

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1971 - 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 29th July, 1975

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

PRESENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA, C.B.E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Mr. R. StC. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, J.P., (Deputy Speaker); Mr. L. S. CRAIG; Mr. J. B. SPRINGER; Mr. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. F. L. WALCOTT, O.B.E.; Hon. F. G. SMITH, Q.C., S.C., B.A., (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. P. G. MORGAN, C.B.E., (Minister of Tourism, Information and Public Relations); Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND; Hon. P. M. GREAVES, B.A., (Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance); Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Health and Welfare); Hon. A. MORRISON, (Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology); Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A.(Econ.), (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport) and Mr. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M.

Prayers were read.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, 22nd July, 1975, have been circulated and are before you for confirmation. There being no amendments, or corrections, I deem these Minutes duly confirmed.

PAPERS PRESENTED

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, I am commanded to lay (1) The

Consumption Tax (Amendment) Regulations, 1975 and (2) The Leave Passages (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 1975, and on behalf of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance, Report of the Labour Department for the year 1973.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Prime Minister, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Leave Passages (Amendment) (No. 2) Order, 1975.

On my own behalf, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$3,300 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1975-76, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1975-76, No. 3, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I give notice of a Resolution to approve of the Compulsory acquisition of land at Welches, St. Michael, for highway improvement.

ORAL REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to inform you that the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 20, asked by the hon. member for St. Peter, is now ready.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to inform you that Parliamentary Question No. 33, asked by the hon. member for St. Lucy, is now ready.

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

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1975-76
NO. 1

A Resolution in the sum of \$154,087 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking leave to deal with this Resolution. Under Ministry of Finance and Planning, Head 11 - Pensions - Item 3 - Pensions and Gratuities, there is a sum of \$2,112. The explanation given there is fairly satisfactory, but I think I had better read it. In accordance with section 21 of the Escheat Act 1899 as revised by the Consolidated Laws of Barbados, 1971, the Minister of Finance on behalf of The Crown and with the approval of the Minister responsible for Legal Affairs has agreed to the payment of the sum \$2,112, being all the personal estate of Ulric St. Clair Smith, late of Whitehall in the parish of St. Michael, who died in this Island on 4th November, 1973 intestate without heirs or next of kin, to Ernesta Griffith.

This gentleman used to work with the Water Works Department, and he left his reputed wife Ernesta Griffith, who has petitioned for the personal estate of the deceased. She was his reputed wife since 1948 and had 11 children. In the normal way this is the regular practice in such cases. The reputed wife petitions to the Government to pass on what is left of the estate to the reputed wife and children. Even though they may be illegitimate, they should benefit in such cases.

12.20 p.m.

This Petition was sent in by Ernesta Griffith and it is to the effect that in or about the year 1948.....(Mr. ADAMS: What is the date of the Petition?) The Petition is dated 14th October, 1974. This petition as sent in is "In the Matter of the Estate of Ulric St. Clair Smith, deceased, to the Minister of Legal Affairs." The humble Petition of Ernesta Griffith, Petitioner, sheweth that in or about the year 1948 when she was 15 years she became friendly with Ulric St. Clair Smith, now deceased, when he was 17 years of age, and it was shortly after that date until his death on 4th November, 1973, that she was on friendly terms and had eleven children. He was an employee of the Government of Barbados, and worked in the Waterworks Department, and at the time of his death undrawn wages of \$68.10

due to him, and as a result a gratuity in the sum of \$2,112 was payable to his estate. This is one of those cases which is a regular routine matter and it is a question of paying the gratuity of the deceased to his reputed widow and the children to be divided among them to share and share alike.

If there is any further information required, I would be quite willing to supply it.

I beg to move that Head 11 - Pensions - stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I know this case well since the Petition which the Minister was reading out was drawn by me, and I am the lady's lawyer. I do not know if that is known to the Government, but at this stage I do not suppose its being known would matter. I had better declare my interest too, Sir, because I am also appearing for the lady in the Supreme Court in the matter mentioned in paragraph 3 of the Petition, and the extent of my interest, indeed I can even declare is that she paid me \$130 in the Supreme Court case, but I prepared the Petition for her to the Government for nothing; so I hope I am covered under the Legislature (Immunities and Privileges) Act, and I will abstain from voting anyhow.

Now, Sir, the facts of this case. Obviously it is a very hard case. This is a woman who met a man when she was 15. She informs me she has never had another boy friend and the man was killed in an accident when a lorry turned over and a number of people were injured. He was killed at a comparatively young age leaving her with eleven children many of whom still require support, and the new Succession Act will partly deal with that. I would ask hon. Members to bear in mind he has never acknowledged the paternity of any of these eleven children and therefore none of them would be entitled to share if the Succession Act is passed in the form in which it appeared before the House. He, the lady and the eleven children, even the big grown up ones, one of whom I think is working in Government, all live in the same house. The people who informed me that he was the father of the children were the sisters of the deceased and they are acknowledged as his children, but they still would not be entitled to share in his intestacy under the Government's Bill because of the way it is drawn and I hope hon. Members will draw a lesson accordingly.

I cannot ask hon. members to support this. I cannot speak for or against the Resolution as I conceive it; I am just speaking to lay my knowledge before the House, but the point I will ask hon. members to bear in mind in this matter is that this happened since 15th October last year that she petitioned and all that time she has been holding on wondering if she is going to get any money. The man died on November 4, 1973. She did not receive complete advice for some time and this petition was sent forward in October. Why should it take the Government until July to come to a decision on this? If Government policy is to assist illegitimate children and reputed wives — this is known to be Government policy — I cannot understand why decisions take so long to be reached by the appropriate departments of Government. This is something which, if a similar matter came into a lawyer's office, it would be dealt with in three weeks. It would be three weeks from the coming in to the sharing out of the money. Why has a Government got to take ten months?

I want to draw to the attention of the House another matter with which I am familiar. The Minister of Health should hear this. There is a claim against the hospital for malpractice, that a doctor operated badly, cut out the wrong organs; sixteen days in the Intensive Care Unit were the result. Neither the doctor nor his superior under whose direction the operation was performed are now associated with the hospital. I know that my cause regret in some hearts; there is nobody who is there now. The legal officer concerned, to my knowledge came back from vacation, was given this to deal with, he consulted authorities that even the best lawyers in Barbados do not have. I do not know how he got hold of them; he came to a decision to my knowledge in a matter of ten days, put up a proposal, a counter proposal was put up, but an agreement was reached, and this in a matter of ten days. The Ministry of Health was then informed. He advised the Ministry of Health — I would not like to say the Minister of Health — and the Hospital Director, and weeks and weeks have passed, but all you hear is that a Cabinet Paper has to be prepared, before the legal officer's agreement could be officially communicated and the money paid out.

Now the effect of that is going to be this, and this is why I mention it: after a year you cannot sue the Government. I am informed this operation took place a year ago in August. If a lawyer fails to sue the Government within a year, it is my belief he will have to find the

money to pay the client himself because it would be professional negligence. It follows inevitably as night follows day that the Government is going to be sued in this matter with consequent expense. It will have the expense of entering appearance, of paying the money into court and they will have to pay the lawyer much more.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member is completely out of his order.

Mr. ADAMS: No, Sir. I have said this Petition was sent in a year ago and it is only now being dealt with; so I am dealing with the delay. I am dealing with why there should be no delay in these matters, and I am drawing an example — don't mind the hon. Member for St. Michael West — and I am finishing the example.

Mr. WALCOTT: On a point of order, that matter the hon. Member is speaking about is not a matter now before the House. That is not a fact that you can bring here. You do not know if there is somebody who has been operated on and that there is any case pending. He should not have been permitted to say that at all.

Mr. ADAMS: The Prime Minister said it in here already. Suppose I said I have seen documents signed by officials of Government admitting the fact! Do you want more than that? I do not want to go into that, but I am dealing with the delay. The only reason I am mentioning all this relates to delay. When you delay in cases like these you involve the Government in more expenditure. The lawyers might be glad because it is the lawyers who are going to get it. In the particular matter I am speaking of, a lawyer will get a few hundred dollars because the Ministry of Health is slow to send up a Cabinet Paper or whatever, and if officers were surcharged with the costs which they occasion the Government due to delay, and Ministers too, you might find that the Government acts a little more quickly in dealing with citizens. It is a very irritating thing to people who have to deal with officers of the Government realising how taken for granted it is in Barbados that the wheels of Government move extremely slowly. I only wish that some of the Civil Servants could have complaints that have to be dealt with in the United Kingdom where in a matter like this the whole matter is settled in six weeks, or I would wish that some personal pressure could be put upon them and the Ministers too. Always remember the Chichel Down case. It took them two years to give Commander Martin back his land and the

Minister of Agriculture cried in the House of Commons when he made his resignation speech and Civil Servants went home. I only wish we could get a little of that in this country. From in 1961 or 1962 the Prime Minister has been talking about the army of occupation. Why hasn't he done anything about it if he believed that? These delays are extremely irritating and cause a lot of heat-burn to the people concerned with them.
12.30 p.m.

I would also just briefly say in connection with this matter, that the Government might possibly have shown some courtesy in writing to tell Miss Griffith that they had accepted the petition. They might just have managed that little, slight courtesy even in advance of these proceedings.

The Question that Head 11 – Pensions – stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I have abstained. Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I have abstained from this vote. If I have to take a division to get my abstention noted I would do so; but I do not want to put the House to the trouble of a division. (A Pause) is it noted?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Yes. your abstention has been noted.

Mr. ADAMS: Thanks.

HEAD 13(1) – CABINET OFFICE – WAS CALLED.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, in moving the passing of this sum of \$50,000 the note explains the necessity for having the supplementary, to some extent, and I think I would give to members of this committee the additional information which I have in order to satisfy them – at least, with the hope of satisfying them,

Sir, the notes sets out that the amount of the vote for meeting claims of Government hospitality has become inadequate because of the visits earlier in the year of the African Heads of Government and the visit of the Right Honourable Pierre Trudeau of Canada. As result of those visits the amount would be inadequate for the balance of the financial year, and the amount of \$50,000 is now required

To give members a brief rundown as to what money was spent, although I know members are

generally speaking, satisfied. In the case of Mr. Trudeau and Party on the occasion of the visit of the Canadian Prime Minister, the amount spent was \$4,058.79. In the case of the Zambian party, \$6,591.00. In the case of the Nigerian party – General Gowon and his party – \$10,992.50. In the case of Botswana, Seretse Khama \$3,562.80, gifts amounted to \$952.50, expenditure at Seawell Restaurant \$84.40, other entertainment approximately \$10,000; making a grand total of \$37,241.99. That being so we need the supplementary.

I think we all welcome these visitors, and I certainly would not like to hear a lot of criticism. This money I regard as being well spent.

I beg to move that the sum of \$50,000 under Head 13(1) – Cabinet Office – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 19 – MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS – (1) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION – WAS CALLED.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, in moving the passing of this sum \$2,025 I would remind the House of Assembly that an amount of \$12,000 is included in the 1975–76 Estimates of expenditure under Head 19 – Ministry of Communications and Works – Item 22, Furniture, Fittings, Fixtures, to purchase furniture and equipment for the Ministry.

When the Draft Estimates for 1976–76 were being prepared no provision was prepared under the Item to purchase the following items of furniture and equipment which are required for the Telecommunications Unit: One typist desk \$420, One typist chair \$175, One wooden desk (telecommunications assistant) \$200, One desk chair \$75, One upright chair \$50, One wooden desk (Telecommunications Operator) \$200, One desk Chair \$75, Two chairs with arm rest \$380, One work bench (workshop) \$350, and two upright chairs or stools \$100, Sir, that brings it to a total of \$2,025.

Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the sum of \$2,025 – under Head 19 – Ministry of Communications and Works – stand part of the Schedule.

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

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

HEAD 22 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND WELFARE – (1) GENERAL ADMINISTRATION – WAS CALLED.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution seeks to do two things: (1) to make payments for debts which were incurred when the Sanitation Board was functioning, and in addition to that, to make a grant to the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners.

The Sanitation and Cemeteries Board came to an end on March 31 this year and its place was taken by the Sanitation Authority. Many of the debts which were incurred this year by the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board were not paid when this Board became defunct and the new Authority were not bound to pay these debts.

This arrangement now is to ensure that the people who had credited the Sanitation Board during the first quarter of this year are now paid.

As regard the grant of \$5,000, the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners has been making out a case that they need some assistance, and this case has been well received by the Ministry and the Ministry of Finance. It is unfortunate that the sum that they asked for could not be given at this stage due to certain constraints affecting the country, but it is hoped that may be in the new year they will be able to see an increase in this grant given, and things continue to improve.

12.40 p.m.

The Association is seeking to improve the standard of medical practice in this country especially among the general practitioners and in this light its needs are not merely financial but otherwise, so that they can organise seminars and courses for medical practitioners in this country.

Very often in Barbados doctors graduate and go into private practice and there is no special effort to have these private practitioners participating in special courses. We believe in the Ministry that as a result of this inability to participate in special courses and conferences, not only in the Caribbean but outside, much of the newer research which is being provided in Medicine is not being made available to the general practitioners and we hope that by assisting the Medical Association with this grant that they will be able to support projects which

will enable general practitioners and others in Barbados to get the benefit of research in their own fields and other fields.

I beg to move that Head 22(1) General Administration stand part.

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

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to mention my views on both of these items. The grant for non profit agencies is one that I am very pleased to see, and I am hoping that the Medical Association of Barbados will be able in every way to participate in research and studies that really relate to some of the needs of our community. Barbados has a teaching hospital and I hope that the Medical Association will give some study to what is happening to the labour force of this country and the incidence of illnesses among certain groups of the population so that it can be of benefit to posterity.

This is a small community, it is true, and we cannot compete with large communities; but I have had the experience myself of writing to the Medical Association that our organisation wanted to set up a medical scheme, for dockers and the secretary did not even have the courtesy to reply. We were thinking of setting up a medical scheme for dockers because they are people who work alongside persons coming in from outside areas and we want to know what is the incidence of diseases like high blood pressure and arthritis. They also want to know to what extent pesticides affect people working in agriculture and the like so that you know what is the position and if you will suffer from any undue skin diseases from the use of pesticides.

Those are areas for the Medical Profession to study, and we hope that some of the agencies, other than Government agencies will make a contribution. In our own organisation, the Barbados Workers Union we have already done so to the Intensive Care Unit that they have at the hospital.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have a very fierce criticism to make against the Government for the way that this new institution now known as the Sanitation Service Authority has been functioning. I want the Government and the Minister to understand that the Government must be a model employer, and any institution that the Government sets up must be an example.

We must get it into the heads of people who operate these institutions that they do not go there to superimpose their ideas on people. There are too many people in Barbados with the idea that when a man or a woman goes to work he or she is some serf of the Government or the Minister. Ministers do not employ people. Ministers are there in trust of the departments.

In this Sanitation Department there is a row looming because we have the preposterous nonsense of employees getting travelling allowance, and unilaterally some people believe that if the Minister or the Permanent Secretary is behind them they can do as they please. This is only courting trouble. It is a serious problem. We have had the problem of the five day week and 40 hour week. You cannot block the rate of progress no matter how you try. The only way you can block it is if you get guns and shoot down people and there are still some people who will prefer to die.

There is no point in giving a man travelling allowance and then the Chairman decides that he is going to cut out travelling allowance, no matter who the Chairman is. If you are Chairman of the Sanitation Service Authority you are not Lord High and Mighty.

Some of us in the Trade Union Movement are tolerant because we do not want to walk down the street and parade for the sake of parading. If you think that you can pass legislation to prevent people from fighting things, you are wrong. The people will rise up against you. You cannot pass any law to prevent anyone from doing anything. They will break laws if the laws are stupid. People will observe laws that are sensible and not stupid rather than laws against commonsense.

A Minister has a parliamentary function to perform, not an administrative function. If he puts a board there, it must administer. If it cannot administer, change it. I am very fierce in this, the attacking of people's rights. Ministers get travelling allowance. There is no point looking at a man down the street and saying that he should not get travelling allowance. If you want to take it away by agreement, go back to the source of the agreement.

I do not believe in fighting bad cases. I am not fighting any case where you carry away Government property. I am not in any of this underhand business at all. Count me out.
12.50 p.m.

I do not get into any deals with people, I do not want any money from any person to do my job, I am not in that, nobody can charge me of that in the House of Assembly or out. I represent workers and no matter who the worker is if he is right I will tell him he is right but if he is wrong I will tell him he is wrong. The same thing goes for the Minister, and it is wrong for the Government or any Chairman to unilaterally take away travelling allowances from anybody without discussing it. This is going to cause a big row, I am not looking for anything, there is too much interfering with the workers, and the Chairman is putting somebody to draw workers from here and from there. (*Asides*).

I do not like to talk about personal things but all of us have to die some time but we nearly had to have an obituary in here for the hon. member for St. James but we are glad to see him back. (*Asides*). I am glad to see him back out. The hon. member will have the right to get up and speak. He is a member of the Board too so when I have to deal with the hon. member I will deal with the hon. member because when it comes to paying my National Insurance I do not owe the Government any money. Go and ask the Government if I ever sent a cheque to them and they had to send it back to me. I do not have those kind of cheques, all my cheque books work. We have some members who should be locked up. (Mr. ADAMS: Joy in here today?) You are talking about Joy but you had better look closer into your own ranks, there is no point in people making these insinuations about other people when they have these things staring them so starkly.

However, Mr. Chairman, all they have to do is when we start to deal with an issue like this block the pathway we are travelling and we will see what the results will be. All I am saying is that whoever gave authority to stop the travelling allowances of the workers is wrong and it is stupid and not in the best interest of any worker or of any Government. They are entitled to travelling allowances and they should have them until they are wiped out by agreement between the sources. This unilateral action by people is all right in Rhodesia and those parts of the world but we do not like them here. Discuss things with people and when you reach an agreement you do not have anything to worry about, but when you take away things from people in this manner, it is not right.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, I have sat there and heard all types of remarks being made about the Minister of Health, especially when the Sanitation Board comes up. I am amused because these remarks indicate a lack of knowledge of what has been going on either inside the ranks of Government or the Sanitation Authority on the part of those people who make these comments. I have never been around here in the previous debates when the five day week was under discussion but I would like to make it very clear for the benefit of the member who has just sat down that when it comes to the question of defending myself where he is concerned I can do that. If I have kept quiet in here in the past I have kept quiet because I consider myself a member of the Democratic Labour Party and I do not wash my linen in public. There are a lot of things we do not like to bring out, but when you have a look at each person in this country who is in a position of trust or in a position of authority and you scratch and search properly you will find some skeletons in their closets, and I have no objection if I decide to talk in bringing out skeletons. I would like to make it quite clear that the matter of the five day week is a matter for the Prime Minister, not me, and if the Prime Minister's interpretation was that the workers should work six or seven days on a workers' shift system that is a matter of opinion, and as a member of the Cabinet it was my duty to relate it to the people for whom I am responsible. If he has been in a position due to his might to jockey the Government into a position where they have to accept the five day week from Monday to Friday give thanks, it has nothing to do with me. I have my own views and I have never expressed my views about it.

Mr. WALCOTT: On a point of order, the hon. member spoke on a platform of the Democratic Labour Party on the five day week which he said he agreed with.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: He has talked in here without interruption and I do not want him to interrupt me. You feel that because you are the General Secretary of the Union you can bulldoze people in here, but there is a tremendous difference in this country between the Leadership of the Union and the Union workers themselves and one day I am going to get up in here and make that distinctly clear to the people of this country that there is a distinct difference between the Union and the workers of this country. If the Union leadership of this country was seriously interested in the welfare of the people of this country consistently a lot of these things which the

workers now have to put up with would not arise. I have a lot to say where the Union is concerned, not in here, I am going to say it outside when the time comes. The five day week is a matter for the Prime Minister and you should criticise or disagree with the Prime Minister, it has nothing to do with me.

When it comes down to the question of the Board, I agree that administration is a matter for the Board, I do not tell them what to do. (Mr. WALCOTT: You lie.) There is nothing more uncivilised, uneducated, untrained and inebriated than you, man. I will make it quite clear as regards the travelling allowance. That is a matter that the Board deals with, and even his colleagues on the Board of the Authority did not go along with some of his actions. If he has a personal grouse with the Chairman of the Sanitation Authority let them shoot it out, I do not have any colleagues on the Board, that is a matter for the Chairman and his colleagues, if you and the Chairman have grouses shoot it out, there is nothing wrong with that.

1.00 p.m.

I would like to make it quite clear that, where travelling allowance is concerned, I think it is wrong for anybody who does not travel to draw travelling allowance. That is all I have to say on the matter.

The Question that Head 22(1) – General Administration – 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 the sum of \$154,087 do now pass.

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1975–76 NO. 3

A Resolution in the sum of \$30,438 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, as the Addendum sets out, this Resolution seeks to provide an amount of \$30,438 to supplement the Estimates of the Port Department under Part II Capital, Annexed Estimates. The position is that amounts totalling \$24,676 were provided in the 1974–75 estimates under Item 1 and 2 of Part II Capital, Annexed Estimates, Port

Department, to provide additional coverage protection on the southern side of the Customs Examination Hall and accommodation for nine Curio Dealers in the Bridgetown Port.

Only \$10,408 were spent at 31st March, 1975, but the balance of \$14,268 was not revoted in the current estimates. This is now required. An additional amount of \$16,170 is also required due to increased cost of materials and labour. The Ministry of Communications and Works, who are carrying out the works, have advised that, since the original estimates were prepared, the cost of building materials have increased over 70%. As a result of this increase, the Ministry have requested an additional amount of \$16,170 to complete the work. The total amount now required as a Supplementary is \$14,268 plus \$16,170, making a total of \$30,438. That is the explanation.

Mr. HINDS: What is the percentage of the labour increase?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that a Resolution for the sum of \$30,438 do now pass.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I think I should point out certain matters in relation to the Port Department and draw them to the attention of the Committee. There have been discussions in this House from time to time about what is taking place at the Harbour. Since 1961 when the Deep Water Harbour was constructed there have been changes going on, and we have now reached a stage where mechanisation of the Harbour has reached the stage where we are unloading cargo in containers causing a serious reduction in the labour force.

You will remember that, prior to the construction of the Deep Water Harbour, about 1,500 to 2,000 people were employed, but there are now about 400. For the amount of cargo Barbados unloads, it has one of the lowest labour force in the Caribbean. It is here now that we have to draw to the attention of the public generally that the change in cargo handling and the change in the systems whereby smaller ships are coming to Barbados from CARICOM countries and are able to enter the Careenage mean that it will not take as many people to load and unload them.

Of course, my organisation have refused to participate in this question of containerised cargo. We have objected to the appointment of the Chairman because we feel that he has a side

and that the Chairman should be an impartial person, and not necessary a person like myself who has a positive side. I think the time has come when we have to draw to the attention of the public that you cannot expect the workers to be satisfied with the gradual diminution of their earnings while the work is going to other areas. Barbados is no different from any other part of the world. About two years ago there was a serious decision taken in this matter in the United Kingdom. Five doctors were sent to prison, and the official solicitor had to use what power he possessed to have them released. As a result of that, there was a big situation in London itself. That is getting to be the situation here. The dock work has been reduced from a labour force of 1,500 to 376 or 380, and you cannot expect a man to look upon any situation like that without giving it serious consideration.

1.10 p.m.

It is for this reason that we feel the situation in Barbados in so far as dock work is concerned is likely to be a very serious matter in the future and there is likely to be an explosion if this diminution of employment continues. They have taken a reasonable view of the matter, that sometimes things are going to be light, but when it comes to work being done it is always expected that those people who worked in the Harbour or on the docks will find that where work is started at places as a result of work not being handled there, they would be given the option in getting that kind of work. That is to say, when the new bulk terminals are instituted, it is expected that employment would take place in those areas, because I am satisfied that the question of severance payment will not be the answer, because severance payment is only a short term method as against a man getting a job. There is no point in giving a man at 35 years who has been working since he has twenty years' severance payment money for 15 years and tell him he has enough money and to go home, because at 35 years he is a young man and still has to look for a job. That is where we take a very serious view about the new employment of dockers. They are as much entitled to jobs stemming from anything taking place as a result of the new changes that occur through the technology that is going to take place in the dock as any other worker, and they should have the first option for these jobs. This is something that would be in the interest of the workers concerned.

I raise this matter, Mr. Chairman, because I feel sure that it is a principle that is employed in other areas. I need not say anything more on

that, Mr. Chairman, than to place on record our view that at this moment there is more diminution of work among these people concerned, and it has grown faster as a result of the influx of a considerable amount of cargo that is coming by containers; so it means that the dockers themselves are not earning more money but the dockers are earning less money as a result of these changed conditions, and these are things that people will look upon in times like these where their earning capacity is reduced, not as anything that is only a passing phase; it is a very real one to those workers concerned.

The Question that the Resolution for the sum of \$30,438 do now pass 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 Money Resolutions in Committee of Supply. Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am asking for leave to deal with a Resolution for the sum of \$3,300 of which notice was given earlier today.

This Resolution was given notice of this morning, and I have communicated with the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and I do not think there is any strong objection.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Leader of the House is asking for leave to deal with the Resolution of which notice was given this morning, and unless there is any objection, leave will be granted.

There being no objection, leave is granted.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are two Resolutions of which I should like to give notice. They read as follows:—

COMMUNITY HALLS

Be It Resolved that the Honourable House of Assembly requests the Government to consider the setting up of a Community Hall in the Parish of Saint James to serve the following

areas:— Rock Dundo, Orange Hill, Carlton, Westmoreland and Sion Hill.

THE BARBADOS MARKETING CORPORATION

Whereas the Barbados Marketing Corporation does not serve the purpose for which it was originally set up;

And Whereas the Barbados Marketing Corporation is creating food shortages due to the lack of proper planning and the monitoring of food agencies by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Commerce;

Be It Resolved that a full scale survey of the entire operations of the Barbados Marketing Corporation including the Policy, Administration and Marketing be carried out.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Those Resolutions will be dealt with at a later stage.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1975-76 No. 3

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, as the Addendum sets out, consequent upon the absence for six month's leave from 15th April, 1975, of His Honour the Speaker of the House, the responsibility falling upon the Deputy Speaker has become greater because of the length of the Speaker's absence.

It is considered that the Deputy Speaker should be compensated for the additional responsibility by way of payment to him of an amount equivalent to full emoluments, including the entertainment allowance of the Speaker.

As you all know, the Deputy Speaker has been acting since March, and I think he took care of the Estimates when they were being considered, but the Speaker was only granted leave as from 15th April; so this is really to compensate the Deputy Speaker who has been

carrying the burden all through the Estimates March and up to now, and it is only fair and right that he should be remunerated for his services. He has an onerous task and no one to relieve him at present, and I do not think this calls for any great amount of debate. I draw the matter to the attention of the Cabinet and it is felt that the Deputy Speaker should be compensated and dealt with on an equitable and fair basis. The amount is made up of \$2,400 Personal Emoluments which is taxable and \$900 which is not taxable.

I beg to move that the Resolution for the sum of \$3,300 do now pass.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I have much pleasure in supporting this Resolution. The Deputy Speaker has given the House sterling service in very difficult circumstances. He has presided during the course of the Estimates; he has presided over the debates on very wide-ranging topics and he has been called on to give many decisions of interpretation on points of order and other matters that have arisen from time to time, and I think I can fairly say has given those decisions in a manner which has offended no one. In the House there has been very general acceptance of his interpretation of the Rules, his control of behaviour in the House, his attitude towards the traditions of Parliament and his relationships with individual members.

1.20 p.m.

I look forward in the distant future to having the pleasure of seconding his nomination to the post of Speaker; and that brings me to the main burden of what I have to say.

In accordance with tradition, and not I may now reveal without some disagreement at the inner councils of the Parliamentary Labour Party, I seconded the hon. member for St. Philip North when he was nominated for the Chair. At that time you may remember, some amusement was occasioned – the Prime Minister and others were amused – when I said I would hope he would pay careful attention to Maxwell upon the interpretation of Statutes. I cannot say I am entirely satisfied with the attention which he paid to the ordinary principles of statutory interpretation, but I was prepared to put that down to inexperience because I felt that we, having chosen for the first time in the history of the 300 or 350 year history of this Parliament, to elect a man to the Chair who had no experience of Parliament previously, we should have to abide with him during such period as he was learning

the ropes. However there has been no such excuse for the extra Parliamentary activities of Mr. Speaker.

Members of the House of Assembly may lose their seats in a variety of ways. They may lose their seats at an election – and it may come to all of us at one time or another; there are three or four of us in here now who have lost seats previously. There are ten or twelve of us in here now who may lose seats in the future or resign to save themselves from such an embarrassing situation. What I do believe is that possibly none of us in here are likely to lose our seats through acts of bankruptcy, financial misdealing or other extra Parliamentary activities. I can find no record of a member of the House of Assembly in historical times being declared bankrupt. I can find no record of a member of the House of Assembly in recent times, in popular days, having it said of him in open court in front of people, that he took people's money for a particular purpose and that that purpose was not carried out, and then having the Chief Justice advise certain courses of action to those people.

As I heard the hon. member for St. Michael South East say a long time ago, owing money is no crime. May be the hon. member for Christ Church West has never owed, but I cannot speak with such certainty about any other hon. member in here, has never owed money at one time or another. We may not all have been sued to judgement, but even that fate has occurred to more than half of the members of the House; to more than half the members of the House...

Mr. SPRINGER: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I think the hon. member quoted me wrongly. What I said was, the inability to pay is no crime, which is a far different thing from saying that owing money is no crime. I said the inability to pay is no crime.

Mr. ADAMS: Whatever the hon. member said, I welcome the interruption for the sake of hearing those gulsic tones again, the first time, I imagine, for two years in here that we have heard him speak. Whatever the hon. member said, I take the correction.

Now we have given Mr. Speaker, six months leave. It is time for us seriously to revise our attitude to that. The leave conditions of the House of Assembly were not intended to give a man his parliamentary salary for a period while he is keeping out of Barbados. The Chief Justice has found – and I speak of this with my own knowledge – that he has committed acts of

bankruptcy by leaving the Island when subject to bankruptcy notices. He is — and I speak of what I have been informed — he is at the moment subject to several complaints for financial dealings made to the Bar Association, and in the middle of all this he has six months leave from the House of Assembly.

At the very least the hon. member for St. George North should not be having to ask for a supplementary Resolution. We should be men and make the man speak up. There are five members of the Opposition and at least three members of the Government who are qualified to be Deputy Speaker. I hope that the claims of the hon. member for St. Peter would be recognized when that day comes — his claim of seniority — because I do not imagine the ex-Minister, the hon. member for St. Andrew would, after having been a Minister, wish to accept a subsidiary position in the House, and I do not think the hon. member for St. Michael West at this stage of life is going to compromise his authority and his power by being a mere Deputy Speaker. He has been a General Secretary for too long to be a mere Deputy Speaker; but that is merely in passing. We ought to be men in here and take the steps of electing a new speaker.

We cannot anticipate whether the hon. member for St. Philip North will find over \$200,000 in cash and pay it between now and 10th December, and be discharged from his bankruptcy. It may be that he can, but he has disgraced the House already. No Speaker in any Commonwealth Parliament that all the records can afford has ever been made bankrupt in office. We are making record in the House in Barbados. All sorts of things have happened to Speakers in various Parliaments; some indeed have committed crimes. I believe this has happened in one of the Indian States but none has been bankrupt...

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, On a Point of order. I do not want to stop the hon. member but I think the hon. member is aware that the House has already granted leave to the Honourable Speaker, and you cannot now speak adversely on the vote that you have already taken.

Mr. ADAMS: A Resolution; that is the difference. You cannot reflect on a vote of the House except by substantive Resolution, but the granting of leave is not necessarily a matter, as I understand it, of specific Resolution. Was there a vote, Sir? Anyhow I do not want to reflect on it. That relates to whether he has leave to be out of Barbados or absent from the deliberations of the House.

I am reflecting on his position as Speaker and that is something which was done in the last session. That was a vote of the last session not this Session. I do not believe he should be Speaker. I believe and I think that perhaps it is only that hon. members do not want too much dirty linen washed in public. I believe we should have a simple vote in the House. Not even a vote of no confidence; just to ask the Clerk to advise us how we can go about removing the Speaker, and pass a simple vote; no debate if hon. members feel embarrassed.

1.30 p.m.

The Hon. member for St. Michael North West, the distinguished Chairman of the Committee on the Succession Bill and Minister of Lands can confirm that I suggested to him and the hon. member for St. Michael South Central that if a vote were brought from that side in this regard we would support it. We would not if this appeared to be appropriate, pursue it with debate as a party matter, but we would support it.

The hon. member for St. George South should be confirmed in the position to which he has brought distinction in the last few months. In this Resolution, while we support it to the hilt, it should not be necessary, and now that it has been openly stated on the floor of the House, I hope that the Leader of the House will take counsel with the Prime Minister and his colleagues as a whole on that side and let us have a quiet demise of the whole affair of the hon. member for St. Philip North.

The hon. member may well feel that the matter is still in the hands of the Chief Justice who has not yet made any report to the House. To whom is he to report? To the Speaker? Is he going to report to the Speaker that the Speaker is bankrupt? Let us save ourselves that embarrassment and the embarrassment of a lawsuit.

We may feel that while it is still *sub judice* we should not pursue the matter. The Bar Association is deciding whether to disbar him. He will have to be disbarred eventually if he is bankrupt, but all of that is being gone into and I believe that there may be even hints of other matters, more important matters even than that.

Let us in the House cut ourselves free from the whole L'affaire Maxwell. Perhaps I should not call it that, but you understand what I mean. Do not let it be turned into a little mini-Watergate of Barbados let us show our disapproval of what has gone on, and

restore the House of Assembly to a position of respect.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to continue along the same lines as the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, but I am sure that on reflection he will be bound to agree that the Resolution in itself is for a vote dealing with the Deputy Speaker, and the gravamen of his speech was on the Speaker to whom leave has already granted.

If the hon. member, as he said, wanted to make a motion, I do not think that it would be necessary for him to ask any member from this side to introduce a motion. I think that he is still a member of this House and he will be free. I do not think that we will have a lot of legal entanglements, because as he said already, what the Bar Association intends to do has nothing to do with this Chamber. The Bar Association's debates or decisions have no relevance at all to our decisions in here and as he knows, the court when it makes a decision, has the authority to transmit the decision to this Chamber.

The hon. member is saying that there is no Speaker to whom to transmit the decision. The hon. member cannot be serious about that because this House is a constituted Chamber and people can transmit messages to this House in the same way as if the substantive Speaker of the House was in office; so we do not have to have a substantive holder of the office for us to receive any of the documents that have to come to this House.

The Deputy Speaker now for all practical purposes has all of the authority of the Speaker of this Chamber, and it is for this reason that the Resolution that we are now dealing with is to invest him with the privileges and emoluments of the Speaker. Had it not been so, we would not be dealing with this.

I would say that what the Leader of the House should bear in mind is that we should look into this question of the officers of the House, Mr. Chairman, and see if amendments to the Standing Orders of our Chamber are not necessary in order to make provision for these contingencies instead of having to deal with them in an ad hoc manner. You have a problem now with the Deputy Speaker who has to sweat it out all alone because there is nobody to relieve him. I think that the Standing Orders should make provision that where the Speaker and Deputy Speaker are not available there should

be some means of having someone to go into the Chair.

I understand that one day the Deputy Speaker could not be relieved even for a purpose that he alone could have performed. Not even his closest deputy could have performed that duty for him; and he is called upon to be on duty all the time. I hope that we will be able to relieve him from these embarrassments in the future. I feel that whatever views the hon. member has about the matter, that we are speaking about, I think that it is covered by the vote that we have taken already about leave to the Speaker. As regards the other aspect that the hon. member has spoken about, I believe that such matters would come to an end in due course, so I do not think that the hon. member should be too worried about hastening daylight because daylight would come upon us whether we want it or not.

I do not think that it is any question of asking this side to bring a motion, because it will be unwise to ask the Government side to bring a motion when they have asked for leave for six months for the Speaker, unless we hear something to the contrary from the person concerned.

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA each seconded by Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND the resolution was read a first time, a second time and agreed to.

Mr. A. DaC. EDWARDS entered the Chamber and took his seat.

QUESTION TIME

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this concludes Government Business for today's Sitting and I beg to move that Question Time be now taken.

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

QUESTION TIME

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

Mrs. EASTMOND: I beg to second that.

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

QUESTION RE FREE TEXT BOOKS AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 20 asked by the hon. Member for St. Peter.

Mr. HINDS: To ask the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport: 1. What are the plans of the Ministry for distributing free text books to Secondary Schools in accordance with Government's promised free textbook scheme? 2. Is it a fact that all parents and/or guardians will be requested to pay "caution" money as an insurance against loss or wilful damage to textbooks issued to children? If so, how much "caution" money in respect of each pupil? 3. What schools are equipped with facilities for providing safety storage of textbooks? 4. Is it a fact that the Minister has under consideration the abolition of "petty" fees in Secondary Schools which are now paid by pupils towards cost of exercise books, games, etc?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 20 is as follows:

1. Free text books will be distributed to pupils attending Government Secondary Schools and Approved Independent Schools at their respective schools.
2. A rental fee of \$5.00 per annum will be charged and parents or Guardians will also be required to pay for loss or damage to the books other than that due to reasonable wear and tear.
3. Storage facilities are being provided at prospective schools, however there are three Approved Independent Schools without suitable facilities and books

for these schools will be stored by the Ministry of Education.

4. No, Sir.

QUESTION RE STREET LIGHTING IN ST. LUCY

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 33 which was left over from last Sitting and which was asked by the hon. Member for St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: To ask the Minister of Communications and Works: Is the Minister aware that the following areas in St. Lucy are without street lighting:- Durhams, Greenidges, Hannays Village and Mt. Gay Tenantry? Will the Minister give some indication as to time when residents of these areas can expect to have the benefit of street lights?

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 33 asked by the Hon. Member for St. Lucy is as follows:

The provision of street lighting at Durhams, Greenidges, Hannays Village and Mount Gay Tenantry will be considered when funds are available.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, can the hon. Member give any indication as to when these funds will be available?

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am happy to inform the hon. Member that Cabinet has approved funds for the installation of street lighting in the Island and that funds will be available in the very near future.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There being no further questions that brings us to the end of Question Time.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: This concludes Government business for today's Sitting. Subject to any matter which the Opposition may wish to deal with.....

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that Private Members' Business be now taken.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that Item 11 be the first Order of Private Members' Business.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

RESOLUTION RE THE GRANT OF FREE
MEDICAL ADVICE, ATTENTION
AND MEDICINE TO OLD
AGE PENSIONERS

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Item 11 is in my name and it is a Resolution which I am quite sure should have a very easy passage along with Government support. It seeks to extend the services of the Ministry of Health for the purpose of assisting the old age pensioners, those people who gave most of their years to this country in the early days when things were more difficult than they are today. I am not saying that things are not difficult today but in their day things were very difficult indeed. I sincerely hope that the Government will assist us in giving it an easy passage.

It seeks to extend the services of the Ministry of Health for the purpose of giving to the old age pensioners free medical advice, free medical examinations and free medicine from any pharmacist who is practising in this country as well as any medical practitioner. We are all aware of the fact that there is a free medical service given to the old age pensioners and free medicine, but this is only as far as the Government dispensaries and Government practitioners — those who are attached to the Ministry of Health — such as the District Hospitals and so on, but we on this side feel that it would be much easier for old age pensioners on the presentation of their cards to any pharmacist practising in Barbados or to any medical practitioner to have free medical advice. As you are well aware, the cost of some medicine today reaches staggering heights and old age pensioners will find it difficult to obtain medicine especially if they live in areas where there are difficult bus routes. I am sure the Minister of Health, knowing him as well as I do, will not block in any way this bit of social legislation and will try to make it as simple as possible for old age pensioners to acquire their medicine and free medical services which the country now offers.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, it is a fairly interesting resolution and it is the kind of

resolution that one would like to see, if agreed to, implemented. However, Sir, it strikes me that the implementation of any such resolution is bound to incur a charge on the public funds. The resolution speaks of medical advice but that is free only to the pensioner.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the hon. Member making a speech?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am on a point of order and my point is that the Resolution is out of order and I think this is a matter which Your Honour should consider carefully. 1.50 p.m.

I am trying to show Mr. Deputy Speaker how it is my view that this Resolution is out of order, and I am so submitting. It speaks of free medicine and attendance. This is very laudible, but medicines cost money. The medicines will have to be paid for from some source, and that source has to be public funds.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your point is well taken.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, after you have cleared the Resolution and it is now on the Order Paper, we have a right to debate it. What the Minister of Housing is setting out to do is reflecting on your views and your interpretation of the Standing Orders. That is what has happened. You have cleared it.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The hon. member has accused me of casting a reflection on your interpretation of the matter. That is far from the truth.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a word in this Resolution and the word is "consider," and that is why I gave permission to put it on the Order Paper. The Resolution states:

"To move the passing of a Resolution requesting the Government to consider....." When it was brought to my attention, having realised that it said "to consider", I gave permission to have it debated.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have heard a half-baked economist, and I am saying for the first time a half-baked lawyer. If the Government decide to consider it, they can implement it. We on this side of the House cannot implement it. I am requesting the Government to look after the welfare of the old people as much as they can. It is better to

relieve the old people of the problems they have than to spend \$75,000 to purchase a dredge for the Coast Guard, or to spend \$350,000 on the crematorium. This is a priority, if they are a Socialist Government. The Government should take care of the old people as well as they can.

All the Hon. Minister is setting out to do is to show that the Government do not care anything about the old people who have already made their contribution to this country. I want the Government to vote against this Resolution. I would like to make a strong suggestion to the Government at this stage to remove the 5% tax imposed on medicine. Old age pensioners are getting \$10.00 a week. I know that an old lady had to pay a doctor \$7.00 to attend to her. He gave her a prescription for medicine which cost \$22.00. She was unable to pay for the medicine, although the price was considered to be cheap. I had the prescription filled by a druggist who is a friend of mine. He gave me the medicine for nothing, and I gave it to the old lady.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government are paying the old age pensioners \$10.00 a week, and they should relieve them of the burden of having to pay so much for medicine. The old age pensioners should get their medicine free. I am quite sure that pharmacists and medical practitioners in this country would agree that it would be a good thing to assist such people.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in rising to second the passing of this Resolution, I want to say that, if Government are to consider any matter contained in this Resolution, I should like to see all of those persons who have reached the age of 68 and have not been registered, or have not been receiving old age pension for some time for some reason or other, treated fairly. It is known that, because of the means test, if an old person owns a shack valued at a certain amount, he or she is not given the benefit of this money. There are some old people who are suffering from diabetes, which is very common in this part of the world, and they are unable to pay for the medicine and the green vegetables they are required to use to sustain their bodies. They cannot afford to buy certain commodities at the price at which they are offered.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Government are to consider this Resolution and do anything about it, then all persons who have reached the age of 68 should receive old age pensions, and leave it to persons whose position does not warrant receiving it to refuse it. After a man has reached the age of 68, consideration will have to be given to the amount to stamina it will be necessary for him to have in order to maintain his body. All of these persons should be taken into the fold and given \$10.00 a week or whatever the amount might be. By doing this the Government may be encouraging me to give them a vote when the time comes. It would be a good gesture to give the old age pensioners what they deserve in a country such as ours.

I beg to second the motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It now being 2 p.m., I.....

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hour now being 2 p.m., this Sitting is now suspended until 2.45 p.m.
2 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Sitting is now resumed.

NO QUORUM

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no quorum and I ask that you direct the Clerk to ring the Bell.

The Bell was rung for 2 minutes but no quorum was obtained.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bell having been rung and there being no quorum, this House now stands automatically adjourned until Tuesday next, 5 August, 1975, at 12 o'clock noon.
2.49 p.m.