

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1971 - 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 6th May, 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); 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. 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) and Hon. A. MORRISON, (Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology).

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of this House for Tuesday, 22nd April, 1975, are before you for confirmation. If there are no corrections or alterations, the Minutes will be confirmed.

There being no objection, these Minutes are duly confirmed.

Mr. HINDS entered the Chamber and took his seat.

DOCUMENTS LAID

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following: The Customs Duties (Commonwealth Caribbean Resources Centre) Order, 1975.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Rules of the Supreme Court (Amendment) Rules, 1975.

Also, the Magistrates' Courts (Civil Procedure) (Amendment) Rules, 1975.

Also, the Supreme Court (Constitutional Redress) Rules, 1975.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Ministry of Education for the period 1st September, 1972 to 31st August, 1973.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following documents:

Statements showing the sums advanced to the Postmaster General for the payment of Money Orders for the month of December 1974 and the months of January and February, 1975.

Statements showing Money Order Transactions through the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments and Administrations for the month of December 1974 and the months of January and February 1975.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to advance the sum of \$600,000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government for the purpose of making a loan to the Transport Board.

I am duly instructed that this Resolution has been circulated, and we are asking leave to deal with this Resolution in all its stages today.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Communications and Works is seeking leave to deal with this Resolution in all its stages today.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not objecting to the Resolution being proceeded with as such but in view of the fact that I have seen this Resolution for the first time since it was circulated, you will observe, through no fault of your own or mine, and in view of the fact that other members of the Opposition are not yet in the Chamber, that we will like further time to consider this Resolution. I would take it for granted that there are no amendments. However, in these circumstances I believe the most the Minister should be doing at this stage is to give us an indication that he is seeking leave later in the day, rather than to proceed to make a motion which I do not think has been seconded. I believe he should give us time to be advised as to the context of the Resolutions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: So far the Honourable Minister only gave notice but he has not made a motion.

Mr. FORDE entered the Chamber and took his seat.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, to enquire of the appropriate Minister: How many motor vehicles owned by Government Plantations, Agencies, Corporations or Boards are in daily use on the highways of this Island or are otherwise kept without the appropriate licence fees or taxes being paid to the Collector of Taxes; and in the case of motor lorries, without having been submitted for inspection, and without the necessary insurance coverage having been perfected?

Will the Minister give the registration number of each vehicle so kept, and the place where kept; and what steps, if any, does the Minister propose taking to have such irregularities corrected?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Would Government essay to give meaningful expression to the term — Speightstown Development Plan — by proceeding without further delay to construct a public market at the site earmarked therefor?

2. Would Government state how many years and how many times a sum of money was voted for this project, to no avail?

3. Does Government intend to remove the inconvenience to the buying public and the congestion by hawkers and vendors generally who have no alternative but to trade their wares on pavements, street edges and corners and like places, through the absence of a marketplace at Speightstown in the parish of St. Peter?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:—

When will Government make arrangements with the Barbados Telephone Company Limited for the installation of public telephones at the following districts in the parish of St. Peter:—

- (a) Black Bess, for the benefit of residents of that area and Mangrove tenantry;
- (b) Diamond Corner, to serve Portland, Welchtown and Moore Hill residents;
- (c) Boscobelle, to serve Gays, Castle Mount No. 1 & No. 2 and the residents of Boscobelle, St. Andrew;
- (d) The Baltic to serve the people of Collins Tenantry, Date Tree Hill and adjoining areas;
- (e) The Risk;
- (f) Indian Ground to serve, amongst others the residents of Roebuck, Four Hill and Lonesome Hill; and
- (g) French Village?

12.15 p.m

To enquire of 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?

To enquire of the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport:—

Is it a fact that Government intends establishing a unified teaching service?

2. Is it also a fact that Government intends introducing a unified Secondary School system, embracing both Grammar and Comprehensive Schools?
3. When does Government propose moving towards Nos. 1 and 2 above?

To enquire of the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport:—

What was the per capita expenditure on Grammar and Comprehensive Schools for the academic school-years 1972-73, 1973-74 and 1974-75 respectively; and what is the estimated per capita expenditure for Grammar Schools for 1975-76 respectively?

To enquire of the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport:—

Is it a fact that plans are afoot to channel all post - "O" Level studies through the Barbados Community College, thereby removing sixth forms from such schools where they presently exist?

To enquire of the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport:—

What plans does the Government have to zone schools so as to take care of, amongst other things, the travelling by bus of little children over long distances as at present?

To enquire of the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport:—

What plans does the Government have for establishing a basic salary system

for Heads of all Secondary Schools and then a differential to be determined by the number of pupils attending?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is Government aware that tenants on plantation lands require further protection against land developers and others in this country?

2. Would Government take steps to see that where plantation tenantry lands are offered for sale, that the tenants thereon are given the first option to acquire the plots they rent and occupy?
3. Would Government further take steps to see that tenants of fifty or more years standing be further assisted in acquiring the plots they live on by the amortisation of all rents paid over fifty years and applying same as a credit against the purchase price, which must be reasonable?
4. In view of the numerous plantation tenants being constant victims of sharp-practices in the land-development Schemes - some tenants having lived on one spot for as much as 80 years - would Government cause a survey to be carried out of all such applications presently before Town and Country Planning Department, with a view to giving immediate protection to long-standing tenants, many of whom had to provide the said plantations with their blood, sweat and tears in years past to prevent eviction?
5. Would Government seek to have established that the first offer to purchase a plantation tenantry plot must be given to the tenant residing thereon and occupying same?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works -

Is the Minister aware that with the absence of adequate and proper gutters to the Rose Hill Main Road at St. Peter, property owners and others suffer much inconvenience when there is a heavy rainfall and for long hours afterwards?

2. Will the Minister cause an examination to be carried out of the area to determine the extent of damage to property caused by the overflowing of the highway, thereby interrupting or hindering certain developments of the area generally?
3. Will the Minister take the necessary steps to remedy this unhealthy and unpleasant situation?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works —

Is the Minister aware that Greaves Gap, Reservoir Road and Millionaire Road at Ashton Hall, St. Peter are in a state of disrepair?

2. Will the Minister cause such repairs to be effected as would relieve some of the hardships now experienced by persons who have to use the said roads?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works —

Is the Minister aware that intended passengers awaiting transportation at several bus stops suffer much inconvenience by having dirty water from the pot-holes in the roadway in front of these bus stops being splashed upon them by passing motor vehicles?

2. Would the Minister cause a survey to be made of the pot-holes so located on the several highways and take steps to repair as many as possible before the rainy season approaches — the period during which most inconvenience is experienced?
3. Will the Minister treat this matter with the seriousness and the urgency that it deserves since many of the sufferers are poor people without the means or energies to seek redress elsewhere?

To enquire of the Minister of Education, Community Development, Youth Affairs and Sport —

Will the Minister cause a survey to be carried out in all Grammar Schools and Comprehensive Schools to ascertain the number of children whose progress is hampered by

defective eyesight, defective hearing and the presence of bad teeth in the mouth?

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to report to you a matter which is well known to you. I have received in my capacity as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee a letter from you resigning your membership of that Committee consequent on the added duties which you have assumed. I presume by reason of Mr. Speaker's extended absence.

I do not know if you have written to the House, Sir, because it is the House which appointed you to the Committee; but in the circumstances I will give appropriate notice to the House that you have resigned. I take it that there will be a vacancy. I do not know what arrangements have been made to fill the vacancy.

I mention this because I spoke to the Leader of the House informally last week and I do not know what arrangements have been made in the circumstances. At some stage I will wish to move, if it is in my place to do so that the vacancy be filled.

As Your Honour knows, Your Honour is the only member of the Committee from that side of the House who has attended meetings of the committee since the session has started and it would be very hard to form a quorum as present formed. I would like to state how grateful I am for your valuable assistance in the deliberations on the occasions that Your Honour has attended, and to state how much I regret that Your Honour's duties have made your further attendance at that Committee too onerous. I would like some assistance from Your Honour as to the stage at which the House should be called upon to fill the vacancy and who has to move to fill the vacancy, whether the Leader of the House or I.

12.25 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the House at some later stage, I presume, will deal with the matter.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, before the business of the House is commenced I should like to pay tribute to the passing and to the work of the late Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder of "Colvilla", The Garden, St. James, who has been a representative of the constituency of St. James, for a period of 20 years, from 1951 to 1971.

Anyone who knew Mr. Holder, whether politically or just merely socially, would have come to the conclusion without any great delay that he was undoubtedly a man who was a very amiable, genial and cultural person and a man who had great sympathy and understanding for his fellow men. He had attributes which are very seldom found these days and seem to be on the way out. Mr. Holder by virtue of his sterling qualities, being born a gentleman and properly educated and cultured found no difficulty in securing a seat in the constituency of St. James where he lived, was educated and where he worked, and he holds his seat more easily with less of the harangue, difficulty and nonsense that we see going on, which seems to be the pattern nowadays. The fact is that the late Mr. Holder held his seat in a very able manner and in a manner which is befitting members of this Chamber. In other words, what I am saying is that he set a very high standard, and I am afraid that very few of us are able to emulate him.

He was born on 3rd October, 1896 and he died on April 29, 1975 at the age of 76. He was educated at St. Silas Boys' and Combermere Schools, and he served as a planter and worked for many years in the Department of Agriculture. As a private planter he was very knowledgeable and successful, and he distinguished himself in the planting profession as well.

He was formerly a member of the Vestry of the parish of St. James and later became a Councillor of the now defunct Northern District Council. He was decorated for his outstanding service to the public, and soon after his retirement from the political field in 1971 was awarded the O.B.E. In 1968 Mr. Holder visited Britain as a representative of the Barbados Branch of the CPA and distinguished himself on that delegation.

Mr. Holder was a man of sterling qualities and a good and sincere friend, and was a very proper representative in that he did not contribute to any filibustering, what he had to say he said it clearly and plainly and did not interfere with the business of the House in delaying tactics or filibustering. He made his statements and he made his presence felt whenever the thought fit, and he enjoyed the popularity of the good people of St. James for many long years and I think has made a big contribution to the present sitting member and the Barbados Labour Party as a whole, because his popularity there will remain for another 50 years and the Barbados Labour Party will enjoy a measure of support in that particular constituency.

I beg to move the passing of the following Resolution:

"RESOLVED that the Hon. the House of Assembly place on record its profound sympathy concerning the death of Mr. Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder, the former representative for the constituency of St. James;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to his sorrowing relatives."

Mr. ADAMS: In rising to second this motion, Sir, on behalf of my Party and on behalf of myself, I would like to say that it was with a feeling of great loss that I heard the news of the death of Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder. He was a man of course many years older than I was, a contemporary of my father, but I have known him since my late adolescence and I well remember the glorious days of the election of 1951 before the division which separated the two halves of the Labour Movement of Barbados, and the days when there was one Socialist Party fighting against the old regime that had dominated Barbados even if it had not ruled it for the few years previous. For many years the Barbados Labour Party had tried at what appeared the impregnable Conservative seats in St. James. The Leader of the House made his effort and failed, other stalwarts had tried in St. James and failed, and under the banner of "one gone" Ellsworth Holder topped the poll triumphantly and set St. James on the Barbados Labour Party's path, from which it has not since deviated entirely and a path which I have every confidence it will continue to follow during my political lifetime and that of the present hon. member.

Ellsworth Holder was a representative of the old school, the old school of decency, of belief in gentlemanly virtues, the old school which appreciated tradition but not the traditions of conservatism and subservience which some others of his generation and similar background followed in St. James, not a tradition of subservience to the plantocrats of the districts, but the traditions of reformism, the traditions of good Government, the traditions of settled social ways within a framework of political advancement. He joined the Barbados Labour Party at a comparatively young age, as I understand, and when eventually the Party's lot fell upon him to be a candidate it was realised right away that although this was not a man of spectacular achievement and not a man of what is today called charisma but what in those days were perhaps more often regarded as mere flambuoyance.....

12.35 p.m.

He was not a man with these qualities, but he carried, nonetheless, a quality of eloquence and a quality of sincerity which impressed me as a lad, and I am sure impressed such persons present with us today as the hon. Members for St. Michael West, Christ Church East, and St. Michael South Central — impressed, indeed, all who knew him. In my observation there was no one on our side, not even the hon. Member for St. Joseph in his later days, who enjoyed so familiar a relation — familiar but restrained — with the Prime Minister, with the members on the opposite side, with the Leader of the Opposition and with everyone in the House, as the hon. junior Member for St. James as he closed his days in this House.

I have said, on numerous occasions before, that if there was one regret I had in connection with Ellsworth Holder it was that he so seldom treated the House of Assembly to the flights of eloquence of which he was capable on political platforms. I have seen him eloquent and courageous in the face of hostility on the platform at election time. I have seen him eloquent on the platform out of election time. I have seen him hard-working when, for example, at the age of 70 he took on the work of being Secretary of the constituency branch then the largest, and I dare say still now one of the two or three largest in the Barbados Labour Party.

Ellsworth Holder's interests were not, of course, confined to politics. His first work, I believe, as a young man was as an overseer at Joes River Plantation. There, as he told me himself, he became a Free Mason and struck up a friendship with Mr. H. A. Williams, then a mighty magnate in the land. Ellsworth has often told me how he and Mr. Williams, familiarly known as 'Hog and Iron', although I am sure that Ellsworth never called him such when he was overseer of his plantation, used to travel to Bridgetown together to attend Masonic gatherings. This would be, perhaps, between forty and fifty years ago.

His early devotion to gardening turned to be his life's avocation. Anyone who knows his house and who has spent the number of happy hours in his house as I have, from time to time, will be aware of his love of plants and his willing assistance to all who had the same concept of the beauty of the countryside as he had. It was another of my regrets that some years ago he gave me a breadfruit tree and superintended while I forked it up from growing just in front of his house, but did not live to see it grow big. He gave me careful directions of how to plant it. He said that the roots must run east and west just as they were when I forked them up. I dug a hole

at my own premises and planted the breadfruit tree, but Ellsworth, indeed, never had the opportunity to see it when it grew big. It is now a tree, Sir, higher than this Hall.

He had a very acute knowledge of the countryside and the districts where he lived: the districts of St. James St. Andrew, and parts of St. Peter. Ellsworth Holder, when we in here were discussing the repeal of the Poreys Spring Act, could tell me how his grandfather told him as a boy how the people of Orange Hill had to walk to Poreys Springs to pay a penny a gallon for water from the spring, which even now stands there over a hundred years old at Poreys Spring in the parish of St. Thomas. He could tell me how Spring Head, St. James, derived its name also from a spring. He was familiar with the local history of Orange Hill and, indeed, all parts of St. James. He could remind me how, when he was a young lad, communications into Bridgetown were sufficiently difficult from Orange Hill for him to have boarded in Bridgetown while he was at school at Combermere. Ellsworth Holder was always a man of dignity and a man who engaged the respect of all with whom he came into contact.

It was a moment of great sadness for all of us, I am sure, who were present at the ceremonies of his internment during the week to think that he was no longer with us. I had the privilege of reading a lesson at his funeral ceremony, Sir, and I may say that it was with great emotion and appreciation that I did so on that occasion. We shall not see his likes again, Sir. Ellsworth Holder came of a breed that I think Barbados has now left behind. The breed made its contribution, a very vital contribution, to the development of this country 30 and 20 years ago, and all of us who sit in this House of Assembly today owe a debt to Ellsworth Holder and what he represented. A debt that, no matter what we do for Barbados, we can never repay in full for we have to respect the fact that they were the pioneers. To end, Sir, I can only repeat the words: "And all the world will say, this was a man."

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in supporting this Resolution here today, I would say that when one has served in a similar capacity as the late Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder and has to eulogise him in this House, it is human nature for him to think and understand that one day he too, must leave this world. Mr. Deputy Speaker, having served as a Vestryman, Councillor, Chairman of the Council, and subsequently, a Member of this House, my expression here today is of sincerity and sadness.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hope never to find myself eulogising any late member in this House and for others to consider me as a wolf in sheep's clothing. If there was ever a representative of this House, who represented his constituents at grass-root level, it was the late Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder. Although not being a Minister of the Government, the late Mr. Holder took on the position as a whole-time one. He possessed the fine qualities of gentleness, love, humility and sincerity. His motto was: "Love your neighbour as yourself." The genuine qualities which the late Mr. Holder possessed and displayed at all times were demonstrated in his humanitarian approach to his constituents.

The late Mr. Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder did not enter politics for monetary gains and prestige. His sole purpose was to render service to humanity and especially to the people of St. James. He accomplished this, having dedicated his whole life in assisting his people on the street, at home, and in the House of Assembly.
12.45 p.m.

His contribution in the House of Assembly can in no way indicate the wholehearted representation he gave to his constituents. Men of such fine qualities as the late Ellsworth Holder are extremely difficult to replace, and his passing from this world to another is a big loss to the community and especially to the people of St. James. His affiliation and dedication to his party were sincere, but they never motivated him to vilify or belittle members of other parties. In this House, on the platform, everywhere he was a gentleman of the highest order. He never carried animosity, he never carried ill-will for his opponents, and even his biggest detractors, if he had any, he was very level-minded with.

The late Ellsworth Holder was not a cantankerous person. He has done his duty to man and God on this earth. To his sorrowing relatives and friends, I extend my deepest sympathy, and it is my fervent prayer that the God whom I serve will allow his soul to rest in peace.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is most appropriate on this occasion to end using these words, and I use them from the depth of my heart:

"Lives of great men all remind us
We must make our lives sublime
And departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time."

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I shall not be too long but I could not let an

occasion such as this pass without joining too in paying tribute to the late Mr. Holder. He was a very dear friend of my father and I have known him for several years. As a matter of fact, throughout his illness we were constantly in contact by telephone, and there was a matter which I fixed for him just before his death. He was a man of quiet disposition, of an unassuming nature, a sincere, honest man; a man who was what he was partly because of his humble upbringing though in his case his upbringing was less humble than quite a few. He was a man who walked with kings nor lost the common touch. He was approachable, he was quiet, he was a man who if he had crushed an ant would certainly have regretted. He did his best at all times from a purely humanitarian point of view and because above all he was a christian gentleman.

For a long time he was ailing and I do hope that the pretty speeches we have heard and the opportunity taken to make political capital out of Mr. Holder's death that those who made those speeches did visit him as often as he would have liked, because I think you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that very often death or obituaries are the occasion when we hear so much about people whom you have neglected in their life time or you hear so much about people for whom when help was needed, no helping hand was extended.

I therefore shall not say anymore except that Barbados has lost a true, honest, sincere, God-fearing gentleman, and as was said, they do not come like him very often, and I think a great gap not only in the life of Barbadians but in the political life will be left for a long time.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have heard sentiments expressed by hon. members of this august Chamber with reference to the late Ellsworth St. Aubyn Holder, sentiments which I would not even attempt to try to express in the manner in which my colleagues on both sides of the House have set out to eulogise the late Ellsworth Holder. I want to say what I think would be befitting and use words such as these: "For when that one great writer comes to write against your name, He'll ask not how you have won or lost, but how you played the game."

I think Ellsworth Holder was a person who I am quite sure can safely face his master on judgement morning, knowing that he played the game fairly. I first knew him, Mr. Deputy Speaker, strange enough and I believe with much surprise to my colleagues, way back in the 1940s when my father at that time living in Barbados worked for Mr. Holder as a motor mechanic, and I will say that Mr. Holder was very fond of me as

a lad growing up because he always remarked to my father and in front of my face that I was a little devil, as he put it. I do not believe he meant a devil in the sense in which people may refer to it, but I since then have been able to interpret that he meant I was a courageous young man, and this I can say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was clearly borne out in 1966 when I had the honour of walking side by side with a man whom I can only refer to and whom the people of St. James respected as a quiet gentleman.

He had one basic key in his armour when it came to campaigning. Strange enough I of myself was a bit disappointed when I heard him in here and was then surprised after hearing him talking to my father as a lad growing up with such a soft voice and then I heard him from the public platform. I was the most amazed person that such a tall, slim man had such a powerful voice and spoke with such command. He was able, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to squeeze out the very last vote out of the household. He was not the aggressive type, Mr. Deputy Speaker; he was a man with a love for people, a willingness to help; he had a great care and love for very poor people in particular, and I recall the years when I campaigned with him. He knew every single person between the ages of forty and his own age group by name, and what was surprising is that he would always ask, how is John and when last have you heard from Sheila. He knew nearly every single person in St. James' type of life and I think he knew that because the people of St. James respected him to the extent that they brought their personal business to discuss knowing their confidence would not be betrayed, and I am sure that the people of St. James have not only lost a son, but Barbados as a whole can safely say it has lost a quiet political gentleman. I am not sure how he would have stood up today with the rough and aggressive approach to public life, but I am quite sure he would scorn the idea, even the thought of associating himself with some of the people today in public life for the things which you do hear now about them.

He was a gentleman first and foremost and a man who had a great care and love for people in Barbados. I would like, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to express my deepest condolence to his relatives and to all the people of St. James on his behalf and I sincerely hope that God will give me the strength and the health to continue to march the political path which he paved for the past years as a member of Parliament.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, other members of this Honourable House have spoken very eloquently, sincerely, and indeed with a

great deal of feeling concerning the outstanding qualities of the late Ellsworth Holder. I wish not to refer so much to his political career as to refer to the quality which I think he possessed in abundance, and that was the quality of friendship. I have known the late Mr. Holder for over 30 years. He was a very close and personal friend of my adopted parents and for several years when I was a lad and after that he was my mother's dancing partner. I think very few members of the public recognised that he exhibited in his personal life the ability to be a very relaxed person, possessing a sense of fine humour and satire. He was never given to ribaldry but he could delight a crowd by his refined jokes and his sense of timing with humorous remarks. He was an expert at square dancing, and in the days when people of my group were not allowed into certain institutions in Barbados, Ellsworth Holder together with my adopted parents and some other persons set about to break down what was then a well known colour barrier. He was a frequent escort of my parents to dances at the Marine and at the Club Morgan, and I noted as a youngster growing up that it was always one of his outstanding qualities to ensure that his circle of friends was drawn from people of all different complexions. 12.55 p.m.

Colour meant nothing to him. It was the value of the man, and I think he set out to prove that these institutions should not be the preserve of people who are only white in pigmentation. He was also an outstanding cook. In some ways I think he surpassed even the then hon. junior member for St. Lucy and the hon. member for St. John in his ability to cook daintily and tastefully and it gave him tremendous joy to entertain people in this respect.

I believe we can say he was a rounded gentleman; a gentleman in every sense of the word, and he was one of those people who gave me as a youngster, tremendous pleasure in recognizing that human value meant a lot. I came into contact with him around the same time I came into contact with the Hon. Leader of the House, the President of the Senate and many others who were visitors to my parents' home and in some small measure my insight of knowledge into politics was stimulated by meeting with Ellsworth Holder.

I regret very much his passing, and personally and on behalf of my family I should like to convey deepest condolence for his passing.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I as Deputy Speaker, associate myself with the remarks of the other speakers.

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

Members then stood in their places for one minute as a mark of respect.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE GRANTED

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to be absent from this country for about two weeks beginning Sunday, 11th May, and I seek the leave of the Chamber to be absent from any meeting of the House that may take place during that time.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister has asked for leave of absence. There being no objection leave is granted.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would be absent from the country from 21st May until the 4th June. I ask leave of the House to be absent from any meetings that might take place during that time.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition has also asked for leave of absence for a specified period. There being no objection leave is granted.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to make it clear that I am going on CPA business; I will not be on holiday, Sir.

ORAL REPLY TO QUESTION

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport, I beg to give notice that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 4 asked by the Hon. member for the City is ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I propose continuing with Item No. 1 which stands in my name and which was considered by the House on the last occasion when it sat. On that occasion the Honourable Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance was acting on my behalf as Leader of the House and he moved the second reading, and further consideration of the matter was postponed.

I propose dealing with Item No. 1 and Item No. 2 in order to be in a position to get the matter dealt with and passed by both Houses so that we can have the revised Laws of Barbados completed.

I beg to move that Item No. 1 be the first Order of the day.

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

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

Resumption of second reading of the Bill to amend the Law Revision Act, 1967, was called.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am aware that I reserve my right to speak on this particular matter. Is this the Act itself? Is that right Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Item No. 1.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would say very little more about that, but in advance of Item No. 2, I would say that the main contention of the Opposition on the whole question of Law Revision will be that it needs a saving clause.
1.05 p.m.

I am saying that our view of the whole exercise is that we will need saving clauses. There is nothing more that I can say on this. I would have to be advised, briefed, since I am not an expert on the Laws enacted on what is the fashionable word. There may be other hon. Members who can enlighten us more.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I should like briefly to refer to the work of the Law Revision Commissioners and to say that it has taken them a very long time before we have reached this stage. I recognised that the task of consolidating and revising the Laws is one that calls for infinite care and the ability to attend to detail.

It is unfortunate that very soon after the work was begun two of the main commissioners found themselves having to perform other public duties to such a large extent that they could not have devoted their full attention to this exercise; and of course those of us who are concerned with keeping up to date the Laws of this island must thank them for having now completed the task.

I think, however, that it is incumbent upon me as a member of the Legal Profession and one of the vice presidents of the Bar Association to place on record its appreciation of the contribution which has been made by Mr. Wilfred Fergusson to this exercise. I regret very much that the notes in the preface to the

New Edition of the Laws do not adequately bear testimony to the work which Mr. W. K. Fergusson has contributed to the revision of the Laws.

It should be made known, Sir, that he himself did most of the work in connection with the years 1970-71; and with relation to the earlier years his work was certainly not limited to mere proof reading. People who come later will probably believe that all that he did was to proof read the Laws after the revision had taken place. That is very far from the truth of the situation. Many of the details of law revision, he effectively participated in and many of the suggestions for improvement came from him.

He is of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, far too modest a person to want this to be said or indeed to say it for himself; but I believe that where we have such an outstanding Legal Draftsman, a man who obviously understands this branch of Jurisprudence with a depth of learning that is, I am sure, reasonably unrivalled in the Commonwealth Caribbean, that we should feel very proud of the fact that his services will now be available to the Government to continue the ongoing process of Law Revision.

While Professor Paget and Dr. Roy Marshall are also well recognised in the Legal field, some people may well believe that because Mr. Fergusson is not an academic lawyer his qualifications are not as outstanding. I wish, therefore, this debate to reflect that his contribution was as outstanding as that of any of the two Law Revision Commissioners, and certainly more outstanding than that of some of the other persons who came before and who are mentioned in the preface to the new Revised Laws.

The Bar Association of Barbados will wish me to say that we are indebted to the Commissioners, and we are most indebted to Mr. Fergusson for the valuable work that he has done. I will say in passing to the Minister of Communications and Works that I believe that his enthusiasm during his years as Attorney General of the country has helped to push the work that has now been concluded here. I recognise that fact.

I hope that the House in passing this Act will emphasise to the Government the necessity not only to keep our laws under revision, but to keep them reformed as well, and that there must be a seriousness of purpose in our

approach not only to law revision per se, but to law reform as well.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to say that I had hoped as Attorney General of this country to add the revision of the laws to the list of my achievements in that post. However, for one reason or another as stated by the hon. Member for Christ Church West, that was not to be.
1.15 p.m.

I am very happy today to see that we are coming to the end of an exercise which has stretched over almost a decade. I too am fully conscious of the contribution made by Mr. W. K. Fergusson, and I was instrumental in bringing Mr. Fergusson into the exercise when I was not happy about the pace of progress due to the fact that the two able Commissioners were involved in other public duties and so they were unable to devote to this long, drawn out exercise the time, the energy and the scrutiny which a work of this nature entails. I was rather surprised, like the hon. member for Christ Church West, especially as I know of the contribution of Mr. Fergusson to the entire exercise that greater recognition was not given to him and that his position in the exercise has been down played.

Mr. Fergusson was no proof reader. he had to sit down for long hours on this, and I should like to pay tribute to a Civil Servant called Miss Alleyne who was loaned from the Attorney General's Department in my time who worked and during that period gave Mr. Fergusson all the assistance long after hours in trying to accelerate the pace of this very difficult task. I too share the disappointment of the Bar and that of the member for Christ Church West that in the acknowledgement of those who contributed to the finalisation of this exercise that real, proper and deserving tribute was not paid to the work done by Mr. W. K. Fergusson. He did the first laws revision for Barbados and I think those are the laws which are still in use in this country today, and as the hon. member for Christ Church West has said I am very happy to know that in the revision of the regulations of Statutory Instruments his services will be readily available to Barbados along with another distinguished jurist in the person of Mr. Erskine Ward and I hope that they, seeing how long the original exercise has taken, will do everything to speed up the revision of the regulations.

It is said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the law resides in the bosoms of judges but not in the heads of counsel, which is as true today as it ever

was, and therefore criticism can be levelled against members of the Bar, very often unjustifiably, because when I was Attorney General I knew the difficulties they experienced, especially the young barristers whom I had the honour and the privilege of introducing to the Bar, the difficulties they experienced in getting laws up to date. As a matter of fact, I am not sure whether it was not in my time that my own department amended a law which was already amended because we ourselves did not have the books and did not have an up to date set of legal instruments. I think it was the Opposition who drew this to our attention that we were amending a law, and it was a vital piece of legislation, dealing with the Budget, something which was amended before.

I do hope that we have reached the stage as far as the substantive laws are concerned where occurrences of this nature will be completely obviated and that the necessity for this will not arise. I can only ask and hope that the Commissioners who are revising the Subsidiary Legislation, as it used to be called although we have the hifaluten title now of Statutory Instruments, will do everything in their power to expedite the completion of this exercise. I believe that law and order and a respect for the judiciary is still the foundation stone for the stability of our society, and I still believe and believe seriously that we lawyers have a part to play in our community, and a vital part at that. Of course in our group like in any other professional group, you will get bad eggs and good eggs, but I am not satisfied in my mind that the bad eggs in the legal profession are any more or any worse than the bad eggs in any other professional group. This is the price you have to pay because into a profession anyone can enter who has the basic qualifications.

I want to record as a former Attorney General my recognition and appreciation of the work done by the Commissioners and of the sterling assistance and contribution made by Mr. Wilfred Fergusson to the present exercise which is the object of this debate at the moment.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, all this talk has shown one thing, that we in this country for many years have believed that only those so-called experts who are brought from abroad can do work in Barbados, and this has shown quite clearly that in the end we have had to resort to our own local people to complete a task which was sent abroad to be done by so-called experts who have never completed it, and I would wish that out of what is said here today courage can be taken at least to employ more of those persons from among us to carry through

the work we need done in Barbados instead of farming it out to overseas experts or bringing those from abroad into these shores to try to tell us how to do things.

I remember in 1964 when I came back to Barbados and was introduced to the Bar by Mr. William Jacobs who is now the Governor of Antigua, I was told it was no use trying to collect the present laws, that the new laws would have been out in the next two months. It has taken 11 years since then for these laws to come to light and during that period the amount of books which have been missing, even from the library at the Courts, is an example of what can happen when you have not got a sufficient number of laws for those who require them.

As the Minister of Communications and Works has said, I remember a few years ago in an effort to bring the Budget into force they came to the House and amended an old section of the Highways Act in order to increase certain fees payable. When we on this side drew it to the Minister's attention that they were amending the wrong Act they said no, and it was after the budget was delivered that they subsequently realised that they had amended an Act which had been amended already, and if this situation arose in Government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can imagine what the poor practising barrister who does not have the facilities of the Government has to undergo. Once again I hope that we will have more local people to carry through some of the work we have to do in Barbados and realise that experts from outside are not always the best people to do these things.

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

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

1.25 p.m.

Clauses 1 to 22 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, before the Schedule is put, I beg to move that Clause 10 be recommitted. It lies to the hon. member for St. Peter for pointing out that it takes a person with commonsense to see the wood from the trees. We are amending a law which does not exist. Section

10 refers to the Clerk of the Senate. There is no longer a Clerk of the Senate and the Clerk of Parliament should be substituted for the Clerk of the Senate. We should not amend the new laws to refer to an office that does not exist.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, two things should actually be amended. You will have to change Clerk of the Senate in the original Act to Clerk of Parliament, and you will also have to change it in this Act. I would respectfully suggest that the Draftsman be called in.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I see the point raised by the Leader of the Opposition. The Clerk of the Senate would not be in order. I ask that further consideration be postponed at this stage and later on we can have the Clauses recommitted. I think we can pass the Schedule.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, the motion for recommitting Clause 10 will have to be dealt with before we can pass the Schedule.

The question that Clause 10 be recommitted was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition has already stated his case and given his reason for the postponement.

I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER who resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
1.35 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that further consideration of this Bill be postponed.

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

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

THE LAW REVISION (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS) ACT, 1975

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 2 be the next Order of the Day.

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

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

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill seeks to make certain miscellaneous amendments to the Acts in force in Barbados on 31st December, 1971, for the purposes of and in connection with the incorporation of those Acts into the Revised Edition of the Laws of Barbados pursuant to the Law Revision Acts, 1967, and these amendments are made in some 186 Acts.

The position is, as I have already explained to some extent, that we passed the Law Revision Act of 1967 which we are now proposing to amend and which was enacted for the purpose of enabling the Commissioners appointed to revise the Laws of Barbados to prepare for publication the Revised Edition of the Statute Laws of Barbados which would be a cumulative edition and kept current by a new system of continuous revision. The Commissioners took many years doing their work, but they eventually reported and the Commissioners who were appointed to prepare this Revised Edition wrote a letter in which they reported to the Attorney General that they had examined the several volumes of the Laws of Barbados, 1971, for which they were responsible, and that the completed work meets with their approval and satisfaction. They however went on to state very clearly in the same letter that it is necessary for a Miscellaneous Amendment Bill which incorporates certain amendments to the Laws to be made by them in the Revised Edition to be enacted before the Revised Edition can be released. This is what we are doing in this second Bill.

In addition, the Ministry of Legal Affairs made their own close examination of these seven copies of the Revised Edition of the Laws of Barbados, and the Ministry of Legal Affairs considered it necessary to amend the Law Revision Act, 1967, in order to correct certain errors and omissions which are to be found in the Revised Edition, and also for the purpose of ensuring that the Law Revision Commissioner appointed to maintain the cumulative edition as a current edition will have the necessary powers for the purpose.

A great deal has been said of Mr. Wilfred Fergusson and Mr. E. R. L. Ward and with these sentiments I would like to concur very much indeed in that the work now will be carried on by Mr. W. K. Fergusson who has had enormous experience in the revision of Laws from 1942, he and Mr. J. W. B. Chenery, so that there is every

evidence of the competence and expertise of Mr. W. K. Fergusson who had done revision of laws on numerous occasions, as far back as thirty years ago, and the same applies to Mr. E. R. L. Ward. I would like to join with these sentiments expressed by certain members especially by one of our legal luminaries, the hon. member for Christ Church West and the former Attorney General.

The Ministry of Legal Affairs has considered it necessary that these amendments be done. This Bill is to see that all these miscellaneous amendments are incorporated and brought into force at the same time as the Revised Laws come into force.

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

Hon. A. MORRISON: I beg to second that.
1.45 p.m.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I should like to say that the exercise which has been done in this has been a very painstaking exercise. In some cases some of the corrections are substantive and in others they are tidying up measures, but I should hope that the Ministry of Legal Affairs will draw from this experience to undertake another fundamental exercise in our laws, and it is to make a change in many of the Statute Laws which still conflict with the fundamental provisions of our Constitution. Under the 1966 Constitution we kept in being, existing laws or any amendments thereto — even the provisions in those existing laws or their amendments were in conflict with fundamental rights; and I hope now that the Government has got over this exercise, that that or any succeeding Government would feel that respect for human rights and fundamental freedom is such an important tenant of the democratic principles on which our Constitution should be built, that we would hurry on and change those existing laws where any conflict occurs. This has given us good experience. I hope it will be used to good advantage.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise perhaps, on a slightly less friendly note than the notes of most of the speeches that have been made so far. I myself had thought when we passed the Law Revision Act, that we were giving the Commissioners power to revise some of the fines and penalties and to straighten out some of the anomalies which existed in the law. I thought this was the effect of some of the clauses which we then considered and enacted. I was very disappointed to read in this Act that the

Commissioners did not choose the opportunity nor is their draftsman taking the opportunity now to update many of the fines and penalties which exist in the present law.

You can start Sir, with the Beach Protection Act, where a fine relating to the protection of beaches in 1890, of the amount of £1 and 12 shillings is only thought worth today \$10. In my opinion there has been adequate time for the Beach Protection Act of 1890 and the Parks and Beaches Act to be compared, unified into one Act, and a proper schedule of fines instituted for offences against the one Act.

Now let us take the Solicitors Act. Why is the Solicitors Act bothered with any more? Why should the new laws have in the Solicitors Act? (*Aside*) I am aware of that aspect of it, but the Solicitors Act is not a repealed Act. It should have been a repealed Act.

Now the Petty Debt Act is not a repealed Act. I am sure there are other members of the House who will recall that village lawyers would go into court and say that the law allows them to appear because they are Attorneys for one of the parties; that they have some power of attorney. Now that has been changed to Solicitor instead of being changed to Attorney-at-Law. This is one of the small things which make me feel that the careful and meticulous attention which should have been given to this exercise was not given.

Now let us take the Highways Act. All they have done is to substitute dollars for shillings. Indecent language on the highway is one of the most popular offences which come before the court, and the fine for that offence is \$9.60. There are people today who would stand up before the police, I believe and use indecent language and say that after all the fine is only \$9.60, you can have it now. There are persons who behave like that, and who would come and tell the magistrate 'I am sorry, Sir. I used the word,' and the magistrate says \$9.60, and the people go along. They regard it as a tax on the evening's entertainment.

If you use bad language on a Transport Board bus or another bus, I believe the fine is \$50, and I have heard so much legal argument devoted to the bus stand cases with the people who argue, depending on the nature of the charge, that they were in the bus and the words could not be heard on the highway, or alternatively, that they were on the highway and not on the bus, depending on what charge is brought. A lot of argument is brought to bear. Lawyers collect \$120 and \$150 for arguing about

these matters. All these should and could have been cleared up.

Is cursing in the Deep Water Harbour really a more serious offence than cursing in front of school children in the bus stand or in Broad Street? Standing up in Broad Street and behaving as you like, Sir, is \$9.60, but in the Deep Water Harbour when you are only before a customs guard or a policeman, I am informed it can be as much as \$200. All these matters are so small, Sir, but the whole point is this; you just come to a decision in a matter of minutes and you change to three numerals; you change it all to \$200 or whatever the case may be. It is something we could do in here. Not that I am suggesting that, because the peace of an office may be the better place to do it, but these are so small, we are entitled, in my submission, to better treatment from the revision authorities than this.

Let us take the Petty Trespass Act, Sir. Now I know trespass is not a crime in England and therefore it is treated in Barbados as if it should not be regarded as too serious, but all of us know that trespass is a great nuisance, and something that should come within the ambit of the criminal law in Barbados; that you get many serious fighting cases as result of the terms of the Petty Trespass Act. The Police hold that they cannot arrest for petty trespass, that it has to be done by the landlord and he and his servants have to remove the trespassing person, and so on. The police hold that they cannot get into the Petty Trespass Act, and indeed I believe they are right because I think the law says the action has to be brought by or on behalf of the landlord.

Now we see murder cases arising — to take it as an extremity — out of what is basically something that could originally have been dealt with under the law of trespass. People are provoked over land disputes and so on, and these matters come about; but the fine for petty trespass is \$9.60, Sir, and you cannot even send a man to prison on first instance except for non-payment of the fine, a fact which the hon. member for Christ Church West and myself discovered many years ago when he appeared for me in a trespass matter. I doubted either of us were aware that you could not send anybody to prison for trespass in Barbados. That is something, I submit, which could have been dealt with. Instead of substituting \$1 for four shillings, should it be \$1, Sir, or should it be more like \$100? It was \$1 in 1904. It should be more like \$100 today to put a bite into it.

I know there are those who say it is no part of the Opposition to put themselves forward as putting greater penalties on people, but that assumes wrongly to my mind, that the criminal classes of this country exceed the law abiding classes. It is in the interest of all law abiding persons to see that the law bears some relationship to reality. I think there are more people who need to be protected from criminals than there are criminals who need to be protected from honest people, Sir.

Now the Hawkers Registration Act; as far as I am concerned they could give the hawkers a better break than that, but, there it is, Sir.

Even the District Auctioneers Act, I see we amended it once. Are we amending it again? Anyhow I would not press too hard on that.

Now even to come more up to date. I want the hon. Member for St. Michael South Central to be alert here, Sir. He may deserve some praise, but I have to see where the *(Aside)*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, Order!

Mr. ADAMS: I want to praise the hon. Member for his loud voice, his capacity for instant heckling, I want to praise the hon. Member for his repeated assertions of the tremendous qualities which he brought to the office of Attorney General, of the great achievements which he made therein, I want to praise the hon. Member for being the most resounding exponent of his own virtues that the House of Assembly at present has, but I also want to criticise the hon. Member for stopping a young member of Parliament in the year 1969 from making an amendment to the Laws of Barbados — I refer to the hon. Member for Bridgetown who was newly in here then having been elected in a bye election, and I want to criticise the hon. Member for stopping him from making some useful amendments to the Magistrates' Jurisdiction and Procedure Act that would have saved the Government of Barbados a good deal of money, save the Director of Public Prosecutions office which was all associated, I believe, with the then Attorney General, some trouble.

1.55 p.m.

When we wanted to make the amendments that are made by this Schedule to allow for example malicious damage above the value of \$24.00 to be tried by a magistrate, when we wanted to make those amendments a certain

member then of the Senate came and stood up in the House of Assembly Lobby and shouted out and railed and went on badly and persuaded people who should have known better that they should not proceed with them.

That was six years ago, Sir, and the same amendments are made today. They were only corrections and misprints, corrections of a minor misprint that allow the most serious offence — it is very rare but none the less deadly serious offence of setting a false light in a lighthouse. It may seem a joke, but if somebody turns out the light in a lighthouse and sets a false light somewhere else and wrecks a cruise liner, if somebody carries on Sam Lord's practice you will see death and misery.

That is triable by a magistrate due to an error, but if two men have a fight in the same bus stand and one breaks the other's glasses, glasses which cost \$36 to repair — two cases like this have appeared before Sessions in the last two years — that has to be tried by a judge and jury instead of being dealt with summarily by a magistrate.

The hon. Member for Bridgetown, when he introduced a Bill in his first two months of Parliament to rectify this and some other infelicities in the Jurisdiction and Procedure Act, it would have taken nothing off anybody to let that Bill pass, and we would have had a more efficient administration of a part of the Criminal Law; but due, I say, to jealousy on the part of somebody who felt he had not seen it first, it was not passed and it has now slipped into the Schedule in the back.

Even Senator Moe saw it or knew it, Sir, but I understand that he was working in the Department at the time of the original mistake and thereby may lay a tale. Even Senator Moe agreed with it at the time. He was then a Civil Servant. Sir Wilfred Jacobs was not Attorney General then, nor H. A. Vaughan, nor was Asquith Phillips acting, nor was Senator Moe Attorney General. If you please, Sir, I will not detain the House by going into every Act.

SUSPENSION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am sorry I have to interrupt, but the clock on the wall says 2 p.m. and this Sitting is now suspended until 2.45 p.m.

On resumption:

QUESTION TIME

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: This is the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 4 asked by the member for the City. I ask for leave for the Reply to be laid.

The Question was laid.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Order No. 2 be the first Order under Private Members' Business.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

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

BILL TO AMEND THE MARRIED WOMEN'S (SEPARATION AND MAINTENANCE) ACT, 1950

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a Bill entitled an Act to amend the Married Women's (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1950, providing increased maintenance for married women and legitimate children. This Bill was introduced sometime during the last session along with a Bill to amend the Affiliation Act of 1963. On that occasion the Bill to amend the Affiliation Act of 1963 which increased the maintenance for illegitimate children from \$5 to \$10 was passed, but this Bill which sought to increase the maintenance given by a father to a legitimate child from \$5 to \$10, and in respect of the wife from \$20 to \$30 was rejected by the Government.

So, Sir, we now have a rather anomalous situation whereby according to the laws of this country an illegitimate child can under an Affiliation Order get \$10 a week, but the legitimate child can only get \$5 a week. As a result of the prorogation of the House earlier this year it was possible to bring this Bill back before the House, and I do not believe that any long speech is needed. Members will be aware of the purpose as set out, which is to put legitimate children on the same footing as illegitimate children.

When the original Bill was introduced about two years ago the Government voted against the second reading. If I recall correctly, the

Government stated that it was intended to bring down a Bill dealing with Family Relations. Two years have gone by since then and no such Bill has yet been introduced into Parliament. I know, Sir, that there are magistrates who feel that the situation is rather queer, and I dare say that some, even without the money being increased by law, are making orders in respect of \$10 a week.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in seconding this motion we are not seconding it because we do not believe in marriage. The Government has always believed in marriage as a christian institution, and long may it remain so. If of course the Church will not be used for political purposes, I hope that they will stick to that principle and will stick to the principle that the Church is the House of God, and therefore political speeches should not be made from the pulpit of a church.

This Government has never attacked the institution of marriage at all and has no intentions of doing it. Two people meet each other and fall in love and because their economic position permits them to go to the altar and let a priest marry them or go and let a magistrate marry them that is their business. That is why we are supporting a Private Members' Bill because of our firm belief in the institution of marriage.
2.40 p.m.

If however, other people seem to think because they have their own pet grouses or because they think that the Cathedral is a place to be used for political purposes — although in one breath saying it will never be used for political purposes — but to make a political speech against this Government, then of course I cannot control that. If the Church is going to enter into the political arena on behalf of a particular Party, and what is even amusing, I put it to the Opposition now that on the Succession Duty Act which the Prime Minister spoke about the Opposition is in favour of it, so if we have run out of ideas they have run out of ideas, the PDM have run out of ideas, so if the Dean is saying that the Government has run out of ideas and that a new Government should be elected to run the country he means them too, because they support it, the Bar Association supports it, the Opposition supports giving the illegitimate children the same succession rights, and so I dare them to go to the public or write and tell the Dean that they support him and that they will not give illegitimate children the same rights of

succession as legitimate children if they get into power. Who does he want to run the country? We have run out of ideas because we are attempting to introduce this piece of legislation, they have run out of ideas too, the PDM have run out of ideas because they have supported it too.

I am a lay preacher in the Methodist Church. If the Church is going to enter the political arena and use the sanctity of the pulpit for making political speeches to influence the electorate of this country to vote for one side and not the other the Church has to stand the consequences. Why did he not preach about the woman at the well whom the Lord told that she had five husbands and not one of them was hers? He did not condemn her. The same Church decided in the Bahamas that in certain cases divorced people can be married in the Church, but because of some past difference between the State and the Church — I do not know what it is — you get an assault on this Government on the front page of Monday's paper telling us that the Government is against marriage, there is no such thing as unholy wedlock, and this is spread throughout the country as if this is a wicked heathen, paganistic Government out to destroy the institution of marriage created and ordained by God, when everybody knows that as a result of the slaves situation in Barbados there are people in Barbados who have lived together for years and years and have produced able offspring occupying positions in this country whose wedlock cannot be said to be holy by his standards because they did not go before him but whose union is as strong and as devoted as those who went up the aisle of the Cathedral to say "I do." I say that this Government, of which I am a member, will do nothing and can do nothing.

Italy has just given to illegitimate children the same rights as legitimate children, and that is a predominantly Roman Catholic country. Jamaica has done it, Guyana has done it, and then you talk about equality. If you are going to discriminate against people you cannot have Women's Year because some women are legitimate and some are illegitimate. This is a dangerous precedent. The Church must preach out against social evils, the Church must preach out against social injustice, the Church must pinpoint wrongs in the community for which there is a Christian remedy or for which the remedy is not forthcoming, because those who are to remedy them are not Christian motivated, but the Church must not, and I repeat not, endeavour to use the sanctity of the pulpit for the purpose of making strictly political broadcasts. "Those whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder," and you get

free school books brought into a text like that. You also get sales tax, and the Constitutional debate and you are preaching to people who in a community like Barbados are basically Christian. That is why they are so many Missions, religious organisations and Halls thriving. The people would like to worship God, they are seeking leadership, but when you use your exalted position in a community to twist a Christian text to mislead or to tell the people that they must get rid of a Government because the Government has run out of ideas, because the Government is destroying the holy institution of marriage, a line has got to be drawn, and if this Government sits down and let it be thought that because most of us are Christians and because most of us believe that the Church has a part to play in the community, and that the Church throughout the life of the growing citizen can wield a moderating and restraining influence upon us, if we once let it be thought that because we are afraid to offend the Church when the Church crosses those boundaries, then of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the line must be drawn.

As far as I am concerned I believe in the Church, I believe in one God, and I believe in those Christian principles which have always guided my life, but when I read that speech on Monday I could not but feel that he had left the pulpit and could have been in Independence Square instead of in that ancient and revered Cathedral. Let it be a warning. Preach against evils in the Society, preach against social injustice, preach against all those things which man has unjustly done to man, the inhumanity of man to man, but under no circumstances use the sacred House of God that you yourself have said will never be used for political purposes, and use it for what can only be characterised by the most illiterate man in Barbados as an attempt to influence the elections or to influence the voting in this country. I have not got the paper here, but if I read it it would be so clear to you. It should have been a speech of much better content and different. Anybody who read that speech can say that it was a calculated attempt on the part of the Dean to bring down a Government or to bring about a change of the people's attitudes to the elected Government of this country. When you are wrong you are wrong, and I feel if he is really Christian he must sit down in a sober moment, even minutes after the delivery, and realise that in his sermon he had transcended all the basic tenets of good Christian preaching and guidance.

3.00 p.m.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to associate myself with the remarks of the hon.

member who has just spoken. I want to say that all children, regardless of whether legitimate or illegitimate, must be maintained. When fathers do not take on the responsibility of maintaining illegitimate children, the Government at present has to do it through the Welfare Department with national assistance; therefore, indirectly it is a burden on the community. I am going to be fairly crude in my expressions. There are not two ways in causing children to come into this world. There is not one way to get a legitimate child and another to get an illegitimate one; therefore, when people are criticising illegitimate children they are doing a great disservice to the community.

Let us consider the percentage of children in this Island. Approximately not less than 75% to 80% are illegitimate children. It is those children who must go to school; it is those children who we, as parents, must see that they are supported well. When the hon. member for the City introduced this Resolution, I want this House to know that it has my wholehearted support. In these days when there is inflation not only in Barbados, but throughout the world, what can \$5 a day do for a child? Parents have to realise that they have caused these children to be in this world and therefore, they will be called on, or are expected, to make sacrifices to maintain these children.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when people who are placed in prominent positions take it upon themselves to make statements which are not conducive with the proper upbringing of these children — I am talking about not having the necessary funds to assist them — it does not speak well for this Island. Some mothers are very poor — especially domestics — they have children to maintain, and, in some cases, some fathers do not face their responsibilities and, consequently, mothers have to take the fathers to the Courts. It is, therefore, a pleasure and privilege for me to be here at this particular moment to associate myself with a Resolution which is in the interest of illegitimate children. Some of the illegitimate children in this Island and throughout the world hold very prominent positions.

I am not ashamed to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in the Anglican Church there are a few Priests who are illegitimate children; therefore, we always have to think in this country before putting any obstacles in the way of these children. It is my fervent hope that commonsense will prevail and the people of this country will censure not only those who oppose illegitimate children, but even those who say things about this Government which it does not deserve. Illegitimate children must be maintained.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill deals with legitimate children, but I am sure that, in dealing with legitimate children, it also creates a precedent for illegitimate children. I am sure that the Magistrates will use their sympathy and will not only consider legitimate children, but also illegitimate children and that such children will be given a greater share of the wealth of their parents so that they can obtain better facilities in this world.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, no one, I think, even the mover of this Item, would have thought that so much heat would have come out of a simple Bill as the one which is now before us. I am quite sure from the time this Bill came before this Assembly, and after reading the Dean's Speech on Sunday, that the Church would have come in for another baptism from the Government's bench. I think it was ill-timed to bring this matter at this time because it would have saved the Spiritual Leaders of this country from the vicious attacks of this Government. We heard certain things today in a sober manner unlike the manner of the Prime Minister on the last occasion, when he spoke about the Church.

I am in support of this Bill because it provides for these unfortunate children an additional amount of money. The hon. member for St. Philip South says that he supports the \$5 a week. It is only a few months ago I brought a Resolution in here to give the old age pensioners \$15 a week, and the Government members along with the same hon. member voted against it. This is a very strange world, and I wonder if it is possible for us to fill our mouths with food and whistle at the same time. The hon. member was happy to pay \$5 a week, but he was unhappy to see the old age pensioners getting \$15! 3.10 p.m.

You do not know where you are going and that is why the Dean said from the pulpit of St. Michael's Cathedral that you should give way to people with a more progressive approach, because you are hearing on one side that the additional \$5 a week is something which he is happy for, but he did not see fit to get up and agree with a Resolution to give old age pensioners \$15 a week, an addition of \$5 a week, from 1969.

Mr. WEEKES: On a point of order, the hon. member is introducing irrelevance. There is no comparison.....

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is for you to decide whether or not it is irrelevant.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: May I hear the point?

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am drawing to your attention that the \$5 is to be paid by the parents of the children. The increase in old age pensions would have to come directly from the taxpayers and I can assure you that while the Government might not have seen it possible at the time to increase the amount owing to lack of funds, I can vouch that in the long run pensions will be increased.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your point has been made.

Mr. CRAIG: That is no point of order; that is a real point of ignorance from that gentleman who appears to be suffering from senility. He agrees and is happy to see the children of this country get the additional \$5 a week, but he did not support the Resolution for old age pensioners to receive \$15 a week. Is that not relevant? It has been distasteful to hear the Church once again give them a baptism. I should like to remind the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works that the church's one foundation is Jesus Christ the Lord. That is what he has first to understand, and the spiritual wheels will speak out and can speak out to guide the destinies of the society. He cannot say that the Church must not be in politics because the Church is part and parcel of this society and the society has to be involved in politics. I doubt the hon. member remembers the Lord Bishop of Barbados, Bishop Mandeville at the Garrison when the Government took over, with a broom in his hand in 1961. Did he not bring the Church into politics. What is wrong with the Church getting into politics? What is wrong with the Dean's address? If he had said that the Opposition should all be gaoled, they would have hailed such an address; but the Dean simply said from the pulpit of St. Michael's Cathedral that he feels within himself that the legislation brought down by the Government is not in keeping with his spiritual belief, and now he is taken to task for that simply because he said you should give way to those people with a more progressive way of thinking. Now he is taken to task again. The Dean is not in a position to go into Independence Square not that he can't, but he wouldn't to say these things, but he said them in a place where he has a God given right to say them from.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am going to support this. I did not want to get involved in this whole exercise, because it is a straight-forward Bill which the hon. member for Bridgetown brought

before this Assembly, but all we have seen is that the Minister of Communications and Works who is supposed to be a lay reader, not in the Anglican Church, not in the Salvation Army, but in the Wesleyan Church, is now crossing swords with the Dean of the St. Michael's Cathedral simply because he has expressed a view. The Prime Minister invited the public to send in their views in relation to the Constitution debate, this famous debate, and then took them to task in here because he did not agree with what the Church and the other business houses had to say. This is really a difficult society to live in; it is really an unfortunate society to live in with the unfortunate people you have to be around. Why did you invite the institutions and organisations to send in their opinions and then take them to task publicly because their opinions did not suit you? It is the same thing that the Minister of Communications and Works has done today. If it were something against the Opposition Party, it would have been a victory hail for the Government. There are twenty-one seats in the Senate and Evangelist Matthews is a politician appointed by the Governor-General on the advice of the Prime Minister of this country, yet you are saying that the Church should not get into politics and Senator Matthews is a spiritual leader. Reverend Hatch said a simple prayer in the Senate when the Queen was here and in this prayer he said he hoped the unfortunate people in this country would have been in a position to see the glamour you had in this country, and he was chased out of the Senate. Now you have the Reverend Crawford. *(Asides)* What sort of lay reader could you be? If I were in a rum shop.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order, if I had to preach a sermon on that text, I do not see how a 5% sales tax could get into the text "Those whom God has joined together let no man put asunder". How could the Constitution, school books and a change of Government get into it?

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker nobody interrupted the hon. member. The Church is involved in politics because it is part of the society. You would not have preached it that way, your way would have been like the Matthews way; but the Dean did not go the Smith way or the Matthews way, therefore the Dean is a vagabond.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order, at no time did I say the Dean was a vagabond.

Mr. CRAIG: I do not expect you to say that. I said he is a vagabond in the sight of the

members of the Government. He is a criminal and should not be in the Cathedral; he should mind his business in the sight of the Government.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker,.....

Mr. CRAIG: You have no idea of what is going on.

Mr. WEEKES: The hon. member has said that the Dean is a vagabond.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On what has the hon. member risen?

Mr. WEEKES: On a point of order. The hon. member has said that the Dean is a vagabond in the sight of members of the Government. I am a member of this Government and to me he is not a vagabond, and therefore I am respectfully calling on you to ask the hon. member to withdraw those remarks.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not consider that remark anything to be withdrawn. Let the hon. member continue.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that in your boyhood days coming up you have met a village priest, a village lawyer, a village doctor and a village clown and I in my years have met a parliamentary clown.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order he has to withdraw that. You cannot refer to any member as a parliamentary clown. It is disparaging, it is insulting and if you look at the Standing Orders you are not to make insulting remarks, and it is obviously a reference to the hon. member who has just sat down. The hon. member should be made to withdraw, otherwise what is going to happen in here when you refer to an hon. member as a parliamentary clown.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Let there be some order otherwise I will enforce the Rules against members on both sides.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: After all we are not all idiots in here, and I am objecting on the ground that after the hon. member who had spoken sat down, the hon. member for St. James made reference to a village this and a village that and said now he has met a parliamentary clown. Now as the judge of this House and the preserver of the rights of this Assembly, I ask you to whom was he referring other than to the hon. member for St. Philip North? Are you going to let him in this House refer to the hon. member as a

parliamentary clown? It is a matter for you. The Speaker is the one who makes the rulings. You have to use commonsense.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member said now he has met a village clown. He did not say where.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As soon as the hon. member sat down, the hon. member for St. James talked about a Parliamentary clown. You have to use commonsense and you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have to interpret the Rules and expressions.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you making a speech on this?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am saying that the hon. member must withdraw it.
3.20 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has now said he has met a village clown. Where did he meet him?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: You as Mr. Speaker have to interpret the Rules.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But are you making a speech?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am speaking on a point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have ruled and I will permit the hon. member to continue.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, somewhere in 1971 a former now deceased Minister of Religion at St. Lucy's Parish Church had a candidate who is now the member for St. Lucy — had his picture — placed on the pulpit, and asked the congregation to support it. Now the Minister does not take objection to that but you are actually saying that the Dean is trying to influence the people of this country to vote against the Government.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of explanation. I have never seen the member's picture on any pulpit in St. Lucy's Parish Church and how can I object to something I have not seen.

Mr. CRAIG: I am going to give this my blessing as members on the other side of the House, and I hope sincerely that all hon. members in here would leave the church out. If the people of this country, as the Minister of Communications and Works said, find a little

consolation in going to church let the spiritual leaders provide that consolation for them, and I am calling on members of both sides of the House to refrain from attacking the church.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, before the question is put I would like to make it clear that at no time did the Government oppose the principle of this Bill. (*Aside*) The voting against it was on the principle that more comprehensive legislation would come down.....

Mr. MOTTLEY: On a point of order, Sir. The hon. member is misleading the House. He cannot say that the House did not vote against the principle of the Bill because when you vote against the second reading of a Bill you vote against the principle of the Bill, and the Government voted against the second reading of the Bill on the last occasion that it was introduced.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am saying that the Government was never opposed to the principle of the Bill in that more comprehensive legislation was being brought down, and I am glad we have agreed on this occasion to continue with this Bill on the grounds that delay has been too long and in order to have conformity to enable legitimate lawful children to enjoy the same facility as illegitimate children.

As far as allowances are concerned, the comparison made by the hon. member for St. James is entirely wrong. One thing he must realize; none of us here would oppose old age pensioners getting \$15 or even \$20 but the question is, can the Government pay \$15. We are all in agreement with higher old age pensions but the question is that the Government alone in one case has to pay this bill and in the other case the father or the putative father has to pay.....

Mr. CRAIG: On a point of explanation. The Honourable Leader of the House said that the Government did not oppose the old age pension increase by \$15 a week.....

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I did not say that.

Mr. CRAIG: You said you did not oppose it. When I brought a Resolution here asking for \$15 a week for them and the Government postponed the Resolution and brought in the Budget carrying it from \$8 a week to \$10. So this is contrary to what they are now saying.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Your point is taken.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: The hon. member is there sitting in his seat and cannot understand what is being said. At no time did I say that the Government was not in favour of this \$15, or whatever he said. I said each member in here would feel old age pensioners should get more, and we feel so too — are entitled and should get more owing to the high cost of living but the Government cannot afford to pay \$15 a week yet to old age pensioners, and if we follow that trend of thought it would mean additional taxation in order to find this additional money. So that the comparison is not on all-fours and it is not a proper comparison to make. In one case the father, and in the other case the putative father in the case of illegitimate children, they will have to pay the allowance.

So that the time is not far distant off when this \$5 or \$10 in the passing of this Bill would have to be further increased because \$10 a week is not very substantial and the purchasing power is very small; so that this Bill, although much fuss is being made about it now, a new Bill with new figures should be brought in; that is how I feel. This has been pending now for two years and things have gone up immensely in the last year or so. So whereas \$5 should be increased to \$10 and \$10 to \$20, yet in accordance with the rapid increases in the cost of living we feel that these increases may really be very slight or almost fictitious.

So I just wanted to make it clear that the Government was always in favour of the principle and we feel that more should be done for married women.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am glad to hear that the Government is going to support a measure such as this. I am going to support the measure myself but as a strong believer in women's rights I consider this legislation highly outmoded and completely unsatisfactory for the crying needs that arise in relation to the rights of women in this respect.

3.30 p.m.

I do not believe that in this day and age the rights of magistrates to award a maintenance order against a husband should be limited to any \$30 for the wife or indeed \$10 for a child. There are several cases that I know of before the courts where the man was working for a very large salary and the woman was being forced to resort to action in the High Courts, even if she does not want to get a divorce, before she could get an order for maintenance of herself and indeed of her children.

It is not often known by people, even in Government circles, that the legislation of this island does not permit the High Court to make a maintenance order against a man where he wilfully neglects to maintain his wife or indeed wilfully neglects to maintain his children. In order to circumvent this defect in the law, we have had to advise women to go into the High Court, at increased expense to themselves, or to make an application under the Infants Act of 1958. This is an unnecessary procedure.

I understand that the Government's views on women's rights seem to be that there is nothing wrong with the laws but that the fault is that of the women, that they have to get up and get. With due respect to this view, it is unfortunate because it does not accurately reflect the facts.

Women cannot make Parliament pass this legislation even if they demonstrated in full force outside of Parliament. It is for the Government to realise that there is need for reform of the laws of the island and to take positive steps to remove inequalities such as exist in this sphere of the law.

We have been advocating a reform of the Family Law, in my experience for some 16 years since I have been back here. I have heard the Government say that it is considering the matter, and that is as far as it has gone. Unless this Act is passed, we will have a further inequality where distinction is being made between children of a legitimate union and children of an illegitimate union.

That was created because of the fact that on the last occasion on which an amendment was suggested to this legislation the Government saw fit not to accept the amendment, and hence the anomaly in the law. I believe that we have to be positive in these matters. It is a measure that commends itself to people who believe in equality of rights and equality of the sexes.

Sir, it cannot be left to the whims and fancies of political parties who only dance to a tune when it suits them to do so. As far as I am concerned it is a matter that should be outside partisan politics because it concerns the bread and butter of children in particular; but we have got to the stage where if the Opposition raises any measure which the Government feels has some political mileage in it, it is silenced, it is played down or undermined because of the partisan political approach that the Government takes to

measures of this nature and not because of their intrinsic value.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am disgusted to see what we have reduced some of our women to, where some women have to queue in the hot sun or stand up outside a Magistrate's Court to collect money. Usually on Fridays you see women, some with babies in their hands in a long queue waiting to ask the Clerk of the Court if the man has left the \$5 there yet to feed his child.

We should by now have had legislation making it compulsory for employers to deduct from the wages of persons if they do not know how to carry out their responsibilities to their families. I say definitely that the Prime Minister has slipped so badly that he does not understand what the argument about women's rights happens to be, when he can make the type of statement which says that nothing is wrong in relation to women's rights; it is the women themselves who have to reform the situation.

Is it fair that a man should enjoy the sweets of a woman and then make here have the sourness of walking into the courtyard to collect money on Fridays? (*Aside: She had her sweets too!*) I heard an hon. member say that she had her sweets too. I want to say let him show that he can give some milk too.

I am asking the Government to pass legislation to remove this burden from the women of this country. Every time that I see legislation of this nature it makes me emphasise once more that many members of this Parliament do not seem to understand the inequality in the law which exists *vis a vis* the women of this country, and that we are treating this as a joke, as though it is a special thing for myself or somebody else whereas it is a fundamental thing that the Government should devote a special legal adviser in order to research the law and make reforms in the law where necessary.

The whole field of Family Law calls for serious changing. I heard complaints made about the illegitimate and legitimate child. Let me state this: The Barbados Labour Party in its Manifesto in the last election made it clear to the public that had we been returned as the Government of the country we would have reformed the law.

All that happens to the poor Prime Minister is that he always takes up our ideas a

little late. Eventually he uses them. (*Asides*) I would like to point out to the hon. member — because many members do not know that the Bar Association has gone on record on this matter of changing the law in relation to legitimate and illegitimate children some 15 years ago. So the Government itself has been tardy in this respect.

It is no great thing. The English Parliament in 1961, Mr. Deputy Speaker, changed the legislation and it was there to be copied by the Government if they wanted to do something about it (*Aside: Tell the Dean that.*) It is coming as though it is something so new and so different. As a matter of fact two weeks before the Prime Minister made his address I wrote a Guest Editorial in the Catholic News on the issue. I am glad to see that the Prime Minister took the opportunity to read it and accept my ideas on the matter.

I do not agree with the Dean's attitude on this matter. (*Cheers*) He and I differ in our approach to this matter, but I will defend in this House his right to express his views from the pulpit or elsewhere; because very often people believe that the Church should remain silent and not speak out even if they speak out rightly or wrongly on issues that they feel deeply about.

3.40 p.m

I see nothing wrong with the Church speaking out. You invite the Church to speak out but you want a silent Church. We are a disestablished Church now, and get it clear that the Anglican Church has as much right to disagree or agree with the Government when it sees fit as any ordinary citizen. This is guaranteed in the Constitution. The member for St. Michael West said that every question is a question of politics, so why take the poor Dean to task? On the instances that he has come out and agreed with the Government no doubt he will have done a good service. When the Dean was speaking in the constituency of the hon. member for St. Michael North Central he was toeing the line, but the trouble with this Government is that unless you agree with them on everything they criticise you because you have the guts to have an independent view. He has the fundamental right to speak his mind.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: If the hon. member will give way I would like him to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when he has spoken for me.

Mr. FORDE: I said he spoke to the constituency group, not for the Hon. Minister, I

believe the Hon. Minister in due course will stand up and speak for himself. I know I have no such problems. Any hon. member on this side or on that side of the House will get to understand that when it comes to my right to act or to speak as I feel like according to my conscience I reserve the right in this Parliament or anywhere else to do that. Party Politics cannot prevent me from speaking according to my conscience. Respect the man for his right to speak, but you are entitled to criticise him if you do not agree with him. I would hate to think that people will expect that the role of the Church is to be silent in the community, that is not the role of the Church. I agree with the Church taking an interest in the community. The Anglican Church throughout the world has done and is doing good work. There was a time that they sided with the plantocracy but their contribution to education in this Island is an outstanding contribution, and this Government cannot quarrel at the moment at the fact that a lot of the Anglican Church's property is being had by the Government for almost a pittance to support church schools, so do not tell us that we in the Anglican Church are not making a contribution, I refuse to accept that. Our views on family rights may not be what everybody considers to be in step, in fact those of us in the Church do not always agree completely on the attitude that should be taken with these matters.

I believe that you should not visit the sins of the fathers on the children, yet some people consider that the Bible thinks otherwise. I believe that divorced persons should have the right to communion, some people think otherwise. I believe that women should be entitled to be Bishops in the Church, some people think otherwise, but far be it from me to deny any member of this community the right to speak his mind on issues such as this.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not realise that this Bill would have generated the amount of heat that it has generated. Unfortunately we are seeing a tendency in Barbados that those who express opinions which are not in favour of the Government suddenly become the worst individuals of this society. Those who express opinions that do not conform with the views of the Government are criticised for expressing those views. We are seeing a degree of intolerance in Barbados as regards the views of other persons, and this intolerance is being displayed by the Government of this country. Whether the Church should enter politics or not I am not going into that debate at this stage, whether the

Dean was right or wrong I am not going into at this stage, but I would say that whether he was right or wrong it is his right to say what he wants to say. (*Asides*).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members on the Government benches should not speak so loudly.

Mr. MOTTLEY: If we believe in democracy then the Dean was right to say what he thought or what he genuinely believes to be the teaching of the Church as he understands it. It is not right for any member in here to get up and attack him and say that he wants to change the Government. If he feels like any other citizen of this country that the Government should be changed it is right to say so. I remember some time last year shortly after the Dean returned to Barbados that he went on television and radio and said that the Prime Minister of this country was the person best suited to run the country at the moment and nobody criticised him. The hon. member for St. Michael North Central did not get up and lambaste him but we did not criticise him for saying so because we in the Opposition realised that it was his right to say so. Now that he comes out and says that the Government should be changed we are going to be told that the Church is moving into politics. It is obvious to anyone in this country that there is going to be a head-on collision between that Government and the Church, and it may be that in this context the teaching of the Church as set out in England may not be in keeping with the interpretation of the doctrine as could be applied to Barbados, in a society whose social background is completely different from the British society, and that the Church in Barbados will have to take into consideration our heritage and the social system that exists in Barbados, but whether that is so or not I think the Church cannot be criticised for entering politics.

People say that the Church is too silent at times, and when the Church makes its voice heard however right or wrong I think we should be glad to realise that the Church for once is no longer remaining a dormant instrument in society but is attempting to take an active role in our society. We are seeing that every time anyone in the Anglican Church or in any of the Churches in Barbados says anything that is critical of the Government they are being criticised. I will even say persecuted.

I agree with the hon. member for St. James that you have a man of the calibre of Rev. Hatch who has acted for three years as

Chaplain in the Senate. What has Rev. Hatch done wrong except to say a prayer the Government does not agree with? I challenge any one to get up and deny this.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I categorically deny that Rev. Hatch did not get the job because he said any prayer anybody did not agree with.

Mr. MOTTLEY: The hon. member will agree that immediately after the prayer Rev. Crawford who is well known to be a supporter of the Democratic Labour Party was appointed, after Father Andrew Hatch said a prayer which was critical of the Government.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: If he wants to be fair why not say that Rev. Crawford was appointed because he was a supporter of the Government? Where does the prayer come in?
3.50 p.m.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Communications and Works will not be aware of what is going on because he is not so close to the Prime Minister.

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel that Rev. Crawford was appointed because he is a supporter of the Government. I am firmly wedded to the idea that Rev. Hatch was removed from the Senate because of the prayer he used there. Why is it that three years after he had acted in the job and had used that particular prayer he was removed? When the Priests of the Church express views that are inconsistent with those of the Government they will be persecuted just as Saul persecuted the Christians. That is what the Government is trying to do. There is no love lost with the Prime Minister when it comes to the Church.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was a bit surprised today to hear a member, who is a professed Lay Reader, attacking the Church. When the Methodist Church was severely criticised in here during the Constitution Debate by the hon. Member for St. Michael North West, not a solitary word came from the hon. Member for St. Michael North Central. The Government is becoming intolerant to any views expressed that are contrary to those of the Government. If the Dean said that it was wrong to have a 5% sales tax, then it is his right to guide the people of this country spiritually and socially. If he has expressed an opinion that the Government should be changed, it is his right to say so. Whatever he says the people can either accept or reject, and he should not be criticised for saying those things. I believe that it was

Voltaire who said "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend your right to say it."

I just want to say that I share the views expressed by the hon. Member for Christ Church West, and will recommend that the Government's Draftsman look at the system of having money deducted from salaries and paid to women in this country rather than having them standing in the hot sun in the Court Yard all day waiting for a few dollars.

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

Mr. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on the Bill.

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

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

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive were called and passed.

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

Mr. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read the third time.

Mr. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill do now pass and be cited as the Married Women's (Separation and Maintenance) Act, 1975.

Mr. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Order No. 1 be the next Order of the Day.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Order stands in my name. I have maintained the right that, if I have a Resolution on the Order Paper, the Leader of the Opposition cannot tell me when I must do it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All the hon. Member has to say is that he is not ready.
4 p.m.

Has the hon. member for St. Lucy declared his readiness to commence with Order No. 1?

Mr. ADAMS: The hon. member has not been in the House very long, but if he is not ready all he has to say is that he is not ready or move that further consideration be postponed. If he is not ready he is not ready. What is the difficulty with that?

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Order No. 1 standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy be postponed.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I called Order No. 1 but did not hear the hon. member for St. Lucy make any contribution.

Mr. ADAMS: Just let me see what the terms of this Resolution are, if nobody can behave with manners or even commonsense in here. There is not a word saying that a member other than a person in whose name it is cannot move the motion. Just let me see the original motion and I will move it.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr CRAIG: I beg to second that.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member is entirely out of order and he knows it.

Mr. ADAMS: Who says that any hon. member cannot move any motion? Only a Minister can move certain Resolutions, but who

says that because a motion stands in one man's name another man cannot move it? Find the Rule that says that in any Standing Order or in Erskine May's.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: The hon. member for St. Lucy is actually present in his seat, and the Leader of the Opposition finds himself in an invidious position in that as Leader of the Opposition he wants control of all the Private Members' Business, but unfortunately he does not control all the backbenches or members who are not Ministers.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, I do not consider that I have control of anybody in here. I am calling the Orders of the Day in accordance with the Rules so that those who have to deal with them can deal with them. They can say they are not worrying, they are not ready or ask that further consideration be postponed. That is what I am doing. In this regard Bills shall be called before Resolutions and I have called the Bill first and now we are going down the Order Paper. After No. 1 it will be No. 3. Actually I should have called No. 4, but I am not ready with No. 4 because it is something which the Minister concerned might wish to have some consultation on.

If you read the Rules of the House they state quite clearly that the items are called in the order in which they appear. I want to get away from this whole business of Leaders of the Opposition asserting that they have some right and that they can stop other members from doing their business. I do not want to assert it in any way, but the hon. member for St. Lucy has no understanding of what is going on; he has not been in here long enough to know procedure or manners.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a member of this Assembly I would like you to put me straight on this matter. As I understand it, the Leader of the Opposition moved that Item No. 1 be the Order of the Day. It was seconded. The member for St. Lucy got up and made a contribution, and sat down, therefore I take it that was his speech. I would like your ruling on that. I am calling on you to protect the rights of the minority. Both the Minister of Communications and Works and the Minister of Home Affairs are directing the Chair. Give us a chance. We are asking for your ruling on this.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: There is nothing on which to rule. The Hon. Leader of the Opposition moved that Order No. 1 be the next Order; it was seconded. Even assuming, which we

do not accept, that the member for St. Lucy spoke, he could only be speaking on the motion that that be the next Order, not on the motion, because it has not been passed that it should be.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Lucy did not speak on Item No. 1, and that is my ruling.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, I do not think the time of the House should be wasted with continual points of order. There are all sorts of points of view. There is no rule saying that only the Leader of the House can call Government Business in a particular order. There is no rule saying that the Leader of the Opposition calls Private Members' Business either. It is a tradition of the House that, subject to the Chair, the Leader of the House calls Government Business and the Leader of the Opposition calls Private Members' Business. The House is one House whether there are two political parties or not, and whether the hon. member for St. Lucy or the hon. member for St. Michael West like it or not, they along with technically yourself and the six of us are the private members of this House, and it is an ancient tradition of the House which I do not assert that the Leader of the Opposition calls Private Members' Business, and until the hon. member for St. Lucy came to the House there was never any difficulty about any member getting on his Resolution or holding back his Resolution. The only time I can remember being in the House and observing this difficulty is since the hon. member is here.

Now there is a Rule that makes it unnecessary for us to follow tradition, that is, Standing Order No. 20(4) which says that Private Members' Business shall be set down on the Order Paper for a particular day in the order in which it was entered in the Order Book for that day, therefore Order No. 1 has to come first whether it is moved or not. Perhaps the tradition where the Leader of the Opposition is concerned is that if he wants to take any matter out of order, he has to do the taking out of order, but also there is another Rule, and I would have to search the Rules, where it is known that Bills have priority over Resolutions, and therefore it is my practice to look at the Bills and call the Bills, and when we finish with the Bills, to look at the business which I know or do not know has to be done. That is the way we conduct things. Good manners would perhaps suggest that those concerned should get together, but we cannot get together if this sort of conduct exists. Either the Rules must be followed or the tradition must be followed, but we cannot go on quarrelling and behaving like little children all the days of our

lives. Order No. 1 is the instant Order of the Day under Private Members' Business both by reason of the Standing Orders and by reason of the motion.

4.10 p.m

If the person in charge of Order No. 1 chooses to sit in his seat and take no part in it, I submit that anybody can move it. If that is done we will get some kind of decision, but what cannot be done is, when something is properly before the House, that no action be taken on it. Order No. 1 has to be disposed of one way or the other. However you view the Rules, Order No. 1 is the instant Order of Private Members' Business and it must be disposed of. We do not have to go into silly, childish argument. It has to be disposed of. So either those who are interested in it get up, or after a respectable interval I will repeat my motion, that it do now pass. (*Aside*)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, Order!

Mr. ADAMS: There are not two motions. Even if the Government voted against the motion that it be the instant Order it is still the order. The Standing Order is not suspended, and Order No. 1 therefore must be the Order of the Day in the absence of a contrary motion. The Order is merely *ex abundantia cautela*. The motion is merely a motion to go through the motion, so to speak, to use a pun.

The motion need not be made. I will withdraw the motion if it makes members happier, but my withdrawing the motion will not change the situation. Order No. 1 is the Order of the Day; in my submission based upon Order No. 20 Rule 4 — upon 20(4), Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 1 stands in the name of the hon. Member for St. Lucy. Is the hon. Member ready to discuss the Bill now?..... I prefer the hon. Member to stand and speak.

Mr. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I have already made it clear. This Order stands in my name. I have not given the Leader of the Opposition any permission to call the Order on my behalf.

Now the Leader of the Opposition in the rather illogical exercise in which he was involved a couple of minutes ago indicated that by the way in which the Order Paper is set out, that Order No. 1 is to be the Order now. Now if we were to just examine the logic of this position

which he attempted to put here, we are in Private Members' Business and we have been in Private Members' Business for some time now and it is rather strange that the Leader of the Opposition, to follow his argument, when he moved that Private Members' Business be taken, that he did not move that Item No. 1 be the Order, but he moved.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order. Did not the hon. Member hear that Bills have priority and then Resolutions? Does he not know the difference between a Bill and a Resolution?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That point has been taken.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is under Private Members' Business. Now I am just showing how illogical he is. The hon. Member thinks he is the only person who is possessed with knowledge and commonsense and who can read and understand. I want to let him know that I can read and understand English the same way that he can and if he is going to talk about manners, there is no more unmannerly person in here than he. It is as simple as that. The Leader of the Opposition likes to insult people but I can insult people if I want to insult people too, but that is not my nature, but there is nobody more unmannerly than he is.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am asking you to withdraw that remark. You are speaking directly of the Leader of the Opposition as being unmannerly.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker,.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am asking the hon. Member for St. Lucy, before you speak, to withdraw the remark that the Leader of the Opposition is unmannerly.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. Member for St. Thomas, the Leader of the Opposition accused me of being an unmannerly person and I am not going to withdraw this remark of accusing him of being an unmannerly person unless he is asked to withdraw that remark.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not want to hear that. That type of argument is not good for in here. I have made a ruling to you. You are to withdraw that remark. *(Aside)* Order! Order! I am waiting on you. I asked you to withdraw that remark. The hon. Member for St. Lucy, will he withdraw the remark?

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not intend to withdraw the remark.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you please leave the Chamber for the remainder of the Sitting.

Mr. GREAVES left the Chamber.

Hon. F. C. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. All right; I will give way.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I would ask that you ask that the remarks be struck from the record. If you have ruled that they are unparliamentary, they should not appear as part of the record.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order. I cannot see how you could ask for those to be struck from the record when the Leader of the Opposition in this House made reference to unmannerly behaviour of this party about nine times. Ask the Reporter to read it back and see if the question of unmannerliness did not come from the Leader of the Opposition who is an insulting snob.....

Mr. ADAMS: Now I would be very glad if that could be withdrawn.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. To the Honourable Minister who has just spoken; that remark will have to be withdrawn immediately.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I agree. I withdraw it.

Mr. FORDE: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Everybody is going to get a bit hot, Sir. I do not believe, on a point of order, that two wrongs in this House make one right. That is the first point I want to make. Secondly, you have given a ruling, I believe that the hon. Member must accept your ruling. This is my view.

Again, this is what is annoying me more and more about partisan politics. People seem to get so short-sighted on matters of this nature. The authority of the Chair is the authority of the Chair. I do not always agree with the Chair's ruling but if the Chair has given a ruling, in my view it must be carried out otherwise Parliament will have no respect; and I will, on a point of order, move that Your Honour direct that that be struck from the record.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to draw to the Members' attention the Rules of

Debate, 28(18). It shall be in the discretion of the officer then presiding, to order that any statements which are required by him to be withdrawn by the Member making them, shall be expunged from the records of the House.

I think that closes the matter.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I can just give a little explanation. A careful check of the records, I am sure, will not reveal that I have said anybody is unmannerly. I made reference to manners; good manners would dictate certain courses of conduct. Nobody will be able to read those Reporters' notes and find that I have called any member of the House unmannerly. If any member feels that he has been accused of unmannerliness, well I am very sorry if he has been offended; but I seriously considered that there are Rules of manners and that I have not been treated with good manners in respect of this matter of Private Members' Business.

4.20 p.m.

There is a reason why the member for St. Lucy is in a position to say that he has not given me permission. I do not know if he is God to give me permission to do something, to give me permission to introduce a certain order of Private Members' Business. I cannot speak to him to discuss the matter, because he does not, has not, and I do not believe will be prepared to discuss with me the arrangement of Private Members' Business. Therefore I can only do what I think right before God and the Order Paper and my duty as a member to give everybody a chance to get on with the business.

If I could just speak to the hon. member and get him say that he wants something done whether he wants it done or not, I would not have to make remarks about good manners. That is all I can say. If the hon. member for St. Michael South Central thinks that I am an insulting snob — I think he ought to withdraw that — but I think that he should really look into his own problems if that is really his judgement of me. If that is really his judgment of me and not nearly a partisan statement, I wish to say that the statement would be offensive.

It has been pointed out to me that a mistake has been made as regards Order No. 3. It must go to a Select Committee even though the House has agreed to it. The motions for the third reading and passing were out of order and I now move that it be committed to a Select Committee.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I agree that all Private Members' Bill must go to Select Committee. I beg to second that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This Bill has been passed already.

Mr. ADAMS: It could not be passed without going to Select Committee. I think that the motions should be rescinded and the Bill sent to Select Committee.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Up to the second reading speech everything was quite in order. After that everything was out of order. The rules compel us to send the Bill to a Select Committee. Without that it is as though it was *non est* as the law would say. We are regularising a mistake. That is all.

Mr. ADAMS: I move, Sir, that the motions be rescinded and the Bill sent to a Select Committee.

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

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

Mr. ADAMS: I beg to move that the following hon. members be members of the Select Committee — His Honour the Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for St. George North; the hon. member for Bridgetown; the hon. member for Christ Church West; the hon. member for St. Thomas, the hon. member for Christ Church East; the Hon. Minister for Health; the hon. member for St. Michael North East; the hon. member for St. Michael South Central.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I decline. A little pooh pooh Bill like this.....

Mr. ADAMS: The hon. member for St. Michael North West. Is that enough, Sir? Four on that side and three on ours. There are seven, Sir.

The question that the seven members nominated by the Leader of the Opposition be members of the Select Committee was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

BILL TO AMEND THE MARRIAGE ACT

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that Order No. 4 be the next Order.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a very short Bill. The House has already given a second reading in an earlier session to this Bill. The report from the Select Committee was ordered to be laid on the table following an undertaking that the Government was going to introduce a comprehensive Marriage Bill. No such Marriage Bill has been introduced, and I submit that there is no point keeping on and on waiting for these comprehensive Bills. We would have been waiting four years very soon for this comprehensive Bill. It will be like the Road Traffic Bill, I submit that the House should give the Bill a second reading.

I do not believe that there is considered to be any faults in the drafting although I am told that the forms to be used in the comprehensive Bill are a little different. None the less I believe that this form has met the test of time in other jurisdictions. I think I am right in saying that there was one marriage under the age of 16 last year and I believe that there has been already a marriage this year of somebody who is 13 or thereabouts, Sir, so it is not a Bill of totally no effect.

It conforms with the United Nations Resolution on the state of women. It is not considered suitable in this day and age that a 12-year-old girl should be married. Barbados long ago, I understand, adhered to the relevant international conventions relating to the age of marriage.

I move that this Bill be now read a second time. Let us get it to Select Committee and hear from the Government what the progress is with the Marriage Act.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

4.30 p.m.

Mr. ADAMS: I move that this Bill be now referred to a Select Committee. I would like the hon. member for St. Michael North West to be on this because I know he knows a lot about the history of the matter, and it is a pity he is out of his seat now. The Select Committee to consist of the same hon. members as comprised the Select Committee on the previous Bill.

May I move that the Select Committee consist of the same hon. members as comprised the Select Committee on the Married Women's (Separation and Maintenance) Act.

Mr. MOTTLEY: I beg to second that.

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Hon. F. G. SMITH: If the House will permit me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it slipped me earlier this morning, but I should like to ask leave of the Hon. House to request leave, under Rule 72(2), of absence for the Hon. Minister without Portfolio, the hon. member for St. Michael South West, for a period of two months.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there is no objection leave will be granted. There being no objection leave is granted.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I propose that this House, through the Clerk, should go on record as expressing its wish for a speedy recovery, apart from any political considerations. I think when an hon. member has undergone such an operation this House should go on record to show that we are human and that whatever our political feelings might be the health of the hon. members are still of some concern.

I move that the Clerk should send such a letter to the hon. member.

Mr. ADAMS: I associate myself with the remarks of the hon. member for St. Michael South Central. I certainly wish the hon. member a speedy recovery.

Is this an appropriate place to deal with a vacancy on the Public Accounts Committee? There is no reason why the House could not fill the vacancy.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That matter was discussed earlier this morning, I do not know if the Leader of the House is ready to deal with it.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: If the hon. member has any suggestion to make we will consider it, but as far as I remember to be a member of the Public Accounts Committee you should not be a Minister or a Parliamentary Secretary and that is the problem we are facing. Other members of the Government Party are already on the Public Accounts Committee. That there is no ready-made solution to these things, should be made clear; it is not that I am trying to block anything. If there is any constructive suggestion made I would quite willingly go along with it.

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

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 on the Bill.

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

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

Clause 10 was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, you will recall that when this Bill was before the Committee objection was raised to Clause 10 on the grounds which you will recall. That has now been revamped and a new Clause 10 has been brought in which brings in line the objections made by the Leader of the Opposition. These amendments have been duly drafted, printed and circulated.

I beg to move that Clause 10 as amended stand part.

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

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

The Schedule was called and passed.

On motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. A. MORRISON, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill with amendments in Committee, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. A. MORRISON, the Bill as amended was read a third time and passed and its title agreed to.

RESOLUTION RE LOAN TO TRANSPORT BOARD

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the next Item is a Resolution which was given notice of by the Minister of Communications and Works in relation to the loan for the Transport Board of \$600,000.

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

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

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

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, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. LOWE in the Chair.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, notice of this Resolution was given this morning and the Opposition does not oppose the passing of this Resolution in all its stages today.

Negotiations with the Barbados Workers' Union were concluded on 11th April with the Barbados Transport Board which is a Statutory Corporation, and as a result of the negotiations the Board is compelled to pay from 1st April the increased rates which would entail back pay, plus they must pay the rates which the new agreement has concluded. The Barbados Transport Board is in no position financially to do so, it has not got this money.

During 1973 there was an upturn in the fortunes of the Board, but unfortunately with the oil prices and increase of parts, tyres and other equipment used by this Board, whereas at September 1974 we had a bank balance of \$427,401, that bank balance dwindled in December 1974 to \$168,809, and today the bank balance standing in the name of the Board is \$16,000. The new agreement envisages an increase of \$131,000 a month and in the first year \$1.57 million, in the second year \$1.89 million, and the agreement covers a period of two years, and the increases range from 33% to 64.2%.

The Board therefore has been seeking means of raising this money to which the workers are entitled and has got the Government's approval to raise a loan from the Consolidated Fund to the tune of \$600,000 which we anticipate will tide them over a period of four to five months. I think it would be appreciated or ought to have been appreciated that an Organisation like the Transport Board is not a shop; it is not a dry

goods or wet goods store, in that if the cost of something goes up tomorrow morning you can put a penny or a shilling or sixpence on various commodities to raise the money. The Transport Board in terms of increase of rates and fares has got to make an application to the Public Utilities Board; it has got to set out its accounts, its earnings from other sources, it has got to come with a full audited report to justify any increase. That can take a month, two months, three months provided it is decided to make this application. In the case of private concessionaires they have greater mobility than in the case of a Government Corporation, because a private concessionaire with a credit worthiness can go to a bank and get an overdraft of X thousand dollars depending on credit worthiness and past history with his bank. He may very often be able to raise money quicker than a Corporation.

5.00 p.m.

As it stands the Minister is responsible for policy; the corporation, in this case the Board, has got to report to the Ministry; the Ministry has got to report to the Cabinet and the Ministry has to seek to get the approval of the Ministry of Finance in respect of loans or in respect of money if desirable; so that it is very often unfair to compare the quick action of a private concessionaire with that of a Government where Government accounts and Government financing and Government accountability are entirely different and more cumbersome and complicated.

The private concessionaire has no Minister; the private concessionaire has no Cabinet, the private concessionaire has no Minister of Finance through whom or through which bodies he must seek monies to pay; and therefore, Mr. Chairman, I am telling the Opposition this early; I am not getting involved in any past history or any long drawn out argument on this issue. The money has got to be raised, the corporation has not got the money and the Cabinet has agreed that to raise the money to pay the workers at an early time, a loan from the Consolidated Fund is necessary.

The whole question of public transport, as you many have read, Mr. Chairman, is a matter which my Ministry has just concluded. The Cabinet paper is going to Cabinet, the question of whether or not fares should be increased is also in the Cabinet paper, the question as to what should be done with mini-buses, the question of subsidy for private concessionaires, the whole question of the King Report will be reviewed by Cabinet on the return of the Prime Minister this week, if we can get around to it —

perhaps we may not get around to decisions this week because it is quite a voluminous paper since it has got to take in all permutations and all points of view in making firm recommendations.

This Resolution is a simple Resolution in which the Board has got to raise the money. There is no getting away from it, because the Board has not got it and we are asking for a loan from the Consolidated Fund of this money, \$600,000, to tide us over for the next four months pending such decisions as Cabinet may make on the future of public transport in the country; and if Cabinet approves and if my recommendations are accepted, then I would certainly bring to the House a White Paper on the views for public transportation for this country.

We just cannot go on from day to day just coming with these types of Resolutions, these types of subsidies. We have got to make a firm decision one way or the other to put public transportation on a proper footing; and I can assure the public that my main concern is that there should be a properly run public transportation system, efficiently run, honestly run and if the question of a subsidy arises at that stage, then there can be no grouse because I think anybody who has studied the history of public transportation throughout the world will realise that it is a very difficult area of operation; it is not very often a very profitable area of operation, and what with the modern day cost of equipment — for instance, the chassis that we used to buy at \$26,000 and \$28,000 have now gone to \$35,000, — a single bus is in the region of \$52,000. So that you can see that this question of public transportation calls for some new thought, and perhaps at a later stage, a massive infusion of capital.

With those few remarks I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, my colleague here on my left, I am quite sure, would speak at greater length and with much greater authority than I would on this Resolution, and I therefore would like to make a very small contribution and express my views and my own opinion on the running of the Transport Board and the transport system of the country as a whole.

One can safely start by saying it is the public who suffers. Anything at all that goes wrong with the transport system whether it be

a breakdown in relations between the Government and the Union, between the Government and the workers, between workers and the Union, between the mini-bus operators and the Government, there is only one set of people who are going to suffer, and that is humble folk in the society. But what puzzles me, Mr. Chairman, with the Barbados Transport Board is the fact that the private concessionaires have found it possible to eke out — if I may say eke out — a living for the owners and its directors, to be able to keep the buses on the road, try to keep them as well as they can if not as good as some of the Transport Board's, and in some cases, I imagine they pay their income tax and their trade tax and still meet the demands of the union — the same demands with which the Government has to meet the union. Yet we find the Government coming to Parliament over and over again asking the taxpayers of this country to subsidize the running of the Transport Board. I can only conclude that it is bad administration from the Ministerial level.

I am not one, Mr. Chairman, who likes to pin the blame down or upon the workers, though at times we must level the blame at the worker. I am not one who ever sets out to level the blame at the clerical staff, but I feel that in 1975 with all the modern techniques, all the modern training at the disposal of the Government, that the Government should by now have found itself in a position to meet the demands of the Transport Board without coming here all the time asking the taxpayers to pay what the Minister in introducing the Resolution indicated. One can safely say it would appear as if there is going to be an increase in bus fares.

We have been hearing about the White Paper and we have been hearing about the King Report, and I think it was in the early fifties when the late Sir Grantley Adams tried to save the public from the private concessionaires by using what was then considered the famous remark, that bus fares would be raised over his dead body that he found the Government at that time saddled with the transport system; and even at that time, in the absence of modern techniques and modern training, they never found themselves in as bad a position with the public at that time, as the present Government is finding.

Today we have a greater number of motor cars, motor cycles, bicycles, mini-buses and everything to assist the travelling public; in those days you had more people depending on

the buses than there are today and yet we find that Government cannot find it, they seem not to be able to have the business of the transport system properly administered whereby they can show a good profit which will take them out of the red all along. I can only lay this blame on the present Government because it is their responsibility; not the responsibility of the past Government.

5.10 p.m.

It is their responsibility, not the responsibility of the past Government. It was the responsibility of the past Government that saddled the Government of that day and which the present Government has inherited — the running of a public transport system.

When you examine, Sir, the Rocklyn Bus Co. and the Elite Bus Co., they, for some reason, I do not know how it is done — maybe if I were to say that I am not very good myself at finance I might hear from the member for St. Michael West that I should not be in here; but I do not profess to know about everything. I know a little more about some things than I know about other things.

Therefore, I do not want to enter into any argument about the reasons why the Transport Board cannot help itself. I simply use the argument which I have put up here in expressing my views. It is simply because the private concessionaires have been able to send to school their children, have been able to pay their taxes, keep their buses on the road; they have been able to replace some of the old buses with new ones, although some of the new ones now may be in a worse condition than they were some years ago.

I cannot understand. This is about the third time in almost 10 years, Sir, that I have been here that the Government has been coming repeatedly to Parliament asking for very large subsidies to carry through the Transport Board. I am not going on at all with any idea about this oil crisis as being responsible for any inflation and responsible for this thing and the next thing because in my letter to the people of St. James in 1971, I made it clear that the Government was heading for a financial crisis, and there was no oil crisis at that time. We made it quite clear in that letter that there was a breakdown, that there would be a breakdown in the agricultural and industrial sectors and the commercial sector. This is what we predicted in 1971.

Since the Minister has said that he will not be drawn out in any long debate on this, I would like to hear his views. I am not depending on this

White Paper because we have heard about an Education Bill from the time I came here. I have been hearing about transforming the entire public transport system since 1966. It is now 1975 and I am not prepared to accept these delaying tactics. I submit that a statement should be made on the floor of the House.

Sometimes we read reports of the Transport Board. I remember one which said that it was the minibuses that gave them trouble. The minibuses are not giving them trouble. The minibuses are providing a service the Transport Board cannot provide. Without the minibuses, God help the people of this country.

In St. James day after day we have complaints. That is in the Rocklyn Bus Company Route. There are complaints probably made in other areas where the Barbados Transport Board operates.

The time has come when the Minister should not say on the floor of the House that he will not be drawn out into any long debate. We have to support the Resolution. I am supporting the workers. We have to support any Resolution for people who have to go out to work for their daily bread, especially with the high cost of living. Only the other day I read in the Advocate where the cost of living had jumped way out of the reach of the man working for his daily bread.

I sincerely hope that instead of the Minister saying that he is not prepared to be drawn into a lengthy debate, that we would have heard a positive statement in this House, that we would have heard a more positive approach to the whole question of public transport.

My simple and humble view is that if the Elite and Rocklyn bus companies — if Trotman and Mrs. Rock can keep their buses on the road and make a little profit and support their families and probably put something aside for a later date, my suggestion to the Government this evening about all of this King Report and White Paper, my suggestion is to put the buses back in the hands of the private concessionaires.

That, Sir, is my personal view. I am not an expert on the transport system. I am only speaking as a citizen of this country in which poor people are suffering all the time. The taxpayers will pay twice. They will have to pay increased bus fares and they will have to pay taxes to pay back a loan that the Government is now seeking to make. It is the taxpayers' money that the Government is borrowing and they will

have to pay interest on it; and all this is because of the inefficiency of the Transport Board.

I am levelling these charges at the Minister and his Ministry. I am levelling these charges at the Government and its policy. I am not making a charge against Civil Servants who cannot defend themselves. I can talk to a Civil Servant in a rum shop and tell him what I want to tell him in real village language. The charge must be made against the Minister. He has to defend his policy and the policy of the Government on the transport system.

I have my views on the recent strike by the Transport Board Workers. It was an unfortunate incident. It was unfortunate in that children going to school in St. Lucy and living in St. George were stranded. I sincerely hope that nothing of that kind will happen again.

Let the Minister leave out this talk about not getting into any argument. This is a serious matter. I feel that apart from saying that he is waiting on the King Report and waiting to see what Cabinet will do, Government's policy on the transport system should be looked into carefully and something done to ease the travelling public.

I hope that the Minister will not let what I have said fall on deaf ears. I am expressing my views. I am saying put the buses back into the hands of the private concessionaires. I feel that they will do a better job than the Transport Board or the Government is doing now.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, I consider it my duty as Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Communications and Works to say a few words on this occasion. The hon. member has stated that the private concessionaires have been pulling their weight, and the Transport Board which is being subsidised by the Government is unable to meet its commitments. 5.20 p.m.

Sir, the private concessionaires have been calling at the Ministry and informing us of the financial difficulties which they have to face from time to time. This is not anything which has come about overnight and therefore if the hon. member feels that the private concessionaires have been able to solve their problems I would like him to know that that statement is not authentic.

Let us consider the condition of the buses which the concessionaires have as compared with

the buses which the Transport Board has, and we must come to the conclusion that even the new buses which are being built by the private concessionaires are outdated, they are not suitable for this particular age. Private concessionaires can go to the bank and try to get an overdraft only to get them going in business, but when you consider the ages of their buses you will see that there is no alternative for them but to carry on until some decision is arrived at. We have been advertising annually, and if there is one Department of Government which no person will tender for it is for the running of the bus service in this island. It is known that the service, regardless of private concessionaires or the Transport Board, is a liability, but because the private owners have been in the business for all these years they can only carry on for the time being. The million dollar question is what will happen if those private concessionaires die, who will carry on in their places? Those are the questions which we have to ask ourselves. When you consider the ages of some of the buses that the private concessionaires have you must come to the conclusion that in many cases it is a big risk to travel on those buses.

Let us face facts. Throughout the world transportation is subsidised by almost every country and we must realise that if we are to have a proper and efficient bus service in this island that Government will have to subsidise the service in the long run, but for one to get up here today and give the public the impression that all is well with the private concessionaires could almost in my opinion be considered as misleading the public.

Let us deal with the present situation. The Union negotiated and settled all matters amicably with the Board — and indirectly the Government because the Cabinet had to approve what was done by the Transport Board — and without any warning to the Union or to the Government they went on strike. It was pathetic especially to see the school children who had to reach their homes by the transportation of the buses. It was a very sad story and one which I hope will never occur in this island again. The instigators of such a strike have done an injustice to the poor people of this country, they have not hurt the rich people, they have not done any harm to the middle class people, they have not done any harm to people who own other means of transportation, but they have done harm to people who belong to their category, people who are the working class of this island, and therefore nobody in this country could sympathise with them. They knew

that they would be remunerated for their service, they knew that they would be given retroactive pay and yet they did everything possible to inconvenience the poor, working class of this island.

5.30 p.m.

I am saying that for anyone to get up in here today to lay the blame on the Government or on the Transport Board, he would be doing more harm than good and that his conscience would not be alive.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works, in introducing this Resolution, stated that the money has to be found. We agree that it has to be found, but the purpose for which it has to be found is an entirely different matter. I do not mind who says that if anybody lends sympathy to the conductors and drivers he would be doing this, that and the other. I am not concerned with what anybody has to say about who lends sympathy to these people. What I would say is that if the conductors and drivers had not gone on strike at the time they did, then they would not now be so near to the hope of receiving what is due to them. The people suffered when they went on strike, and whenever there is a strike somebody has to suffer. We are sorry that the school children suffered, but if the conductors and drivers took it upon themselves to strike in such large numbers, then they must have known what they were about.

Mr. Chairman, the point is that the Transport Board finds itself in a unique position in this country. Quite contrary to what the Minister is telling us and would have us believe that the private concessionaires have bank facilities available to them and not the Government Transport Board and so on, it must be remembered that the Minister had been apprised of the fact that the private concessionaires cannot now meet — just as the Transport Board — this new commitment with which they find themselves saddled, so to speak. It has all come about as a result of certain things. It is not that the conductors and drivers must not be adequately paid. Every segment of the workers, wherever employed, must be adequately paid for services rendered.

What do we find? The member for St. Philip South was continually referring to the negotiations and the Government rather than to the Board. That is the true position. The Minister cannot deny that both the Elite and the Rocklyn Companies had been hoping, praying and begging

that the negotiations would have been proceeded with as one voice, so to speak, engaged in one concern and that the three bodies negotiate as one. Nevertheless, the negotiators from the Transport Board had a directive from the Minister that they were to start bargaining at 40%. They should go up to 50%, but if they went over 50% the matter would have to be referred to the Minister for submission to the Cabinet. This, Mr. Chairman, is exactly where we now find ourselves.

What has happened, Mr. Chairman, is that the agreements were entered into with the workers' representatives. There is nothing wrong with this at all, but the drivers and conductors have it in their heads — this is what I have learned from some of them — quite rightly or wrongly, that the Elite Bus Company and the Rocklyn Bus Company were given a fixed date on which they should be paying out this money, but that the Transport Board was not given a date. That is what they have in their heads. I am not in a position to say whether it is so or not. I did not negotiate on their behalf, and I would not know. As a consequence, they felt that the time had come when they should know what their true position was. As far as I know the Elite and the Rocklyn Bus Companies have already started to pay the new wages. Those workers employed by the Transport Board are still waiting, I believe, and hoping to see something come through.

Mr. Chairman, it is really interesting because you will find that the Transport Board were the first to negotiate and to conclude the agreement. The Board ended up with financing for a deficit, because their revenue is something like \$337,000 a month, and they entered an agreement to spend \$415,000 a month or something like that. You are earning \$337,000, and you enter an agreement for wages alone at that figure! They must know, Mr. Chairman, where the money will come from. Let us look at the matter in this light. To get an increase in bus fares, if this were found necessary, they would have to go to the Public Utilities Board. What exactly, Mr. Chairman, is the Public Utilities Board? It is still a Board controlled by the Ministry of Trade. It is still a Political Board, so you will find that it is extremely difficult for people in transport to be able to make any appreciable headway, no matter how good they state their case, because Government will find an occasion such as this to come to Parliament to raise \$600,000 and hand it out to the Transport Board alone. A little later on, they will come back and ask us to pay the money. In other words, it is now a loan to the Transport Board. After a time it will not be a loan, but an outright gift.

Mr. Chairman, we have heard from the hon. member for St. Philip South how well the two other concessionaires have weathered the storms. 5.40 p.m.

He goes on to tell us of the condition of the units as compared with the Transport Board's units and what not. Mr. Chairman, all that might be true. The Transport Board has the best routes, the elite routes so to speak. The wear and tear that the Rocklyn buses are subjected to the Transport Board buses do not have to undergo. But what we will find, Mr. Chairman, is that today the private concessionaires have demonstrated their willingness to accept their responsibility to their workers. Undoubtedly there has been a marked reluctance on the part of the Transport Board and consequently on the part of the Minister responsible for transport to accept their responsibility in the same light as the Elite and Rocklyn people and see that the workers are satisfied. The dislocation that came into effect could very well have been avoided.

Mr. Chairman, I want to suggest to the Minister that the Elite Bus Company now finds itself wanting something like \$755,550 more. In other words, their wages bill with the new increases goes up to \$755,550. The Rocklyn now find themselves having to look for something like \$14,529 per week to pay the additional wages to the workers that they employ, and remember, Sir, they do not employ staff that they do not need. That is one point we have got to make, but you will find today that the Minister is here forgetting conveniently the situation of these private concessionaires, and comes for a loan for the Transport Board only, and the Transport Board is only providing part of the public transport service of this country. After all what consideration is being given to them? Out of the mouth of the hon. Member for St. Philip South we have been told how there are advertisements here year after year and there is nobody who is willing to tender for the contract to carry on this public service. In the light of these facts, should not the Minister be coming here to help them too. We agree that the conductors, drivers, inspectors and others must be paid, and when we talk about negotiating an increase of about 60% whenever the accounts of the Transport Board increases are audited, it will carry the Transport Board in the region of 70% to 71% that they have negotiated for. In the light of all this, should not the Minister be coming to Parliament today for some subsidy for the Elite and Rocklyn Bus Companies? We want to say that

if you are lending to the Transport Board and giving them six months' grace or whatever time it may be, you should find out what the Elite and Rocklyn Bus Companies need and also make a similar loan to them, giving them six months' grace during which they have to make the service pay, because they are rendering the same type of service, and remember, the Elite and Rocklyn are running under circumstances, I do not want to say that are completely different, but in many cases different from that of the Transport Board which has the cream of the routes to themselves. Now, Mr. Chairman, I believe that the Government must consider in respect of the Elite and Rocklyn Bus Companies removing the road tax from the diesel they use. The Purchase Tax that has been put on oils, batteries and whatever will have to be removed. In other words, all commodities respecting the promotion of Public Transport in this Island as far as the concessionaires are concerned will have to be duty free. Just as we give the hotel industry and the like these concessions, they will have to be made to the concessionaires who are willing to prop up public transport in the way we see them doing at this particular time.

Mr. Chairman, there will be some argument that things that are imported for buses can still be used in other vehicles. All we are saying is that it is now Government's duty to set up a competent authority to supervise the imports of these commodities and to police the use of these commodities, but you must back it up by making it very stringent and imposing a very severe penalty on any person or company that you find being granted a concession in respect of particular items for transport and is caught using them in some sphere other than that for which they had been granted. If this is brought to bear upon our transport problem, I am of the view that you can get somewhere some time. We agree, Mr. Chairman, that transport in this country creates a problem for us. At least it ought to create one for the Minister responsible for Transport. Why? You have three concessionaires. One is controlled and subsidised, but two are controlled and not subsidised.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister has the effrontery to be telling us now that the bus drivers and conductors went on strike and discommoded the school children and the travelling public, and that as soon as the Prime Minister comes back from Jamaica, he will discuss the King Report. The King Report

has been lying about for some time now in the cupboards of the Minister. In the face of all the inconvenience suffered, in the face of the distaste with which we may look upon the attitude of the drivers and conductors who went on strike, I believe that the action or lack of action on the part of the Minister justifies the action taken by those people.

I am very sorry indeed, Mr. Chairman, if the workers did find it necessary to go on strike to bring about the long overdue recognition of their pension rights, I believe they would have had the support of the entire community, because that up to this time people who retire from the Transport Board after putting in 20 years' service are still getting something like \$3.60 per week and some are offered \$25 a month.

Mr. Chairman, I only hope that the Minister in giving consideration to anything whether it is the King's Report or the Queen's Report on transport will consider the establishing as a right something in relation to the pensioning of these people after they have put in 10 years like those who work in other branches of the Public Service or are serving in any respect.

5.50 p.m

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, we now know who are the culprits in this vicious trend that has taken place and inconvenienced the people. One member of the House of Assembly had this to say: if the conductors had not gone on a strike they would not be so near to receiving the money.....

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman,.....

Mr. WALCOTT: I am not sitting down. I am not giving way one inch.....

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

Mr. WALCOTT: There is no point of order. I have not said anything.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must hear what is the point of order.

Mr. WALCOTT: He is going to make a speech for over half an hour.....

Mr. HINDS: He has to sit.....

Mr. WALCOTT: I have to sit? I do not have to. The only thing I have to do is to die.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, let me hear.....

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for St. Michael West.....

Mr. WALCOTT: The hon. member for St. Michael West, what. That is no point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am just awaiting the point of order.....

Mr. WALCOTT: The point of order has to be instant. What Rule am I breaking under the Standing Orders? There is no point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am the person to decide.....

Mr. WALCOTT: He cannot be calling my name. My name is not in the Standing Orders. That cannot be a point of order. The hon. member for St. Michael West cannot be a point of order.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am prepared to hear the point of order.

Mr. WALCOTT: He cannot be calling my name and saying that that is a point of order. The point of order has to be stated instantly. He cannot be using my name and saying that is a point of order. The point of order has to be stated instantly; not addressing my name. That is not a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will hear the point of order.

Mr. HINDS: The hon. member for St. Michael West, Sir, when he began to address the Chair he said.....

Mr. WALCOTT: That is not a point of order. When I began to address the Chair is not a point of order. That is a speech.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must abide by the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. WALCOTT: But the Ruling of the Chair is in the Standing Orders. A point of order has to be instant and immediate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And that is what I am prepared to hear.

Mr. WALCOTT: But he cannot start, saying when I address the Chair. That is not a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am prepared to hear the hon. member.

Mr. HINDS: The hon. member for St. Michael West when he began to address the Chair, stated, we now know who are the culprits who instigated this.....

Mr. WALCOTT: That is no point of order.....

Mr. HINDS: Just a minute, Sir. Then he goes on to say that one member of the House of Assembly had demonstrated and lent support to this.....

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Chairman, that is not a point of order.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, Sir.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order.

Mr. HINDS: If the hon. member says he knows the culprit and then he sets out to identify me as the culprit.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Never did. He never did.

Mr. HINDS: All right, Mr. Chairman. We do not understand things in the same way.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This is why we must learn to wait in many instances for utterances from people's mouths. The hon. members will proceed.

Mr. WALCOTT: Yes, Mr. Chairman. If the hon. member wants me to deal with him specifically I will deal with him in time.

Now, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (*Aside*) when the *sotto voce* remarks come across loud enough that I hear them but they escaped your ears, Mr. Chairman, I will deal with them.

Now, when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition spoke he said that he was not prepared to deal in detail with the financial implications, but he made the point that he would prefer to see all of the buses returned to the private concessionaires; and we can deal with that. That is his point of view; and he could be shown that after twenty years — he would be going in for something that, in his sober mood he would be bound to realize would be wrong.

Now I have the manifesto here; and as a member of a political party he should be careful. Do not make a profound statement like that that you intend to carry back the buses to private

people, because after twenty years they came about as public transport as a result of the party to which the hon. member has the honour to belong, and now that he is elevated to a deputy position in that party he cannot now be reversing his statement and making such a profound statement unless he has all of the facts; and I will show him where he is wrong, because this will be used against him.....

Mr. CRAIG: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I related that statement due to the inefficiency of the Transport Board. I made it very clear; I said if the private concessionaires can eke out a living for their families and educate them and still keep the buses on the road, the best thing to do, my belief is, is to give the transport back to the private concessionaires because they seem to be doing a better job. It is as simple as that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is a point of explanation.

Mr. WALCOTT: That is all I am going to deal with. I am not going to deal with anything more than that, just to show that that profound statement has no economic sense even in 1975 because the private concessionaires are running buses in 1975 on a completely different basis from the number of private concessionaires in 1954. There were more private concessionaires in 1954 and this amount has diminished, which demonstrates that public transport is not a lucrative enterprise for private people.

Nobody is going to invest in public transportation because it is a public service you are running, and what you get from hon. members of the House of Assembly is, everybody wants a public service as the transport service to run into their own constituency and to run frequently. Now as result of a frequent service it becomes more expensive, and the transport service in 1975 is a better transport service than it was in 1954 when it was taken over.

6.00 p.m.

When it was taken over you had some apologies for buses. You had some juke boxes keeping a lot of noise. So you had to capitalise the system; and if you say that the system of capitalisation might have been piecemeal and wrong, say so. Say that it imposed heavier expenses and for that reason your expenses might increase because you could not find \$2 million in 1954.

The hon. member for St. Joseph must realise that when they were taken over they were taken

over by the Labour Party; but you must understand that in 1954 you could not find the capital to capitalise the whole bus service. You had to run it with what you had. It was a bluff at the time because the then Leader of the Labour Party did not expect that the private concessionaires would have given up the buses.

Some of the relatives of the hon. member for Christ Church West were engaged in this business at the time. They were asking for an increase of one cent in 1954 and that one cent increase was rejected. As a result of that rejection many people thought that the concessionaires would not have given them up; but the concessionaires gave the buses up; so the hon. member for St. James must understand what are the circumstances that caused the buses to be now run by a Board.

It was not any commandeering. You did not go and say "give me those buses; you are making too much money." The politicians thought that the people were making too much money. They had their bluff called and we were landed with the transport service. Since we have the buses we have to keep them and try to run them efficiently.

All over the world you have a public transport service, — in New York, in London and in all the capital countries of the world. Even in Port of Spain where oil is cheap and where gasoline is cheap they have one which does not run as well as ours because people do not use them. They use the taxis.

Now, there is nothing wrong with the public service as a service; because our public service is used. The mere fact that it dislocated the community like it did is a perfect manifestation that it is a used service. What I say is note his words that if the conductors had not gone on strike they would not be so near to receiving their money. What money? They were never in any doubt about receiving their money, and anyone who says that would be a liar. They were never in doubt for one moment about receiving any money. It is another lie to say that negotiations with the Transport Board preceded those with the Elite and the Rocklyn. If anyone had had to go on strike that evening it would have been workers from Elite and Rocklyn.

We finished on the 11th April with the Transport Board. There is a committee of drivers and conductors, a committee of clerks, a committee of inspectors and a committee of workshop people, making a total of 26 members which is bigger than the Executive Council of the

Barbados Workers' Union and bigger than the House of Assembly itself. These negotiations were carried out with the consent and knowledge of all of them at all times because a general meeting was held with all of them. They were told that the matter would have to go to the Cabinet for approval, confirmation and ratification.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would say that if the Government had refused or we were informed that the Transport Board had refused, then there would be evidence that we would bring. We are not hypocrites, Mr. Chairman. If the Barbados Workers' Union had joined with these members and called a strike you would have heard a different voice coming from the member for St. James. You would have heard, "imagine the Barbados Workers' Union calling a strike with the full knowledge that everything had been agreed upon, knowing that there is no dispute, and you call a strike?"

Can anyone in their senses holding a position of responsibility begin to tell you that there could be the slightest justification for that type of madness? Does any man like that have a right to represent anyone for a spilt second of a day — anyone that would throw a country into this kind of plunder as a means of getting at whom? Crass madness.

What do you find? It is absolutely nothing to do with the strike. Maybe some of the innocent dupes among the drivers had this kind of thing injected into them; and then these Daniels ran from them when they found that the public could not support them and they found themselves out on a limb. Those who advised them to take this misguided action can no longer identify, but they are looking for a scapegoat; but they could not find one. Now the only one they could find is the Devil.

Mr. Chairman, there is no question of the importance of transport to the industrial life of the country. Anyone who studies this matter would not have to go far to see that transport is related to your industrial life. Maids go to work by bus. Clerks go to work by bus. The people at factories go to work by bus. When the Government subsidises the transport system it is giving a built in subsidy to industry because it is a service.

I do not have to make out a case for drivers and conductors. I do not worry about the cost factor. The drivers and conductors did not have an increase for three years. The last increase was in 1972, and the cost of living has risen higher than any increase that they have received. I do

not want the member for St. Peter or any other member of this House to tell us that, because they are not standard bearers for workers. They seek avenues through which to divide workers.
6.10 p.m.

When the proposal was made, since September 1974, everybody knew that the Barbados Workers' Union was negotiating for them because it was made public. We saw letters in the newspaper making comparisons. We argue our cases on merit not on what someone else is getting. The argument is that a driver or a conductor has hours of work, 6.00 to 2.00 or 2.00 to 6.00, on a 16-hour shift. They work from Monday to Sunday for 365 days a year. It is a public service and therefore it is a service that the public must be prepared to pay for. Under those circumstances if the Minister is coming down here — and I am not getting into that, I will get into that argument when we are dealing with the question of whether we are subsidising the service or not — but you are subsidising an airline service, LIAT, so therefore if that is subsidised, inland transportation should be subsidised. It is a question of the kind of examination you would use for subsidising.

It is not for me to speak for the Elite or the Rocklyn, but I will say to the two of them you cannot bring the charges of wages and conditions of employment as if these are the only charges but they have to be the main charges because it is a public service you are running, and without the drivers and conductors you will have no service.

I would like to close by saying that none of the subtleties about pretending you are with the workers will work with me, I have been with the workers all my life, but I will not be on their side when they are wrong. I will say to them again and again that they are wrong if they are wrong, the question of voting does not arise, the question is that it is vicious and vindictive, and working against the very interests of the organisation they belong to. Any unionist who can attempt to join in consort with anyone and hold a community to a situation in which it was held a few days ago is not a true unionist.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I crave a little bit of indulgence to speak on the question of what I would like to call a subsidy. I have been in transport from the time that I was attending school in that my adopted parents ran one of the concessions back in the 1950s and prior thereto. I had the either fortunate or unfortunate experience

of having to be helping in a greater measure simply because my adopted father was ill, and I supposed I was pressed into service. I think because of this action I have always taken some interest in the transport industry and service in this country. Let me say that I believe that the decision that must be made by the Government is a political decision. It is a decision unfortunately that was made half-heartedly in 1955 and has been characterised ever since by vacillation on the part of successive Governments.

In 1955 the then concessionaires, including my parents, asked for an increase of half a cent per stage. This was rejected, some of the units were taken over, some not in a very good state, and the only capitalisation of the industry at that time was \$30,000 in working capital. In 1956 the then Government found that their decision was unsatisfactory and it quite rightly set up a Committee to look at the situation, and this Committee made it clear to them in no uncertain terms that a political decision had to be made one way or the other. That decision was not made, but in August 1956 the Government asked Mr. Gibbons to enquire a bit further into transport and he recommended that the buses be returned to the private concessionaire and that a proper fare structure should be set. The Government was a Socialist Government, it had been caught in 1955 on a bluff, it had failed to make up its mind in any concrete manner and so it again vacillated over the Gibbons Report. In 1960 Mr. George Caterby, a U.N. expert, was asked to review the Island's transport and he recommended to the Government that transport should be run on a commercial basis and that it was necessary to ensure that there were no political considerations in the fixing of rates and no financial dishonesty in the operation of the service. The Government was swept out of power without making a decision.

This Government came into power in 1961 and in 1963 appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. E. R. L. Ward to examine transport. That was a very good committee. It had on it people of the calibre of Mr. Henry Cuke and a few others who looked at the matter objectively and recommended to the Government very strongly as a first priority that public transport must be taken over as a public service. As an alternative then you should reduce the concessions. The Government hesitated, it reduced the concessions to two, we nearly did not get the two, it failed to capitalise the

transport service properly, it vacillated in fixing the rates because of the political implications and the increase of rates, and it did nothing until in the late sixties or early seventies and again appointed another committee, this time under an Englishman. Some of his recommendations were implemented and they were mostly on the reorganisation of the facilities of the transport service. These were done at the time the Ward Committee, but again the Government took no definite decision on this matter.

6.20 p.m.

In 1973 it appointed the King Committee. The King Committee reported in 1974, and its recommendations have not varied in one iota from those of the Ward Committee. I believe that that brief historical essay, which sometimes I would invite the journalists of this country to do, because a lot of people seem never to research what has gone before in this country, shows that both the B.L.P. Government — I now have the honour to belong to the Party — and the Democratic Labour Party Government have not really grappled with the essential questions that must be posed for public transport. Are you going to treat it as a service and a subsidy in which all the taxpayers pay, or are you going to run it on a commercial basis and only those persons who use the transport service must pay for it? I do not believe that it takes any mystery of a Prime Minister coming back to Barbados to make this decision. I believe it is a decision that is easy to make. It is well known what is the rolling-stock of the private concessionaires: it is well known the complement of staff which they have; it is well known that the private concessionaires have had an unfair time in the fixing of rates so far as they are concerned.

Mr. Chairman, the Elite Bus Company last year lost something like \$64,000 in the operation of the public transport. The Rocklyn Bus Company showed a small profit of \$6,000 on an investment of \$1 million. I want to say here and now that we sometimes run down private persons, but it is only because you have people like Mr. Coward, Mr. Lucas, the Simpsons and Mrs. Rock, who are wedded to this service, that they have not just packed up and left the Government stranded. This must be made known. How many people in Barbados will be prepared to operate a service where you have almost \$1 million invested in equipment and stock and you are only getting \$6,000 on it? How many people will do that? I do not want to hear that their units are run down. Of course, they are run down because they cannot be properly kept alive. It is not fair to criticise them in saying — if anybody

has indeed criticised them — that they have not rendered a public service. I hear a lot of people saying that the services are inefficient.

Mr. Chairman, I make bold to say that the hours which people like Mrs. Rock and those of us who have been in transport for a long time, have rendered to this country in the public transport service are not matched by public servants or, indeed, many of the politicians who have gone before them. I feel strongly on this because I know the hours that my late adopted father put into this and had to be rescued on many occasions by my adopted mother, who had a better business acumen, by her putting in other investments as Mrs. Rock now has to do. This is not fair to the private concessionaires, nor is it fair to the country. I believe that anybody, including the private concessionaires, would say to the Government, "Take over the service." But the country has to make up its mind on a few things. It must decide whether it wants to subsidise transport by making all of us pay for the transport system and making it available for the use of all of us out of taxation, or whether it wants only the users of the public transport service to pay for that system. That decision should not take a Government between 1963 and 1974 to make up their minds.

Let me say that in 1963 it was pointed out that the Transport Board was in a perilous state. Its financial position was rock bottom even then. It was faced with a legitimate claim from the Workers Union for higher wages, but what have we got? A little bit here and a little bit there. When it comes to rate cases, the Transport Board said last time that they did not want any bigger increase in rates because they do not want to show a profit. By saying that they left the private concessionaires in a difficult position, because they were being asked to carry on a reasonable subsidy. I do not believe that this is right. I know now that the Government would not want an increase of rates. Why? Every politician, and particularly a politician in office, wants the basis of less uncomfortable treatment so that he could be returned to Parliament.

The Government, probably, does not want to face up to a political decision of increase in its cost of the charge which is at present charged to consumers. I am going to make some predictions, Sir, whether I am here next time or not, I predict that after the elections the Government will increase, either by way of the Utilities Board, or removing it from the Utilities Board, the fares being charged to people who use the public transport system. That is my prediction. The political decision is going to be made now

half-heartedly and more expensively to the country to do it this way because it is politically expedient. Maybe it is politically expedient, but I do not believe this is how one should run a country. Let the country have the facts. You are either, as the hon. member for St. Michael West says, going to subsidise it from taxation in one form or another, or you are going to increase the rates. At the moment the Government is scared to do this. The Minister of Trade is frightened that he cannot get into St. Michael North West, so he does not want the decision made and the Minister of Transport is going to have a lot of problems in Cabinet arguing along the line. He will not want to make it too much either, although he is a man of courage most of the time, having regard to the date of the elections. That is what Government is about in Barbados in the year 1975.

I regret very much that most of these matters rest on these shortterm solutions. I believe that the Government should tell the country that it intends to take over the transport system as soon as possible. The private concessionaires should be properly compensated; the workers rights should be safeguarded in any negotiations including their rights to severance pay. I also believe that the Government should have a proper long-term plan for proper pension rights to people in transport. The problem that we have in this country is that it is only the white collar worker and the people in the higher echelons who believe that they have a right to be properly paid, but the people who do the donkey work driving those ungodly and over-sized big buses racking out their chests — a lot of people think that because you give them \$110 a month you are rewarding them unusually.

I do not believe that the people in public transport have been properly paid. Frequently when my late parents ran it — it is not that wages in those days were anything significant, but because, I suppose, my parents were that way given, we had to help people out sometimes. There were no negotiations on their behalf, and you would find sometimes that our Company was paying more than Dowding was paying and that sort of thing was happening. They have a little bit of regulation now, and I hope that they would appreciate it.

I want to come to the recent strike, and I am not going to be very long, Sir. I do not think that it is right for the hon. member for St. Michael West to imagine that there was any political motivation in the recent busmen strike. I do not believe that for one moment. Let me say that if it is my experience of Opposition Parties

in this country, it is that they have too little influence on the course of events that are going on in the country. Anybody would be a sheer lunatic, having regard to the power of the Workers Union, to believe that he can intervene in such a situation and create problems for the Union. I will discount that argument completely. I do not believe the hon. member was fair enough to himself. I believe the hon. member is also sufficiently sagacious to recognise this.
6.30 p.m.

Whenever you are dealing with money with most people, they have no friends. That is the big problem. Whenever somebody has to receive money and he sees his money staring him in the face, he no longer has any friends, and that is the instance that has occurred in this case. The bus drivers for one reason or the other got the impression that they were entitled to their money now, and this was a way of bringing pressure. You can put it down to two things: that the hon. member has talked to workers so well of what it means to be a heavy roller that they have over-learned their case, or that they need another exercise in education on industrial action in which his members are now well educated. That is what I say is the position.

I see the Advocate is recommending the necessity for restrictive legislation simply because of the presence of wild cat strikes. I respect their views but I do not believe that this calls for restrictive legislation because Barbados has been fortunate in having its industrial relations conducted on the basis of collective bargaining and a certain measure of give and take and moderation. A lot of it is due to the maturity and commonsense of the Workers' Union led by its General Secretary, and a lot of it has come in some instances by equal maturity shown by some of the employers, although many of them also act from a position of fear. I would prefer to see this country's industrial relations advance on a consensual basis of proper compromise and respect for the rights of everybody including the community at large than the hard brunt of legislation forcing us into a position as exists in Trinidad today, where regardless of what the legislation says, you cannot enforce it. What are you going to do; lock up everybody in Glendairy and provide jobs for the lawyers?

Mr. Chairman, we need an educational process for workers which the Union has started, and that is why when I spoke in here about employers spending more money on the Trade Union College, and when I spoke in here also about Government giving more money in this respect, I meant it sincerely. I am probably not

basically a politician, but I believe in a strong sense of fairplay and justice. The present wage structure of Barbados is all wrong; we have inherited it, and it is about time that we change it and redress the balances properly because otherwise the pressure is going to push the lid off the pot, and we can only do this by a bit of commonsense.

One final word, the part of the Resolution I cannot agree with is charging the Transport Board 9% interest. I do not see the point in coming down to this House for \$600,000 and charging the Transport Board that cannot pay its way 9% interest, and having to write it off in a couple of months. I believe the Minister's advisers thought this may have been a political safeguard or he had a fight with the Cabinet on this point. To me it is only delaying the evil day for when it suits you politically; but have political guts and courage. We have lost all the people in this country that once had guts and conviction that they could stand up and talk to the public and get them to believe. No longer have we got men that can walk 10 feet tall. I really regret it. I think that if you have dialogue with the people and they believe in you that you should have no fear of putting facts before them, and I do not have to jump on a bandwagon to do that. That is my basic approach to life, my basic philosophy, and that is why when I speak on a matter like this, I can speak without fear that I will lose a vote or a seat, because this is the only basis on which I will remain in public life, let them get me out quickly.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I should like to pay tribute to the speech made by the hon. member for Christ Church West. His historical expression on the history of committees and Reports as well as his sound commonsense in setting out the basic issues which the Government has got to face at one point or another tempts me to wonder if he had seen my Cabinet paper. I know the Opposition has a little secret service when it comes to the Government's Cabinet operations, but the basic decisions which he has made are certainly incorporated.

I should also like to go on record as paying two other tributes, one to the Barbados Workers' Union for the maturity, the fearlessness and frankness that they have shown in a dispute of this nature. I would have expected no less in these circumstances, but I think it would be appreciated that in several West Indian territories the attitude adopted by the General Secretary of the Union would certainly not have been done if similar circumstances had obtained in certain Caribbean or even international areas. It is a

tribute to the fact that the workers have grown up, that their leaders are responsible and fully conscious of their duty to the community as a whole. I should also like to join in paying tribute to the concessionaires who have run and assisted in running the public transport system in Barbados after all these years.

When I hear the hon. member for St. Peter talk as if he is the saviour of these private concessionaires, I am particularly amused because I think it is known that I have always had dialogue with them, and the relationship between the Ministry and the bodies is most amicable. I said I would wait until the Prime Minister comes back because the Prime Minister is Minister of Finance and my proposals for the public transport system involves a colossal injection of finance, if approved.

The hon. member for Christ Church West talks about taking over. If as he says Mrs. Rock has \$1 million in rolling stock, plus spare parts, plus severance payments or whatever is involved, can I make a decision, if agreed, without the Minister of Finance or the Cabinet? You cannot make a decision on what I as a socialist feel should be the nationalisation of public transport. This would be a sign that the Government is serious in rendering a public service to the public, and I feel that it should be subsidised from the Treasury, provided it is run honestly, efficiently and otherwise. This would be a contribution to the entire community, and we who can drive in big cars — mine is twelve years old — we who can buy new Toyotas and Datsuns can pay something for the working class man, or as you nowadays say in this country, the grass roots man. We who have risen can pay something to assist the grass roots, and I have no objection to that. But grass roots is a term you hear now around election time as if anybody in Barbados today has not come from grass roots. Grass roots is a question of attitude; grass roots did wrong to grass roots in the strike; grass roots inconvenienced grass roots. The question of being grass roots, is one thing but all men desire improvement and all men desire knowledge. Are you going to vote for somebody who for fifty years is still in the gutter because he says he is grass roots? There is no merit in grass roots. The grass roots are there whatever position you reach in the community and in life you can sympathise with the man down below because you know his needs, his worries, his fears, his hopes, his aspirations, and you are prepared to dedicate yourself and commit yourself to them. But the working class man's shoulders have always been big and the stepping stones to power, and as long as you hear grass roots and working class people, people like

him will be stepping on the shoulders to get into power because that is the only way you can get into power — on the broad shoulders of the oft used working class.

Since November last year I wrote the private concessionaires. I had a meeting with the Secretary. He mentioned the word "subsidy" vaguely. As a matter of fact, he did not mention it to me, but when I read the newspaper on the Sunday, I read "Bus Companies cannot carry on unless there is a subsidy". I went back to the Ministry and told my Secretary that when I spoke to Mr. Sandiford two days before he did not mention it. I told him to write to them because I cannot take up the taxpayers' money and say, do you want a subsidy, here is \$50,000 or \$100,000. We wrote to him asking for the latest audited accounts value of his rolling stock, spare parts, everything, and the reply only reached the Ministry two weeks ago. How can I come down today having received that two weeks ago without the financial people studying it? I am glad to see the hon. member for Christ Church West turn to the member for St. Peter and say he is right. A lawyer has to be quick on the ball. Although I do not practise much, I still have to keep my ears open, because very often it might mean your winning or losing a case if you catch on to a thing.

6.40 p.m.

Be that as it may, I am willing to look at the whole thing. This is also included in my Cabinet Paper. I have just got the figures and I can tell you what they say their rolling stock is. All of that is in a comprehensive paper on what Government should do about public transport, because Mr. Chairman, let me tell you; to run the present system, I defy anybody in Barbados on that side or this to run it efficiently as it is presently constituted. You just cannot do it.

As to the question of bus fares. I do not know where we are going to get this money from. I am worried — not for political reasons — I am worried; we have to make a decision first as to whether we are going to take over all the buses and run it as a public service subsidized. That is one question. Now No. 2. The point is to keep the subsidy to a minimum. We have to compensate the people for the buses and have them properly examined and have a proper report on them. A lot is involved and all of this involves money. We have to get new units, probably at least 80 new units. We will have then to consider how we are going to run the children's school service. We have to consider what we are going to do with the minibuses. All of this is a comprehensive study which we cannot overnight

come to some conclusion about. All this when the Prime Minister comes will be discussed in its entirety; because this system, with the cost of units rising, unless the Government takes some action, the system is going to collapse.

On the question of increase in bus fares. I say that the public must pay more, otherwise where is the Government going to get the subsidy of \$1.7 million? The only point is, what you have to do now is, if you are going to subsidize the bus companies — I am throwing out arguments; I am not saying it is policy, because Government has got to decide this — what the Government can do is to give a subsidy so as to offset the type of increase that you would have to pay to raise the revenue. This is a point I am looking at. Suppose the busfares should go up 10 cents to enable them to do so, will Government give five as subsidy and the Public Utilities Board raise the other five? These are ideas that we have got to look at in a total assessment of the service, because I fear that with the present situation — and it is not just the wages of the workers that have gone up; it is the whole question of rolling stock, spare parts, tyres, rubber for recapping, in every single iota the prices and the ratio is colossal. It is not only the wages. That is a minor part of the increase of the operation; and if that is taken into account, then as a socialist Government, we are worried that the Board may very well give a greater increase beyond the capacity of the working class man to pay. It is not anything we are scared of; we are not scared of it but we have still as a Government got to look, not at votes as we heard so much about in the paper, but a socialist Government has got to look at the capacity of the working class man to pay an increase, however justified; and therefore the Government is not afraid to raise bus fares. I personally feel that the travelling public should contribute a part of it even if the Government subsidizes it.

We have to come back to the other point. Should the Government subsidize private concessionaires. There are a multiplicity of problems which can be bandied about in Parliament but which I will come to the House on in detail when I have got my Cabinet colleagues' approval for dealing with it.

I do not see there is anything more. I think the hon. member for St. Michael West has dealt with the question of the union. I think we are *ad idem* on what we consider of the strike. We are *ad idem*. I have apologised publicly to the public for the inconvenience and he by implication has also done so, and I say, it has put not only the union but also Government in a difficult position

because the question the public will ask themselves is, after that incident can you take over the whole bus service with that type of behaviour. It has really put us on a spot through the resultant irresponsibility of a few, but as I say, as a socialist, finally, I believe that the Government should nationalize, take over the entire bus service and subsidize it, provided the subsidy is kept within a limit.

We did it for LIAT, we did it for the West Indies Shipping Corporation which carries other people than Barbadians; the subsidy for the West Indies Shipping Corporation of which I am Chairman is nearly \$2 million a year from the Barbados Government and the other Islands, and I do not see why we cannot subsidize public transport for our own people. and we who are better off and who can drive new cars and change them every two and three years should be able to contribute a little something to assist the working class man. I did it on my buses — and Barbados is one of few places in the world where old age pensioners with a card can drive down to Bathsheba, to the Crane, to River Bay and don't pay a penny. I did that, through the Cabinet, and I asked the private concessionaires to do a similar thing and they claimed they cannot because of the revenue loss. We calculate we lose about \$120,000 in travelling by old age pensioners. They like to get on the bus, stretch out their feet, go down to Bathsheba, breath in some fresh air, look at Miss Batson's place, and when the bus is ready to come down, come back down, all for free. That is a Government that is subsidizing old age pensioners too; but you will hear the member for St. James saying you only give them \$10 a week, but when they are going to drive to Bathsheba today, River Bay tomorrow.....

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. All fresh air, all drive and no food is not a good thing. That is not good enough.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely no point of order.

The question that the Resolution for the sum of \$600,000 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.

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

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

reported to Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER who resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE LEASE OF LAND AT EDEN LODGE ST. MICHAEL

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 6 standing in the name of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance be the next Order of the day.

It is a Resolution to approve the lease of a parcel of land situated at Eden Lodge, St. Michael, to the Soroptimists International Club of Barbados for the establishment of a village for senior citizens.

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

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

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, my Ministry have been having discussions with the Soroptimists International Club which plans to set up a senior citizens village in Barbados, and the purpose of the discussions was really to identify a piece of land that is owned by the Government, in the first place, and to make it available to this club.

Now there are some open lands at Eden Lodge about two acres in area, which we have agreed with the Soroptimists Club is an ideal area where this village could be established. For one thing it is already near a housing area and it is very nicely located. It is not far from the centre of town and as I said, it is located near this housing area.

The Soroptimists have overlooked it with their advisers and they think it is an excellent area for the purpose for which they want to put it.

6.50 p.m.

Our plans are, Sir, to lease this land to the club for a period of 25 years with an option to renew it at \$5.00 per annum. It is pepper corn rent. I think that the Soroptimists Club should be encouraged in what they are doing. As a matter of fact, I think that other organisations should follow suit, not that the other organisations do not do their bit for the community; but I am

very pleased especially in this International Women's Year, that instead of shouting and screaming from the roof tops about equal rights and this, that and the other, they are making a positive contribution to the community. I understand that it is their intention to start their project in this financial year.

The project will consist of efficiency units for single persons as well as for couples. It will also consist of a day centre where old persons living in the village as well as old persons living outside the village who for some time now have been adopted by the Soroptimists, can be brought to the village and have fellowship with other old people, and other lonely people already living there.

There are also plans by the Soroptimists to put up a dormitory where the most senior citizens can live. I think that it is a very laudable effort by the Soroptimists, and I think that they should be congratulated on what they are doing. I have no doubt that the Hon. Chamber will endorse the lease of this land to the Soroptimists for such a venture.

I move that the Resolution do now pass.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to second the motion in the first place to show unmistakably that this Resolution has no partisan implications, and that the Soroptimists Club has the blessings not only of the Government in its narrowest sense of being the Governing party, but in the wider sense of Her Majesty's Government consisting of the Opposition as part of that Government.

I would like to say that this scheme is one that is long overdue. I remember some years ago someone preaching to the Lions Club that they should participate in such a scheme and they did nothing concrete about it; and indeed the Soroptimists Club has espoused this project for a considerable time and under the able leadership of its officers has taken concrete steps to raise funds in order to put into effect a project that is not only humanitarian, and of welfare value, but will also be of tremendous economic and financial value to those people who will benefit therefrom.

I am glad that the Government has responded readily in making this land available to the Soroptimists, and I hope that the Government will assist them in other ways, by exempting any materials they want from certain duties under the Customs Act and making it as

inexpensive as possible for them to construct these buildings.

I would like to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is another example of the good work being done in this community by the women of Barbados, and I want to emphasise this.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the hon. member would give way — the hon. member will recall that the relevant Standing Order has not been suspended. I beg to move that Standing Order No. 6 be suspended for the remainder of this day's sitting.

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

Mr. MOTTLEY: With all due respect, Sir, I have heard the hon. member for St. Michael West talk about observing the rules. Some weeks ago this was tried, and it was said that you could not suspend the Standing Orders at that stage. I tried to get the Standing Orders suspended in order to do Private Members' Business and it was ruled out of order.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think that it is right at this stage of the debate for the Leader of the House or any person to move the suspension of Standing Orders. After all, when the Leader of the House comes in here one would believe that he has planned his day's work...

Hon. C. E. TALMA: If the hon. member would give way, with the leave of the Speaker a Standing Order can be suspended. It is just a matter of convenience to allow this particular item to go through.

Mr. MOTTLEY: There is no need for the suspension of any Standing Order. We can go to 7.10, Sir.

Mr. FORDE: I am not going to prolong the business of the House because I think that it would be very inconvenient under this last item to adjourn for 45 minutes and bring the staff back. As I was saying, I believe that the women of this country...

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order. The Leader of the House sought to suspend Standing Order No. 6. He must have had a reason for this because if he wanted us to continue this debate on this Resolution I do not think that he would

have moved the suspension of the Standing Order for that purpose. He must have other reasons.

Mr. FORDE: I will give the assurance that I will only speak for three minutes longer, Sir, so that the debate can be concluded on this matter. I was making the point that this is another example of the good work that many of the women of this country are doing. People do not recognise this because it is so easy to attack women's groups and say that they are middle class or constituted of people with a class image without recognising that the Soroptimists, the Business and Professional Women's Club, the Y.W.C.A. — many of these organisations — have been doing very valuable work in the community for several years even though people do not recognise it; and that is why, in my view, since they have been showing their good works, we should respond by being positive towards women's rights and assist them to make a better contribution to the community as a whole.

7.00 p.m.

If the Government wanted a good reason why it should have a positive programme for the equalisation of women's rights by legislation where necessary, or by education, this is an example of the good work which women have been doing in this community. The Soroptimists Club should be complimented, and I trust that hon. members of Parliament would make some financial contribution to the projects, and I also hope that the community at large will respond by making a financial contribution as well and giving assistance in time and labour to a measure like this.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: This now concludes Government Business for today's sitting.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn till Tuesday 20th May at 12 noon.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
7.03 p.m.