tremendous amount of loss. This is one thing we have to take into consideration. This is a very important point.

The other point I would like to make is that people have to travel long distances in order to reach to their places of occupation and the method of transportation which we have in Barbados is not the swiftest, and I would imagine that if people have to travel from St. Lucy to St. Michael for a job, very often when they reach they have already done a job in itself. What I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, is that one of the things which we have to look at is the whole idea of spreading out our industrial development and having a more balanced kind of industrial development in Barbados, and not concentrating industrial activity in one particular area. I would suggest that if this is done employment opportunities would be provided in areas where people would not have to travel these

long distances, and where people all over the country would have greater access to job opportunities, and then the kind of pressures which I have indicated will be lessened, because one of the other pressures which would quite naturally develop is that you will find that people would move swiftly into areas where jobs are easily available. If we are talking about the balanced growth and balanced development of this country, then we have to look at this matter and provide opportunities for employment in areas where people live so that the pressures which we now get on the urban centres in housing would be removed. This is something which we can control and which we can spread out, because at least if people have jobs near where they were born, then naturally they would prefer to stay there. This is one aspect, but we would have to look at the whole aspect of rural development, social development and the whole aspect of economic development and try to broaden it out and have as broad a base as possible so as to carry benefits to people who are living in the rural areas.

Now this brings me on therefore to another point and something which has also been exercising my mind and has been of some tremendous concern to me for a long time, that is, the whole question of rural development.
5.05 p.m.

It is probably good to see that the Economical Planning Unit is having a survey carried out on economic development in Barbados. It would be interesting to see what the results of this survey would be; but it is my contention that very little is being done on the question of rural development. We have got to look at our country as a whole and try to get away from the unbalanced kind of development which is taking place – the undue concentration, or the heavy concentration of activity in a small area; and as I have said, if we can spread out our development into the rural areas as much as possible, well then I contend that the country would stand to gain from it and we will be able to get many more benefits from our society out of the kind of money which we are spending in this kind of activities.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the surveys which are being carried out will be index surveys of really what is going on and that they will give a true picture of the situation as it exists, and that they will provide the kind of guidelines which will lead to a more balanced development and more balanced growth in Barbados.

The question that Head 9(2) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 9(3) – Income Tax Division – was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 9(3) stand part.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

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

Head 21(4) – Town and Country Planning Division – was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, Head 21(4). In this case it is, more or less, a revote, Sir.

I beg to move that Head 21(4) stand part.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

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

Head 9(6) – Land Valuation Division – was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, the rates of travelling have been increased as from the 1st July, 1974. That is the explanation, Sir.

I beg to move that Head 9(6) stand part.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, there has been a considerable amount of activity by the Land Valuation Division which affects the livelihood of many people in this country. There has been some expenditure so far as travelling as far as Australia is concerned, where some of our officers have gone in connection with getting a greater insight into what should be done or what could be done to bring our Land Valuation and our property valuation into line with that of many other countries.

Mr. Chairman, I know the Leader of the House will tell us exactly how much money has been spent in sending the head of the Land Valuation Division abroad, but, what is now taking place is, requiring house owners to submit to the Land Valuation Division particulars regarding the sizes of their rooms and what they themselves estimate would be the value, and things of that sort.

I believe, Sir, that this is more than an imposition on people at this particular time. We cannot escape perhaps until the Government is changed, the amount of taxes that you now pay. People are aware of this. What measures they will employ in due process is a matter for conjecture; but when the Land Valuation Division is undertaking such a survey, one important thing about this whole matter is that it should be done in such a way as to give householders or property owners proper, a feeling of confidence that the Government knows what it is really about and that there can be no shilly-shally exercise being indulged in by anybody.

If it is Government's decision to place a tax of one-half of one percent or whatever it might be that they contemplate, on houses, – the land is already taxed – and if it is, there are enough valuation experts and there are enough property valuers who could be gainfully employed and whose valuations would be respected by property owners.

One of the things, Mr. Chairman, that continues to hurt many of our people who have been called upon to pay various sums as land taxes is the fact that the system employed in arriving at what is called the site value – or whatever they decide to call it – the system employed has been one with suspicion running from top to bottom. Mr. Chairman, people today believe that it was done in some cases with spite or malice in some areas, that they wilfully devalued the property of certain persons; that if Government has its plan that a road should be cut through this particular area that they have carefully gone about in such a way to have placed a very low value on the lands that they hoped that they would eventually be called upon to acquire for prosecuting their project or putting it into effect, whatever it might be. We admit Mr. Chairman, that an aggrieved person has a right to appeal against it, but, Mr. Chairman, you could not appeal against it without money. All of this involves additional expenditure on the part of the land owner, and we are inviting the Government to act in such a way with its house valuation that it does not bring additional burdens to those persons who now own property in this Island.
5.15 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I am convinced that you will agree with me that there is hardly any incentive, looking at the taxation methods that the Government employs from time to time, for any person to acquire property in Barbados today, and particularly for young people.

There was a time when every Barbadian felt really proud when he could acquire a square foot of soil. I am sure that today if you want to leave some land for your children you have to leave it in trust. There is no incentive to own property. People who own property today will tell you that it is costing them much more money to live in their own homes than if they had to pay for somewhere to rent, when you think of the insurance and taxes and the like that you have to pay.

It does not present a good feature for our boys and girls. It is part of our characteristic, part of the upbringing of people in Barbados throughout the centuries that the possession of a piece of the soil was something that went down deeply. All of this has now been washed away.

Why is this, Mr. Chairman? We call on the Government to stop this business of valuing property and houses in such a manner that it deters people from becoming owners or continuing as owners. We are satisfied that the Government must collect taxes, but Mr. Chairman, we are particularly worried to be able to find out or to give the taxpayers satisfaction as to what the Government is really doing with the vast amount of taxes being collected.

We have to pay taxes of some sort, but taxation must not be burdensome at all times, and this has been the Government's policy for the longest time; and it is time that it be brought to an end. We have quite a number of officers engaged in travelling here and travelling there consequent on the Government's decision to impose a tax on houses. The Government ought to know that the tax which is going to be applied to some houses is going to turn out in the long run to be more than what the house is really worth; because as in the case of the land tax, according to the present system, within about 10 years you will have paid for the land all over again. Can that be right, just, fair or reasonable?

We have a system which is inviting every person who is in possession of land to get rid of it rather than remaining a property owner. We are going to pay for this because parents are now spending heavily and having a good time and never thinking of saving or putting by anything for the children to inherit. You can talk what you like about the Minister of Communications and Works but he knows his plans for his children. I know my own plans, but it is just that I am not prepared to let my thoughts and feelings towards my offspring be broken by the present method of burdensome taxation that we have today.

We are going to hear that there is taxation all over the world, but I am still calling on the Government that when they finally bring into effect their taxation plans in respect of house ownership that it should not fall as a burden on the present owners who are already taxed heavily in respect of their land.

Each property in each area has its own specific value. There are enough experts in our midst to give appropriate and reasonable valuation of each house in each area; and we want to find ourselves back in the position where the Government's valuation of people's houses or lands is the type of valuation that can be considered such a type that you can get a certificate and take it to the bank tomorrow or to an Attorney-at-Law or whatever it may be and do business on the strength of the valuation.

What we are practising in Barbados at the present time is to use valuation merely to collect taxes; but in truth and in fact that valuation bears no relation to the true worth of the land or the house as the case may be. I hope that the day will soon come when the people of this country reach the end of all this. The present Government seems to be money changing people. Their concern is money wherever it comes from. I am saying here and now that Jesus found it necessary to go into the Temple and overthrow the money changers. I hope to have the opportunity during my election campaign, whenever it comes, to call on the people to go into the Temple of the Government and throw out the money changers.
5.25 p.m.

I believe that enough has been said for Government to understand that in preparing their land tax roll or their house tax roll the owners of houses want to feel in their minds that they are fairly, reasonably and justly assessed and that the taxes apply to their particular house or land or property as the case may be.

The question that Head 9(6) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 13 – Customs – was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 13 stand part.

Hon. A. MORRISON: 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 $36,344 do now pass.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. A. MORRISON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. A. MORRISON, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

QUESTION TIME

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I beg to move that Question Time be now taken.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

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

QUESTION RE BLOCKAGE OF ROADWAY AT ASHBURY PLANTATION, ST. GEORGE

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The first question, according to the numbers given, is in the name of the hon. Member for St. George North and it is Question No. 271.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, since Your Honour is in the position that you cannot ask the question I will read Question No. 271.

"Is Government aware that the present owner of Ashbury Plantation in the parish of St. George has blocked the road joining St. Jude's Village onto Highway No. 3 in St. John and has not provided for its tenants a road to church and market? Will Government investigate this inconvenience which these tenants suffer and relieve them of the discomfort of being chased by car, and gun shots fired over their heads when the tenants attempt to travel on the blocked road?

The answer to that question, Sir, is as follows:

The Plantation road which is privately owned was blocked in order to ensure the protection and security of the property. Highway 3D which is adjacent to the property is near to Church and Market. The road is a short cut used by the tenants and not an access to Church and Market. However, the owners of the Plantation have agreed to let the tenants use the road as a short cut when going to Church.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Communications would tell us how long these people had been passing over this road without being obstructed or molested in any way.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I understand that they have been passing over this road for some considerable time, but as is customary in this type of thing the roads are blocked annually for a period of time. It is a common practice with plantations, especially at the beginning of the year, and I have known this to take place from the time I was growing up. This has been the case according to my investigations.

Mr. HINDS: Is this, Mr. Chairman, not a case where new owners have acquired this plantation and want to scare people away? What about the gun shots being fired over the heads of people? What does the Minister have to say about this? Is it true that gun shots have been fired over their heads, and have the police been brought into this to investigate this matter? It is all right to talk about the security of the property and the like, but you do not secure it by gun shots, not in Barbados.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the police have not been brought in to investigate the matter because the owners have denied firing gun shots. They have denied it to the Chief Technical Officer who investigated.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Would the Minister state whether or not the owners admitted doing anything beside blocking the road? Did they admit harassing the users of the road?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The owners have complained, at least Mr. Gill said, that the blocking of the road was done for two main reasons. Vehicles, including heavy duty ones, were using the road extensively therefore causing a danger to his family and to pedestrians. There was also a lot of vandalism done to the plantation house.

Mr. HINDS: Can the Minster tell us if the owners who suffered from this vandalism brought the police in to investigate the vandalism?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: There is nothing on the file to indicate what action the owners took.
5.35 p.m.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope the Minister will take steps to see that we do not have a recurrence of Swain again on this matter.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am entirely unaware of what the reference to Swain means. It means nothing to me.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Sir, if the Minister would look on his right he would appreciate the significance of the reference to Swain.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I should like hon. members to ask questions instead of making statements, please. Question No. 283 in the name of the Leader of the Opposition.

COST OF MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS' VISIT TO PERU

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, No. 283: To enquire of the appropriate Minister: What is the cost of the recent visit of the Minister of External Affairs to Peru to represent Barbados at the celebrations of the 15th anniversary of the battle of Ayacucho, including airfare and any subsistence paid to the Minister? 2. How many officials accompanied the Minister and what is the cost of their visit, including airfare and any subsistence paid? 3. Did the Minister and his officials travel first or tourist class?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the replies are as follows:

(a) BDS $1,837.30;

(b) No officials accompanied the Minister;

(c) The Minister travelled economy class.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Is the Minister saying that the sum of $1,837 include both airfare and subsistence? If so, will he say how much was airfare and how much was subsistence?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I will give you a breakdown:

Passage: One economy class	$ 723.30
Flight Insurance	13.00
Meals: 5 days at $15.00 (US) per day	150.00
Travel: 5 days at $10.00 per day	100.00
Subsistence 5 days at $25.00 (US) per day	250.00
Contingencies:	300.00
Total:	$1,837.30

Mr. ADAMS: For what purpose is the Minister paid $300 for contingencies?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would not say it is the practice, but occasionally when a Minister goes abroad to attend a conference, or on a special occasion such as celebrations, he is given a sort of entertainment allowance in order to be able to reciprocate as far as entertainment and drinks are concerned. A similar practice has been adopted by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association very recently. I think C.P.A. came to the conclusion that a small lump sum should be given to the Clerk, or Deputy Clerk, so that in case any little entertainment was necessary the money could be spent and accounted for.

Mr. ADAMS: I never had any.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: He never had any, but the money might have been available.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of personal explanation. Let me say that while I have no reason to doubt the Leader of the House, let me assure the House that I had no entertainment money on any occasion I have ever travelled with C.P.A. Not 1 cent, far less $60.00 a day like Senator George Moe.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not saying that the hon. member had. Neither did I. I said that it might have been available.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this $25.00(US) per day in addition to the $60.00 per day? Is this $85.00(US) or Barbados dollars? I do not see anybody travelling and spending $110.00 a day. When you are travelling you are given food, drinks and so on. I have travelled, too, and $110.00 a day is a lot of money, as compared to $8.00 a week for old age pensioners. *(Asides).*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. CRAIG: Can the Minister say whether Senator Moe was accompanied by any other person whose passage was paid for by the Government?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I have given you the full breakdown on my file. I cannot attempt to answer a question like that. I am reading from the file. If anybody accompanied him that would be a matter for him and his personal business.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 129 standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Andrew who I do not now see in his seat.

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to lay the Reply.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Permission has been granted for the Reply to be laid.

The next question stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Joseph: Number 152.

INADEQUACY OF FRESH MILK

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Is the Minister aware that for several weeks many individuals and businesses in the Country have been unable to obtain fresh milk? Will the Minister consider carrying out an investigation into the milk industry to find out the following:– (1) The quantity of fresh milk required for National consumption during the period 1st November, – 31st March, 1st April – 31st October yearly? (2) The quantity of (a) skimmed milk (b) condensed milk imported into the country during the relevant periods? (3) The quantity of milk produced in the country during the same periods?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 152 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph is as follows:

(a) No, Sir.

QUANTITY OF MILK PRODUCED AND IMPORTED DURING THE THREE-YEAR PERIOD COMMENCING 1ST NOVEMBER, 1970

	1/11/70 – 31/3/71 *lbs.*	1/4/71 – 31/10/71 *lbs.*
Fresh milk available for national consumption	2,725,250	4,087,413
Imported skimmed milk	604,408	466,904
Condensed milk produced locally	765,991.5	1,282,510.5
Evaporated milk	4,060,045.5	6,585,480

	1/11/71 – 31/3/72 *lbs.*	1/4/72 – 31/10/72 *lbs.*
Fresh milk available for national consumption	3,083,628	4,548,647
Imported skimmed milk	425,112	287,488
Condensed milk produced locally	718,489.5	973,573.5
Evaporated milk	4,978,800	6,318,180

	1/11/72 – 31/3/73 *lbs.*	1/4/73 – 31/10/73 *lbs.*
Fresh milk available for national consumption	3,228,823	4,573,952
Imported skimmed milk	217,600	422,095
Condensed milk produced locally	982,534.5	558,670.5
Evaporated milk	5,478,600	7,733,760

5.45 p.m.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in view the fact that the question is now being answered in 1975, would the Minister give the relevant figures for the period up to 1974?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not have those figures available, but I can get them for the hon. member.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, would the Minister state how much of this milk has had to be condemned as being unfit for human consumption?

Hon. A. MORRISON: None of this milk has had to be condemned to my knowledge.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Would the Minister give the House the undertaking to investigate whether any of this milk has been condemned by the Ministry of Health as unfit for human consumption? (INTERRUPTIONS)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. members who are not replying will please speak in undertones.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking the Minister if he would give an undertaking to investigate whether any of this milk that he mentioned here was ever condemned by the Ministry of Health as being unfit for human consumption.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There seems to be no further reply.

QUESTION RE ACREAGE PLANTED IN FOOD CROPS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 155 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. George North.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if the hon. member would like me to ask the question on his behalf.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The reply is to be given by the Minister.

Mr. BOLDEN: I am seeking permission from the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would prefer a member from the Government side to ask it.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will ask the question.

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, a Minister cannot ask a question. Look at May's and you will see.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the hon. member for St. George North, I beg to ask the following question:—

To enquire of the Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology: Will the Minister take all the necessary steps to ensure that the owners and Managers of plantations in Barbados plant a greater percentage of acreage of the arable plantation land in food crops?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 155 is as follows:

> "All steps possible will be taken to ensure that food crops will be available in adequate supplies taking into consideration local consumption needs, the availability of export markets and the extent to which locally produced food crops may replace imports. Consequently, the proposal to reduce the percentage of plantation land to be planted in food crops is being reviewed."

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, will the Minister state what percentage of plantation land is now required by law to be planted in food crops?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, according to the Food Crops Order, the percentage is still 12½ percent.

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister aware that plantations are not now planting 12½ percent and that there have been subsequent publications by Ministers of Government which allow plantations to plant less than that percentage of their lands in food crops?

Hon. A. MORRISON: I am aware that there has been a reduction in acreage for planting of food crops and I am presently reviewing that decision.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, can the Minister tell us what percentage of the Government plantation lands is planted in food crops?

Hon. A. MORRISON: I do not know the percentage off-hand.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, did it not occur to the Minister whilst investigating the private sector that alongside of this would come a question in respect of Government-owned lands?

Hon. A MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as far as food crops are concerned, when there are short-falls we have tried to make them up on Government lands. A.D.C. has produced plenty yams and potatoes during the past years. We have actually increased our production of those root crops.

QUESTION RE MONKEY POPULATION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 231 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: Is the Minister aware that: (1) Many of the Northern parishes of the island are once again heavily infested with monkeys? (2) These creatures are causing a great loss both financially and in food production to farmers and the population of this country? (3) Would the Minister state what steps are being taken to control these pests?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 231 is as follows:—

1. Yes, Sir.

2. The Minister is aware that monkeys cause losses to farmers both financially and in food production.

3. Various methods of control are being investigated.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state the various methods which are now being investigated? And is the Minister aware that while these investigations are going on the monkey population in the country is growing at such a terrific rate that they can now be seen in the Bridgetown area?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was suggested that we should use poisoning to control the monkey population. That was considered too dangerous in that you might poison human beings. The next method we have been considering is shooting the monkeys and we were thinking of giving a bounty to farmers or to anybody who shoot monkeys, and I am including a sum of money in the Estimates for the payment of bounties. We would welcome any suggestions from any source how we could control the monkey population, because we are trying to explore various methods of controlling the monkeys.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the Minister aware that throughout the world it is now recognised that one cannot poison monkeys as they have the ability to recognise food which is unwholesome?

Hon. A. MORRISON: I am aware of that. I was only giving the methods that are being explored, and that is one of the methods we were looking at.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, has the Minister tried to investigate if there has been found to be prolific breeding in the Cherry Tree fields planted by Government?

Hon. A. MORRISON: No, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, would the Minister of Agriculture request the assistance of the Minister of Health as to whether monkey meat can be eaten?

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker,.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I remind the hon. member that he has asked his quota of questions?

Mr. BOLDEN: With all due respect to Your Honour, I have only asked two questions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have you ticked for three.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I asked a question when it was called; the supplementary I asked was what were the methods being investigated, and the second is that poisoning cannot effectively control monkeys.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry, the Clerk has corrected me.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, has the Minister given any consideration to an alternative policy by which monkeys would be attracted to gullies and areas of natural beauty where they will not be pests, places such as Farley Hill and Welchman Hall Gully, by planting plants which are attractive to them in those places and concentrating them away from planters' crops?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this can be considered but I can assure the hon. members that we welcome suggestions along those lines.

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister considering amending the Fire Arms Act which makes it an offence to discharge a fire arm within a certain distance from the highway in view of the fact that he said that one of the methods of controlling the monkeys is by shooting them?

Hon. A. MORRISON: No, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

5.55 p.m.

Mr. HINDS: Can the Minister tell us if a number of peasant farmers from the Northern parishes have made applications for firearm licences because of the monkey pest? – because of the increase in the monkey population?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not in a position to answer that question.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next question is Question No. 239 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, To enquire of the appropriate Minister: Would the Minister state: (1) The number of Agricultural surveys including the present one which have been put into operation in this country during the last ten years; (2) What policies and/or principles have been introduced into the country as a result of these surveys; (3) Is the Minister aware that the present surveys which have just been put into operation call for many details which entail much time and expense if such

information is now to be extracted; Will the Minister state how this survey will improve the agricultural development of this country?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 239 is as follows.

(1) Nine surveys.

(2) The surveys have enabled the Ministry to fomulate policy decisions on such matters as rural development, mechanised farming and import substitution in respect of certain agricultural produce as an incentive to farmers participating in the diversification programme.

In addition, the Ministry was able to make an evaluation of the consumption levels and future demands of the Nation.

(3) Yes, Sir. However, the cost of this survey was met from funds of the University of the West Indies. The survey related to Agricultural Production Function and will enable the Ministry to determine "inter alia" the unit cost of production for various enterprises, the relative profitability of different enterprises and the reason for variation in the unit cost of production between the individual enterprises. This information will enable the staff of the Ministry to advise farmers on the best way of utilising their resources.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, will the Minister state what was the cost of the recent survey?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am afraid I do not have the figures here but I can get the figures for the hon. member.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state how long was the survey planned before the forms were actually sent out to the individual farmers?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am afraid I cannot supply that information because I do not have here the main file on that subject.

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister aware that many farmers told the investigator to come and plough through the books, take out what they can get, and that is all they are going to get? As a result it was stated that farmers had no knowledge or no indication as to what they would have to supply and never kept such records?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am aware that there has been some difficulty in obtaining that information.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, does the Ministry have enough staff for keeping farmers informed as to the requirements of the survey?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we conduct surveys we employ additional people temporarily to help conduct the survey.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, will the Hon. Minister tell us if the survey has been able to bring to light the unit cost of production on the lands of the ADC?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the survey is now being, what we call, programmed. The results of the survey will not be known yet, until they have evaluated all the information which they have received in the survey. It is too early to answer any question on the results.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the hon. member...

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the permission of the House. It is a very important question which follows this answer. If the House would grant me permission to ask this question.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Could the member get a member of his party to ask it? You are contravening the law.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, is it within the knowledge of the Minister that the ADC has now called in experts from the UWI?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is not within my knowledge.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Next question is No. 284 standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, to enquire of the appropriate Minister: (a) the number of dairy cows held at the Pine Livestock Station between 1st October, 1973 and 30th November, 1974; (b) the number of dairy cows

at the Hope, St. Lucy during the said period; (c) the number of artificial inseminations done on cows held at (1) Pine Livestock Station (2) The Hope, St. Lucy during the said period; (d) the number of return artificial Inseminations done at the above places during the said period. (e) the number of cows in calf at (1) Pine Livestock Station (2) The Hope, St. Lucy, as of 30th November, 1974?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply to Question No. 284 is as follows:

(a) The number of dairy cows at the Pine Livestock Station between the 1st October, 1973, and 30th November, 1974, ranged from 54 to 64.

(b) The number of dairy cows at the Hope Dairy Farm, St. Lucy, during the same period ranged from 125 to 195.

(c) Total number of artificial inseminations done on cows at –

(1) Pine Livestock Station 497
(2) Hope Dairy Farm 705

(d) Number of return artificial insemination-tions –

(1) Pine Livestock Station .. 211
(2) Hope Dairy Farm 510

(e) Number of cows in calf –
(1) Pine Livestock Station .. 43
(2) Hope Dairy Farm 58

6.05 p.m.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the Minister aware that in November, 1974, there were only four cows in calf at the Pine Livestock Station?

Hon. A. MORRISON: I am not aware that there were only four cows in calf in November.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state at what stage in pregnancy were the 43 given in his answer in calf as at November 30th, 1974? *(Pause)*

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister aware that 60 per cent of the artificial insemination done at the Hope has been negative and what he proposes to do about it?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am aware that the rate of conception at the Hope Dairy Farm has been very low. I do not have the monthly breakdown of the conception results available, but according to information there were 705 artificial inseminations during the period under review, involving 195 cows. *(ASIDES)* There were 195 first inseminations and 510 returns. You can work it from that. The actual cause of the low conception rate is not known, but it is felt that the herd experienced some difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies, and this could have been a contributing factor.

Mr. BOLDEN: I did not get what he said. There was some difficulty in obtaining adequate supplies – of what, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister is still replying.

Hon. A. MORRISON: All that I know from the minutes I have here on file is that at the 30th November there were 58 cows in calf at the Hope. I do not know at what stage they were in calf. *(Asides)*

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now...

Mr. BOLDEN: This is the third now.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have the hon member booked for three questions already. The next Question is No. 288 which stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, To enquire of the appropriate Minister: (a) What progress has been made with the establishment of the new cane separation plant being established at Uplands factory in St. John; (b) the total sum of money spent on the project to date; (c) what percentage of the work has been completed; (d) whether or not the original designers are still establishing the plant, if the answer is in the negative, will the Minister state who is now completing the plant; (e) what is/was the relationship between the original contractors, the Barbados Government and Canadian Cane Consultants of Canada; (f) if the original contractors were employed on contract what are the terms of the contract? (g) what is the relationship in the establishment of the plant between Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd., The Barbados Government and the original contractors?

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 288 is:-

(a) The installation of the equipment at the Cane Separation Plant is completed and is

scheduled to be tested during the 1975 crop season.

(b) $2,891,721.58 Barbados Dollars as at 30th September, 1974.

(c) Approximately 95 per cent.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) There is no relationship between the Barbados Government and Canadian Cane Consultants in so far as this project is concerned.

(f and g) The original contractors, Messrs Sandwell & Co. Ltd., were obligated to provide professional engineering and technical services for the design, purchase, management, supervision of the construction of the plant and installation of the machinery and the equipment. The Barbados Sugar Factories Ltd. is contracted to erect, construct and maintain the building out of money provided through the Agricultural Development Corporation in order to permit the installation of the cane separation plant with the Government acting through its contractors, Messrs Sandwell & Co. Ltd.

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister aware that answers given in (a) and (c) are contradictory of each other? One says the work is completed, and the other one says that 95 per cent of the work is completed.

Hon. A. MORRISON: We are saying that the installation of the equipment for the sugar cane separation plant has been completed, but there are minor things to be done like putting sheds over the machinery, which would be done in time for the crop; but the actual equipment is down already and could be in operation.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next Question is No. 158 standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Andrew who is not now in his seat.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I ask that that Reply be laid.

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

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were some files which were held back since last year when the hon. member for St. Joseph was out of the island and have been going to and fro all that time. I would like to give those answers now. They are to Nos. 76, 238, 240, 248, 250 and 252. I would ask permission that these Replies be laid, if the hon. member so agrees.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have no objection to their being laid at this time.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let them be laid. 6.15 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let them be laid. We have now come to the end of Question Time.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: This concludes Government Business for today's sitting. Subject to the wishes of the Opposition – I have given the assurance that if they have any urgent matter they may wish to deal with – it may well be the end of today's sitting. Before moving the adjournment of the House *sine die* I would like..... *(Asides)*..... You are not a schoolmaster in here, you know.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I was moving that the House do now adjourn *sine die.*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let me hear the hon. member's point of order.

Mr. BOLDEN: There are no schoolmasters in this Chamber, we are all parliamentarians. We have reached the point when because of the bungling on the other side, because they have not even studied the procedure, we are trying to teach them from this end and they do not want to admit it is good teaching.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with the procedure. Will the Hon. Leader of the House proceed?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I was adjourning the House *sine die,* Sir. As far as I know that is the procedure. The House is to be prorogued by way of proclamation which will appear in the Official Gazette tomorrow, and as far as I know the procedure is to adjourn the House *sine die* because there is no sitting as such until the new session commences.

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order, Sir, did I understand the Leader of the House to say that the House will be prorogued by proclamation as it will appear in the Official Gazette tomorrow? Or did he say in the Official Gazette of tomorrow?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I heard some of the words used by the Hon. Leader of the House

and that is why I was asking hon. members to be quiet.

Mr. HINDS: Then you did not hear, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not hear distinctly what he said. Will the Hon. Leader proceed?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am saying, Sir, that before adjourning the House *sine die* in order to bring the session to a close, we have had a very lengthly, controversial and argumentative session lasting for.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir, has it been moved that the House has been adjourned *sine die?*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has not moved it yet. The Hon. Leader of the House has made two attempts and he has not yet succeeded.

Mr. ADAMS: Because when it is moved I want to be heard. Parliamentary procedure is parliamentary procedure. The last time I have heard of a House adjourning *sine die* was when Charles I adjourned the long Parliament in 1629.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. ADAMS: Since 1640 when it was recalled and subsequently when Charles I had his neck cut off the device of adjourning a Parliament *sine die* has fallen into desuetude. I will object on a matter of privilege to any adjournment *sine die,* you must adjourn to a fixed date.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let there be some order, please. I have had some discussion on this matter with the Speaker, and according to May's the House will have to be adjourned but not *sine die.* That is what is stated in May's. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition rose on that point just now and as far as I know he is correct. I saw it in May's this afternoon.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think you are turning custom aside, Sir. One would have thought that you as Deputy Speaker would have been advised by the Clerk at the Table, not by the Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It was not a matter of being advised by the Speaker, it was only that here was a situation which I thought I would try to put right.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to advise the Leader of the House just to rise and move that this House do now adjourn.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will follow the advice of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, but that will mean automatically adjourning for a week. The House is due to meet, according to the Standing Orders, every Tuesday at 12.00 noon, but before making that motion I would like to say this. We have had a very strenuous session, lasting three years and three and a half months, or thereabouts, we have passed 157 Bills, 252 Resolutions, 160 Regulations, 49 Orders, 17 Civil Establishment Orders and 102 Statements. We have done a fair amount of work during that period, and I hope that members will return refreshed, although the time is very short, just two weeks. The House is due to resume in this Session on 19th, but I do not care to elaborate. Without any further ado, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn.

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, I have been in this House for a number of Sessions since the year 1966, and I would like to add to what the Minister has said about this Session. Unfortunately I cannot take so sanguine and rosy a view of the events of the first Session of 1971 – 1976 as he has. We have passed 157 Bills, including an amendment to the Constitution which gave rise to perhaps the most – I cannot call it infamous debate, Sir, because that might be unparliamentary – but one of the most unhappy and unfortunate debates that has ever been my privilege to participate in. I hope that the next Session will see all members come back so refreshed that none of us will find it necessary to abuse at least two dozen citizens of Barbados, five or six of them in distinctly defamatory terms, to tell lies upon a range of men as different as the President of the Chamber of Commerce, the Bishop of Barbados, Mr. Richard Cummings, Senator Bernard St. John and others, to read out lies from a sheet of paper and not be content to admit they were lies when they were revealed. I hope that this conduct will never be repeated in the forthcoming Session.

This Session has seen also an exceptional encroachment of the rights of the executive upon the Legislature, evidenced by numerous occasions where it has been sought successfully in many cases, but I must thank the Presiding Officers, Sir, you and Mr. Speaker, for resisting the encroachment on some other occasions, but to put Bills through all their stages in one day, and perhaps more important for the financial regularity of our Government to put Resolutions

for large sums of money through all their stages in one day.

I will say this, Sir, the House has met noticeably seldom during that period. It will be found that far from the regular Tuesday meeting day we have been meeting every two and three weeks, and upon those occasions every two and three weeks we have been finding that business comes down urgently and all in a rush. My belief is that when you adjourn the House for two or three weeks you are adjourning it in order to allow good notice of forthcoming business to be given to members.
6.25 p.m.

Let us hope that in the next Session this practice will not be followed in the mode it has been in the past.

I, certainly, cannot say that this Session has been a happy one, in my view, as far as the good name of Barbados for Parliamentary Government is concerned. Now, we are held out the prospect of a new Session in which we will come forward refreshed. Now, I have something very important to say. I was going to take another opportunity of saying it, but this is the House of Assembly and it had better be said here. For the first time in Barbados' history a reigning monarch is going to open our Parliament. She is not a C.B.C. call, Sir – the Queen of Britain coming to Barbados. The Minister of Information, who so sedulously interfere in the day-to-day activities and Bulletins of C.B.C., can continue his interferes by instructing the commentators how properly to describe the institutions of this Island of which the Queen is the leading Parliamentary Institution and the Parliament consists of the Queen, the Senate and us. She is the Queen of Barbados, but she is coming to open our Parliament on February 19 or 20 – I forget the day when.

I very much hope that those responsible for advising Her Majesty have apprised her of the fact that Barbados is not at the moment in a state of political quietude. There are rumours of elections – there are not rumours; there is the actuality of political discord. It has been a characteristic of the Crown of Great Britain ever since the glorious revolution of 1688, as far as possible, to keep out of party politics and not to allow the name of the Crown, the person of the Crown, the position of the Crown, to be used for intimidatory purposes. It is written in, I believe, our Standing Orders that no one must invoke the name of the Queen to overawe the House. Similarly, I am hoping very much that those responsible for advising Her Majesty are advising Her Majesty not to be allowed to be dragged into the domestic politics of this one of her realms. The whole position of the monarchy can become insecure in Barbados if at any time the Queen permits herself to the political wiles or guises of one party.

We do not expect the Queen to come here on February 19 and make a political speech. It is something that must be made absolutely clear as a political matter. The speech will be written for her by the Prime Minister – *(Asides.)* – as is done in every country.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ADAMS: In a country where the Queen opens Parliament every year the people of that country have come to expect that a political speech will be made from the throne outlining the policy of the Government of the day. That is all very well for the people of Great Britain. They have seen Kings and Queens doing it, for I would not say 700 years, but certainly 200 or 300. This is a different situation. As far as I know, the Queen is already breaking precedent by conducting or taking part in a State Dinner in an official rather than a State residence. It is normal, so far as the investigations which I have been able to make have revealed, that upon Royal occasions the Governor-General is the host. I am, to say the least, a little surprised to find that in Barbados precedent – I call it precedent, but it may be called protocol – should be departed from in such a respect. We are not yet a one-party State. Not yet and never will be I very much hope.

Much of what I have been saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had intended to make the subject of a Press Release at a suitable time, but, since the Leader of the House referred to the end of one Session and spoke of a forthcoming Session, I have taken this opportunity. Having taken this opportunity, I just want to say that what I am saying here is not intended to be an attack upon any of the present institutions of Barbados, whether Her Majesty, the Senate, or the House. I am only asking that those responsible for giving service be extremely careful with what advice they give in this matter.

The people of Barbados are not looking forward to seeing the Queen here, even remotely, to be taking any part of the politics in this country. There have been many Royal occasions, and Mr. Cameron Tudor has described

himself as an unrepentent royalist. None of us on this side, perhaps, go quite so far as Mr. Cameron Tudor in a number of respects. Mr. Tudor informs us that in Cyprus, for example, and in other countries he is Her Barbadian Majesty's Ambassador. That is all very well for Mr. Tudor in London, Cyprus, Germany and Holland. He can go there and be Her Barbadian Majesty's Ambassador. Here in Barbados we take a slightly less refined view of the institution of monarchy. Nobody thinks that if we had no monarchy, or if we were chosing our institutions from the word go without the Queen that we would have invited the Queen of a distant country, connected with us by history only, to preside over our Parliamentary system. It is an accident of history that we find ourselves in this position, and I would particularly ask the Government not to push history too far, not to follow false precedents too much. We have followed the precedents of Great Britain a good deal with lip-service in the last few months. Because it is done in Britain it must be done in Barbados; and we are hearing once again that such an activity is appropriate for Barbados.

I am glad to welcome Her Majesty in Barbados, and I have every intention to be on the tarmac, or whatever it is, when Her Majesty comes. I am Her Majesty's Leader of the Opposition just as much, no doubt, as the Prime Minister is Her Majesty's Prime Minister for now. I have no intention whatsoever of showing any wilful disrespect to the institutions of this country as they are at present conceived, but I will not be going to Culloden Farm for any function relating to Her Majesty, the Queen. I am not denying the Prime Minister's right to hold the reception there; I am merely saying that, with no disrespect to anybody, I will not be attending. I will attend the opening of Parliament, as I expect that most Members of Parliament will wish to, but I am not lending the countenance of the Opposition to making ourselves look like puppets to be joining in any pageant which, in the long run, is intended to extend the gracious hand of Her Majesty the Queen over the Democratic Labour Party. I am not in any way joining in that.

I will say that if the Prime Minister knows in his heart that he intends to hold an election at any time when the aura of the Queen's visit still extends over Barbados, then, as far as Barbados is concerned, he would have done the institution of monarchy the worst harm he could ever have done it.

6.35 p.m.

If the Prime Minister knows in his heart that he intends to hold an election at any time when the aura of the Queen's vist still extends over Barbados, then as far as Barbados is concerned he will have done the institution of monarchy the worst harm he could ever have done. I believe, as I hear from a very percipient member on my left, that perhaps he cares nothing about that. It may be all part of a deep laid scheme. The Minister for Public Relations I don't believe has the penetration or the understanding of some of the people he is dealing with to get to the bottom of the possible wiles, and I must not say machinations, I think that has been ruled out, but that is another factor which I will suggest be looked at.

Barbadians will welcome the visit of their monarch; I do not believe that Barbadians will welcome it being turned into a political occasion, and I believe that February 4 is perhaps the last opportunity on which I will be able or on which any voice will be able to make itself heard sufficiently widely or publicly to warn against the dangers impending in the Royal Visit. Subject to that I am not opposing the adjournment of the House for the purpose of prorogation, even for prorogation in these circumstances.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that this House do now adjourn according to the Rules.

Honourable Members who are of that opinion please say "aye"; those of a contrary opinion, please say "no". I think the "ayes" have it.

Mr. BOLDEN: Divide. What Resolution?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was no Resolution.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Leader of the House moved that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: And I said "adjourn".

Mr. BOLDEN: You said according to some rule. What rule, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you questioning my ruling?

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have got to stop making jokes in this Honourable House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I said in accordance with the Rules.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have not heard that Resolution. According to what I have learned about Parliament, the Resolution must be put.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have Rules.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, forgive me my ignorance. I am quite willing to learn, and I would like to know the Rule or the Standing Order under which the House is adjourned. There is no such Rule or Standing Order, and we are making a joke of this institution now. There are certain rules for some and certain rules for others. You cannot even find the procedure.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I refer to the hon. Member to Rule 17 of the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly of Barbados.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, what is the Resolution before we are called on to vote? That is all I am asking.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That the House now stand adjourned.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it is admitted that the wrong Resolution has been put, I would think that the correct way to rectify the matter is to say that you will put the correct Resolution, but the bell begun to be rung when we said "divide", because we divided on a Resolution which was not put by the Leader of the House, and the bell was stopped after a couple of rings.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was no Resolution; only hon. Members said so.

The question that this House do now adjourn was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

6.44 p.m.