

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1971 - 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 8th June, 1976

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, J.P., (Speaker); Hon. C. E. TALMA, C.B.E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, B.Sc., (Econ.) LL.D., (Prime Minister); Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, (Minister Without Portfolio); Mr. R. ST.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees); His Honour A. DaC. EDWARDS, (Deputy Speaker); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; Mr. L. S. CRAIG; Mr. J. B. SPRINGER; Mr. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B.; Hon. F. G. SMITH, Q.C., S.C., B.A., (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport); Hon. P. G. MORGAN, C.B.E., (Minister of Tourism, Information and Public Relations); Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. A. MORRISON, (Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology); Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), (Minister of Health and Welfare); Mr. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M.; Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M., (Lond.) and Miss B.A. MILLER.

Prayers were read.

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that the Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, the 18th May, 1976, are before you for confirmation, and unless there are any alterations or corrections, they will be confirmed.

There being none, I declare those Minutes duly to be confirmed.

PAPERS PRESENTED

Hon. A. MORRISON: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:—

The Financial Statement and Chairman's Report of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation for the year ended 30th June, 1973.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

The Resolution to approve the sale by the Government of former official residence of the Barbados High Commissioner to Canada at Chalmers Road Ottawa.

On behalf of the Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance, I beg to give notice of the following:

- (1) The Resolution to approve the lease to Aero Services Barbados Limited of approximately 65,340 sq. ft. of land situated at Seawell in the parish of Christ Church.
- (2) The Resolution to approve the lease to Seawell Air Services Limited of approximately 81,000 sq. ft. of land situated at Seawell in the parish of Christ Church.

On behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, I beg to give notice of the following:

The Resolution to grant the sum of \$232,000 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1976-77, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1976-77, No. 3, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

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

(1) The Resolution to grant the sum of \$56,852 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Annexed Estimates 1976-77 as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1976-77, No. 4 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

(2) A Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act.

(3) A Bill to amend the Public Utilities Act.

I would also like to give notice at this stage that I will be seeking leave to deal with both these Bills in all their stages at today's Sitting.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:

A Bill to provide for the establishment and administration of a Student Revolving Loan Fund and for related matters.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICE

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following Resolution:—

Whereas working-class mothers everywhere desire and deserve certain social amenities for the proper and efficient functioning of their well-being;

And Whereas working-class mothers of Boscobelle, Risk, Baltic, Date Tree Hill, Collins Tenantry, Gays, Mount No. 1 and Mount No. 2, Castle, Moor Hill, Welchtown, Diamond Corner and Portland, together with Mile and a Quarter, Rose Hill and Mount Brevitor district, and Ashton Hall and surrounding areas have long been left to eke out an existence without the provision of Child Care Centres or Day Nurseries for their benefit;

Be It Resolved that this House calls upon Government to (a) cause a survey of the requirements of working mothers for establishing a Day Nursery at Boscobelle, St. Peter; (b) to examine the crying needs of those working-class mothers at Benn Hill, Mile & a Quarter, Rose Hill and districts immediately adjoining for a Day Care Centre in such an area as is convenient for them to have their babies cared whilst they go

seeking jobs to maintain themselves and the said children; (c) to explore every possibility to determine the needs of working-class mothers in Speightstown, Road View, Church Street Gardens and all areas immediately adjoining for Day Care Centre facilities, and to take early steps to remedy such situations for the relief of the distress and inconvenience now suffered by so many mothers;

And Be It Further Resolved that Government takes note of the fact that the Indian Ground Day Nursery at St. Peter which caters to the surrounding Four Hill-Lonesome Hill, French Village, Orange Hill and Prospect areas, and which was established by voluntary effort and public subscriptions twenty-three years ago is housed under very demoralising and disgusting circumstances where the floors of the building are a threat to life, the roof thereof is in a state of disrepair, and worse of all, the very old building, despite staff effort, is rat-infested and poses a definite and direct threat to the health and well-being of the inhabitants amongst whom are children of tender ages:

And Be It Further Resolved that Government spares no effort in seeking to provide adequate accommodation and other necessary conveniences for a situation which is badly in need of immediate attention.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following questions:

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:

Is the Minister aware that there is a pressing need for the laying of large water mains to serve the needs of the inhabitants in the following areas: (1) Edgumbe Tenantry (2) Garner's Land near Webb Hill and (3) Chapel Tenantry? If the answer is the affirmative, will the Minister immediately take steps to lay mains in the aforesaid areas?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

Is the Minister aware that there is no Day Nursery or Day Care Centre in Saint Philip North to which working mothers of the Constituency can send their young children while they go out to work? If the answer is in the affirmative will the Minister take steps to acquire land and/or buildings in the said Constituency or erect a centre to fill the needs of the aforesaid working mothers?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

Is the Minister aware that in the Customs Department there are a number of vacant post which have not been filled since 1971? Is the Minister aware that, for example, at the levels of Clerical Officer and Assistant Supervisor no new appointments have been made since 1971? If the answer is in the affirmative will the Minister take steps to have the vacancies filled in accordance with the staff establishment and in the best interest of staff morale?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:

Is the Minister aware that the road in Church Village alongside Mr. Manifold's shop and the low wall thereat is deteriorating to such an extent that it is on the point of breaking away and doing damage to the said shop? If the answer is in the affirmative will the Minister forthwith ensure that remedial works are implemented to prevent the further deterioration of this area and the likelihood of damage to property?

12.20 p.m.

Mr. E. E. GREAVES: To enquire of the Minister of Education and Youth Affairs:-

- (a) Is the Minister aware that the youth in Josey Hill and Rock Hall, St. Lucy, are without recreation facilities.
- (b) And is the Minister aware that about two years ago the owners of Lamberts Plantation had expressed a willingness to make an area of land near Glendilough St. Lucy available for the above purpose?

If the answers to the above are in the affirmative, will the Minister take the necessary steps to have these facilities provided as soon as possible?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:-

Is the Minister aware that the following areas in St. Lucy are in need of street lighting:

Sutherland Road, Fustic Village, Air View Road, Durhams, Bishop's Tenantry Road, Greenidges and above St. Swithin's Church.

Will the Minister take the necessary steps to have lights installed in these areas immediately?

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:-

Is the Minister aware that there is need for water mains in the following areas of St. Lucy so as to assist residents in obtaining water supply without much difficulty:

Sutherland Road, Ellis Tenantry, Checker Hall and Harris (Near Mt. Poyer area).

To enquire of the Minister of Communications and Works:-

In view of the Government's proposed development of the Archer's Bay area into a National Park;

Would the Government give some serious consideration to the inclusion in the project of a playing field for the young people of the surrounding areas?

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to provide for the establishment and administration of a Student Revolving Loan Fund and for the related matters be now read a first time.

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

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

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Public Utilities Act be now read a first time.

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

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

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act be now read a first time.

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

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I beg to state that the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 84 asked by the hon. member for St. Philip North is now ready as well as the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 70.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to state that the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 44 asked by the Hon. member for St. Thomas is now ready and also the reply to Question No. 97 asked by the hon. member for St. Michael North East is now ready.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to state that the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 80 is now ready.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, before the Business of the Day is reached there is a question I would like to mention to Your Honour, a question which relates to the Committee of Public Accounts. The vacancy on this Committee results from the resignation of Mr. Elliot Mottley from the House. It is not provided for in the Standing Orders. I do not know if the House could find its way by leave to allow the vacancy to be filled today.

Mr. SPEAKER: I promise that at the next meeting of the House the vacancy will be filled; but at this present moment I cannot say what would be the best possible solution.

Mr. ADAMS: Perhaps the Clerk will be able to assist us. It was from the beginning of March that this vacancy existed, and I do not know how to get it on the Order Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: If you take Standing Order 60(9), the Speaker may nominate another Member of the House to take the place of a Member of the Committee whose seat has become vacant or who has resigned from the Committee.

Mr. ADAMS: The Public Accounts Committee is a Sessional Committee as I understand it. The name which I will submit to Your Honour for consideration is that of the hon. Member for St. Philip North.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1976-77 PART 1 – CURRENT FOR THE SUM OF \$5,359,920

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, we propose to deal with the Resolution for the sum of \$5,359,920 in connection with the proposed reduction of bus fares and the establishment of a single fare.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this Resolution is to make money available for the implementation of the proposal to standardise bus fares at 25 cents. In looking at the Transport System of Barbados, three important dates come to mind – 1937, 1955 and 1967.

Before 1937, transport in this country was disorganised and very inadequate and inefficient; and people depended chiefly on buggies and donkey carts and things of that nature to get them from one place to another; and failing this, they had to walk long distances. With the introduction of motor vehicles into Barbados in the 1930s began the operation of the fly buses in this country, and those buses operated under no very good system.
12.30 p.m.

Very often you find the operators of these buses opting to travel on the routes which to their mind were the most lucrative, whereas other areas of the country which also needed bus service were left unattended. Because of the manner in which these buses operated the Government of that day, in 1937, introduced the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic Act. As a result of this Act certain changes came about in the

transport system of this country. The Director of Highways and Transport was given specific duties under this Act, for example, he was able to allocate routes to concessionaires, he was able to fix the size of buses and the number of passengers travelling on the buses; he was also able to fix rates and he was also able to lay down the minimum number of buses which these concessionaires should have; and furthermore he could inspect buses.

When this Act came into force it had certain effects on some concessionaires and operators of buses during those days. Many of them found it incapable to comply with the terms of the new Act. Now with this new Act in 1937 one found that the concessionaires were compelled to maintain certain conditions and to give a certain minimum quality of service to the people of this country. It did not necessarily mean that the mere introduction of the Act immediately sought improvement but it made the basis for the Government and for the public in general to indicate to people who wanted to run buses what standard they should maintain to the satisfaction both of the Government and the people of this country.

Many of the people who were operating prior to the introduction of this Act still continued to operate and they operated their previous vehicles and pick-ups and private buses, and these pick-ups and private buses continued to harass the legitimate concessionaires not only in 1937 but right up even to the present day, and pose a very severe threat to the people who were operating their buses legitimately.

Now there was a lot of confusion in this country after the introduction of this Act and one of the effects which it did have upon the people of this country was that one saw repeated requests to the Director of Highways and Transport for increases in bus fares. Some of these were given at some times and at other times they were not given. By 1954 Barbados achieved internal self-Government, and with the coming of internal self-Government the Director of Highways and Transport for that matter, his duties became the responsibility of the Ministry of Communications and Works and Housing. But 1954 started another series of problems to the transport system of this country because at that time the concessionaires — the legitimate ones — were complaining that due to the increase in the cost of living, due to the increase in the cost of parts and due to the increase in wages of their employees, they were finding the operation of bus service not lucrative, and it was necessary to have an increase in bus fares.

The Government of that day appointed a Commission of Enquiry to look into this aspect of increased bus fares, and the Commission made a recommendation that the bus fares be increased. The Government of that day did not like that particular recommendation, and Government entered into direct negotiations with the owners of the buses and offered them a 15% rebate on gasoline, which was turned down by the concessionaires. Not only that was turned down but the concessionaires of the day also indicated to Government that if by a particular time Government had not acceded to their request and also meet the recommendations that bus fares be increased, they would terminate the services from a particular date.

Now it is interesting to recall that at that particular time, 1954-55, the concessionaires indicated that they had made a loss of \$37,000, and Government pointed out to them that the 15% rebate to them on gasoline would amount to something like \$67,000, but they did not see it necessary to accede to the request of the Government.

The Government dealt with the Emergency Powers Act, 1955 and in introducing this Act the then Premier of this country stated "This Government owes a duty to the community to see that life goes on. It is notorious that the bus concessionaires have said that unless Government agrees to raise the bus fares they will not continue their concession". As a result of this Act which was debated in the House of Assembly and passed without dissent, a majority of the members who took part in the debate indicated their support for the amendment and also expressed the view that they saw the necessity of Government operating the total bus service in this country.

Now one has to bear in mind that this was an Act which was forced upon the Government of that day. It was not something that Government had been planning to do and as a result of having been forced to take over the bus service at that particular time, we find that the Government had no proper system to introduce because of the circumstances attendant then. In 1955 the Barbados Transport Board Act was passed and the purpose of this Act was to set up an agency through which, or by which, the transport system of this country would be improved.

Now from the earliest inception when this Transport Board was set up, there were problems, and many of these problems were new in a sense to the people who took over the buses on behalf

of the Government because the Government had not made any preparation for the take-over of buses. Many of the problems continued for a very long time and many of the problems which existed in 1955 can be recognized at the present time. There were problems of proper servicing of vehicles, there were problems of discipline among the staff, problems of good public relations, problems emanating from lack of social relationship among the various categories of workers, and so on and so forth.

As in that day one still hears of complaints about where the bus fares go in 1976. In June the Government appointed the Osbourne Committee to enquire into the general administration of the Board and this Report was produced by December 10, 1966, and that Report again re-emphasised that there was a lack of adequate staff, there was no proper workshop, and many other problems which I recognize are familiar to most people who have been following the history and development of the transport system in this country closely upon the setting up of the Osbourne Committee. In June, 1966 a one man Commission was set up to look into the entire transport system of the Island, and that Report was laid, and certain strictures about the operation of the transport system in this country were made.

12.40 p.m.

In addition to that the Government of that day obtained the services of Mr. George Cadbury, an economic expert, to advise them on certain aspects of the transport system of this country. Furthermore, a third Commission was set up to investigate the entire system of omnibus transport, with special reference to the existing fare and stage structure, award of concessions, and so forth. Coming out of the third Commission three alternatives were recommended:

- (1) that the Government take over the entire transport system;
- (2) that there be a system of Government operated and privately operated buses; and
- (3) (which is a modification of the second one), that the number of concessionaires be drastically reduced.

Government set about to implement the recommendations of this third commission, falling heavily on the third alternative, that is, that there be an operation of the transport system on a

joint basis by Government and by private concessionaires, but that the private concessionaires be reduced to three. Tenders were called for and after many months had passed by only three people tendered for the concessions; the Transport Board, Elite and Rocklyn. It is noteworthy that Elite was a contraction of five previous concessionaires who banded themselves together, and they came into operation on 1st January, 1967. They have continued right down to the present time.

While all this was going on and many recommendations were being made, the transport system of this country still continued to have its problems. In trying to understand some of the problems of the transport system in this country, one must look forcibly at the ecology of the system. Bridgetown, which is the hub of activity in Barbados and has been so from the time it was colonised, lies on the south western end of the island on the mouth of the Constitution river, and the activity of Bridgetown from that time right on to now has been centred around the exportation of sugar to Britain, and we find that roadways which developed into Bridgetown from the plantations were primarily concerned with getting sugar from the plantations into Bridgetown. When you look at a map of Barbados you will see that the roads from outside of Bridgetown converge on to Bridgetown and there usually are not very efficient cross connections or inter connections between these various roads. All of this is due to the fact that the plantations were primarily concerned with getting the sugar into Bridgetown for exportation to the United Kingdom.

There is a small variation of this brought about by the presence of the town, Speightstown, further north, because Speightstown also was used as a centre for exportation of sugar, and some of us would recall the plying of schooners between Speightstown and Bridgetown, and also the activity between Speightstown and a place in Britain referred to as Bristol in those days. You will find that Speightstown has a number of roads which converge on it from the parishes of St. Lucy, St. Peter and certain parts of St. Andrew.

This system which we have in Barbados has made it very difficult for many of the concessionaires to have adequate returns on their investment, because again when you look at the distribution of the population in Barbados you will find at least 70% of the travelling population reside within the three mile limit from Bridgetown, and the existence of this large

number of the travelling public within the three mile limit has conditioned certain practices which still obtain today in the plying of buses along the highways of this country. For example, it is easy to get buses at regular and frequent intervals for people who live within two miles. Usually these buses ply every half hour, and at peak periods you may even get additional buses being put on. When you go outside the two mile limit, and go as far away as six miles, people living those far distances from Bridgetown sometimes find it very difficult to get buses, and usually they only get buses at the peak periods, that is, in the morning and in the evening, because it is not profitable, it has not been profitable to the owners of the buses to ply buses to those far areas as frequently as they ply buses to the two or three mile limit from Bridgetown. Because of this, you find that people even now in the rural areas of Barbados still complain about the inadequacy of the bus service at certain hours, especially at night, from their areas to and from Bridgetown, thereby making it difficult for them to enjoy some of the activities that people within the three mile limit from Bridgetown can enjoy. Already this year a large number of complaints have been made to me about people finding it difficult to get a bus after 7 o'clock going to certain parts of St. George, St. John and other parts of the country, but as I say, this is due to the fact that a large number of the travelling public lie within the three mile limit from Bridgetown and the concessionaires tend to cater chiefly to these people, paying little concern to the requests of the people living beyond three miles from Bridgetown.

When you look at traffic in Barbados, traffic in Barbados centres around the worker — and when I say traffic I mean bus traffic — school children, shoppers and market vendors. In fact it was the market vendors who were responsible for the introduction of a bus service in certain areas of this country. These are the people who went around and bought their vegetables in various locations in Barbados and then boarded a bus, usually sitting in the last two seats of the bus, and wended their way to Bridgetown very early in the morning to sell their produce and again in the evening when they had disposed of their produce, wended their way back to their villages. I think many of us here will recall, those of us who had the opportunity to travel in buses, not very long ago when the back seats of the buses were laid out with large baskets, bags of coal and many other things, because the buses were first introduced to cater to a need of the market vendors. With the introduction of supermarkets and other improved facilities scattered not only over

Bridgetown but over other parts of the country, you find that these market vendors are becoming less and less because it is easier for them to sell their produce by different methods and do not necessarily have to travel on buses to far areas from where they live. In addition, the demands of the travelling public that some control be put on these market vendors travelling on buses have also gone a far way in seeing the removal of the market vendors travelling on buses.

The school children travel in an interesting way. Most of their travel is in the morning when they make adequate use of the school buses being provided, but then in the afternoon the demand for the school bus is not as great because many of the school children rather than wending their way home immediately or quickly very often take time off to stroll through the streets of Bridgetown window shopping or looking for their friends, and then you find again in the evening when people are trying to get home from work they then compete with the worker who wants to get back to his home. In addition to that a large number of school children are away from school during the summer holidays, the Easter holidays and the holidays at Christmas, but here again you find that there is an increase in travel by shoppers at Christmas time and the loss coming about by the inactivity at schools is made up by this increase in shoppers around Christmas time.

The working people of Barbados have to travel to and from work and depend largely upon the provision of an adequate bus service. Because of that you find that there are two peak periods, one in the morning between 6.00 and 9.30 and another one between 4.00 and 5.30 in the evening when the demand for bus transportation is heaviest. In addition to this, people who live near to Bridgetown within the two mile limit may take an opportunity during their lunch break to go home and get a lunch and then return to work, and you find that between 11.30 and 1 o'clock again there is an increase in the number of people who travel on the bus service.

To look into this aspect of how people travel, the time they travel and the problems arising from these fluctuations in travel by the travelling public, a Commission was also appointed, the Ward Commission, to look into that aspect, and they made their report.
12.50 p.m.

Now, the Barbados Transport has been plagued with difficulties from the time it started, and I am not here to lay any blame on any

Government. If one is aware of the way in which the Transport Board was set up and the reasons leading to its formation, one can only sympathize with any Government which now has to face the problems which seek to cripple the Transport Board. As I have pointed out, it was due to the peculiar behaviour of the concessionaires in 1955. Because they did not get an increase in the bus fares they had asked for, they refused to accept a reasonable offer from the then Government and the Government were forced, without any planning and without any foresight, to take over the transport system of the day. Because it was forced on the Government, there were certain problems of which Government were unaware and which, eventually, got worst and have led to many of the present-day problems now occurring around the Transport Board.

It is interesting to observe that, within the first five years of the operation of the Transport Board, there was a deficit of \$1.9 million against assets of \$1.4 million. The Government had to contribute \$2.5 million during that period for the assistance of the Transport Board. When the Transport Board took over the buses in 1955, there were about one hundred and thirteen buses and half of them were not any good and had to be got rid of, and the Government had to replace the other half over a period of time. From the very early inception Government have been strangled by the financial problems and constrictions surrounding the Transport Board. A lot of people have been keen to criticise the Government, but at the same time if you are seeking, as the then Premier was seeking, to ensure that life goes on, you have to take decisions very often which you would not have taken if you had been given enough time to evaluate and access things.

We have a Transport Board nowadays which still have some of the problems which obtained when the Board was set up in 1955. It is the responsibility of the Government and the people of this country to ensure that this Board continues to get the type of improvement and the type of service that will encourage it to be a viable organisation to the credit of the people of this country. In 1967 one finds that the contraction or contracture of stages in this country was introduced for the first time. Previous to that there were many stages, and it was decided to reduce them to four. This is just some of the history of some of the problems which have been facing the Transport Board, how it has been going on, and still continues to go on. We are here, today, to discuss the passing of a Resolution of over \$5 million for the introduction

of a system of a standard bus fare of 25 cents. The basis on which this Resolution is being introduced to the House of Assembly is to be found in the Report of the Committee appointed by the Minister of Communications and Works to enquire into the Transport system for the Island and to make recommendations in 1973. On the 3rd October, 1972, this Committee was set up with the same reference, and they submitted their Report in 1973. As a result of this Report, the Ministry of Communications and Works have been making certain changes in the transport system of this country. This Report has been laid on the Table of the House of Assembly not very long ago, and I hope that hon. members of this Chamber have had an opportunity to peruse it, if not to study it in detail. I would just like to point out that on page 21 of the Report one of the recommendations made at No. 4 states:

“The introduction of a single uniform fare rate throughout the Island with a free transfer system at selected points with the rate fixed at 25 cents per journey and with the rate for school children reduced from 15 cents to 10 cents per journey.”

We have come here today to give meaning to this recommendation. There has been a lot of talk going around this country for some time that the Government is doing things in 1976 to capture votes. It is interesting, because any Government worth its salt is always doing things to capture votes. Not only during the year of election, but from the time the last elections were decided, Governments are always planning and looking forward to winning the next one. If people would prefer the Government to sit down, because this is 1976, and take no action on the requests of the people of the country, then I think the Government or the Party in power would be very foolish to sit down and do that because everything would testify to the fact that they have lost the confidence of the people who they want to vote for them.

I make no apologies for introducing this Resolution at this time. Those who would like to refer to it as vote-catching, let them do so. If one looks seriously at the problems surrounding the people who have to travel in this country, one has to face the fact that there is an urgent need at this time to do something to help the working-class people of this country to get away from having to pay increased bus fares. The last Public Utilities Board enquiry into the transport system of this country highlighted certain things. One of the things highlighted was that there

should be a further increase in the bus fares of this country. Now, we are aware, especially those of us who are conscientiously involved in representing people in this country, that any further increase in bus fares in this country would increase the hardships on the working-class people of this country. If this is not to come about, then it becomes the responsibility of a Government to take steps to prevent that, or to reduce it.

We are taking a step today to reduce the bus fares for the benefit of the people who have to travel. We appreciate that people living in St. Lucy, St. Andrew, St. Peter, who have to pay sometimes as much as \$2.60 a day to get to and from their work, will now have a tremendous saving. We are also aware of the fact that some of the people who live within the two-mile limit will only be paying 5 cents per journey, but at the same time it is accepted in transport economics that those people who live within the short distances from a terminus or bus stand should assist in subsidising those who have to travel long distances. The wear and tear of buses travelling short distances turns out to be far more than when the buses have to travel a long distance. This is an accepted principle of transport economics and, therefore, I do not expect anyone to grumble at the fact that the people travelling from St. Lucy or further afield to Bridgetown make a more substantial saving in bus fares than people residing within the two-mile limit from Bridgetown.

The reduction of bus fares is not the only thing intended to improve the satisfaction of the travelling public. I am well aware of the need to make many other changes within the transport system of this country, and in another place I have indicated that it is the Government's intention to take over the transport system entirely from 1st July, 1977. I would like to stress again that if one reads the Reports of many of these Commissions, which have been set up in the early 50's, that has been a recurring recommendation that one single concessionaire be asked to operate the transport system of this country. That recommendation is again found in the King's Report as this Report is generally known.

1 p.m.

There are benefits which are indicated will be derived from a single concessionaire operating the buses. For example, it is easier to plan, you can reduce overhead costs, it is easier to introduce the transfer tickets system and to get different routes. Many of the routes which are

being asked for by the public cannot be readily implemented because very often you have to cross the territory of another concessionaire, and that concessionaire may not be willing to agree because he feels that you will be taking away his travelling public from him causing him to lose money. With one concessionaire operating the buses of this country, that type or problem will not arise.

In addition to that one has to look seriously at the question of better and more buses on the roads of Barbados. If one travels around Barbados in some of the buses or even travels and takes a close observation of the buses, you will see that many of the buses on the roads of this country are well over 30 years. There are still buses with tarpaulin on the top and sides and when the rain falls people still get wet. On many of these buses it is very embarrassing to see a lady conductor straddling two or three benches to get from one person to another in an effort to collect fares.

The Transport Board has gone a far way in improving their fleet of buses but at the same time the same cannot be said about the other concessionaires. Many of these buses deserve to be put off the roads as soon as possible. In addition to that one has to look seriously at the provision of new bus routes because the people in this country have shifted very much away from the city of Bridgetown in their domicile. People are living in St. Philip, in St. Andrew, St. Lucy and other areas as a result of the development in land which has taken place in this country over the past fifteen years. Previous to that people tried to get as near as possible to Bridgetown because Bridgetown was the centre of activity and still is the centre of activity, but the conditions which tended to attract people into Bridgetown during those days have varied if not changed completely. Nowadays we have people who have to go to work outside of Bridgetown at the industrial parks. Previously more people or most of the people who worked came into Bridgetown for their occupation. That has been changed. Because of these changes people need buses to take them to their places of work maybe as far afield as Newton Park or further afield even than that; people need to get to where they live which can be as far as St. Philip. People are taking to St. Philip and St. Thomas to live and they need an improved bus service. We have to provide that.

Mr. Chairman, the whole system as it now stands has to undergo a drastic change if we are

to meet the demands of the travelling public of this country. It is noteworthy to maintain that modern development theorists use transport as an indicator of the social and economic good of a country and as the social and economic good of a country increases it is expected that there will be improvement in the transport system of a country.

The King Report has touched on many aspects of the transport system of this country. I am not saying that they have exhausted it because I still believe there are many other areas which they could have looked at and made their recommendations which would have been submitted to my staff; but they have looked at many aspects of the transport system and the Government has accepted the recommendations of the King Report and intend to implement these as we have been implementing them from the time I have been in the Ministry of Communications and Works.

We have problems in the Barbados Transport Board. These problems are to be resolved. I have no overnight solution to many of the problems. I would not like to fool anybody with that, but I can say that since I have been in charge of transport in this country, I have been making every effort to see that improvements come about. I know there are serious problems with the workers. They have fears and illusions about some of the problems of people they consider persecuting them, and great efforts have to be taken to get good relationships among the workers at the Barbados Transport Board. The whole workshop has to be improved and the administration has to be tidied up, and this has to be tidied up long before 1st July, 1977, when the other concessions will be taken over by the Barbados Government. We have to get the Transport Board in a position where it cannot only handle its present charge efficiently, but the increased burden which will come about in taking transport in 1977. They must gear themselves for that. We do not want to see occur in 1977 what happened in 1955 when the Government of that day was forced to take over the transport system to save the people of this country from a more chaotic situation.

We have had increases in bus fares in recent times, as late as 1st April this year when an additional five cents was added to the bus fares. We are not necessarily concerned with what the Public Utilities Board said about further increases, but it is worthwhile to point out that much of the increases which have come

about in the transport fares and other items in Barbados' day to day activities have come about because of increases and inflation which have upset this country from October 1973. These are things which happened, and I do not believe that there has been any Government in the world which has been able to anticipate that by October 1973 there would have been a complete change for the worse in the economic situation of the world. We can only hope that we will see a reversal of this trend and look forward that in the coming years we will find a better situation which will enable everybody in this world not only in Barbados to get, not just hope for, the standard of living which they expect to get and to get before they die.

Mr. Chairman, as Minister of Communications and Works, I feel very pleased to be here to move the passing of this Resolution marking a very important change in the transport system of this country. In my opening remarks I said that three dates are very significant when one looks at the history of the transport system in this country — 1937, 1955 and 1967. I also hope that 8th June, 1976, will be considered as one of those important dates in the history of the transport system of this country.

Mr. Chairman, with those words of introduction I have pleasure in moving that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, in seconding this Resolution, I would like to say how happy I am to be given the opportunity to do so. This Resolution is one of vital importance, and I have no doubt that it will go down in the annals of history for prosperity to read and realise what this Government has done for the benefit of the masses of this country. With an election around the corner, it is the duty or they make it a duty of our opponents to go around and mislead the community by telling them that everything this Government does is a gimmick, but I can assure you, Sir, for the benefit of the public that this is no gimmick. It is something which has been going on in the Ministry of Communications and Works for a very long period and the time has come when this Government feels that it should do everything possible to alleviate the hardship which the travelling public suffers.

1.10 p.m.

I do know, Sir, because I represent a constituency in the rural area, and consequently I can speak on behalf of the people of that area. I

can assure you that they will be grateful to the Government for this kind gesture. This Government has always represented the interests of the masses, and regardless of our detractors who run around with propaganda and lying and all of those things, trying to mislead the people of this country, we, the members of the Government, will continue to look after the interest of the masses of this country.

Now, Sir, I shall prove to you the benefit which the people who live in the rural areas will derive from this new scheme, I know a man who travels from St. Philip, to Oistin daily. He is employed by the Government he pays 65 cents from St. Philip and then he has to pay another 65 cents to go to Silver Sands. You will find out, Sir, that that comes to \$1.30 a day. Now, for five days, that is \$6.50. That man at present receives a wage of \$60 a week, and therefore you can see the benefit that this worker will derive from this new scheme.

Sir, from my calculation he will derive a benefit of approximately \$9.60 a week. Now I want to say without any fear of contradiction that he has not got to pay income tax on that \$9.60 and therefore this is money which goes into that poor worker's pocket to assist him in balancing his budget and maintaining his family.

You have, Sir, in this island domestics and labourers all of whom work for very meagre wages, and when you consider the amount that they have been paying in the past for bus fares, with what this Government is doing here today I can assure you that they will all feel happy and I defy — and I am very serious about this — I defy any member of the Opposition to get up here and criticise this Resolution. They will run around and try to twist it in their own way, but the time has come when we as representatives of the people must realise that you can fool some of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time. (*Cheers*).

I am saying that regardless of the misleading statements which our opponents have been spreading throughout this country, about this Government I am saying that time will tell. You must realise that regardless of what you think about the Government, we as members of the Government can go to the public and face them and tell them all that we have done for them during the 15 years that we were in power. We have brought them from darkness into light. The members of the Opposition, and especially the member for St. Philip North has come in here by accident. (*Laughter*) I am telling him now that I

am putting back on my gloves and he has to battle with me, and time will tell.

Regardless of how you analyse it, regardless of how you think about it, time will tell. Let us see what this decrease will do for people. It increases the spending power of the artisans, the domestics, the labourers and people in the lower brackets especially those who are not owners of cars and who are employed by the Government and by private enterprise. Those are the people who will receive the benefit, and those are the people whom we, especially members of the Government represent.

Imagine a Government which has been elected by the people — do you think that that Government would ever want to do anything which would militate against it? Would they want to do anything possible to hurt the masses of the people who have put them here? It is the duty of the Opposition to go through the island and spread their false propaganda; but again I repeat that this is a Resolution of vital importance. It is one which strikes at the root of assisting people in the lower brackets. It is one which is going to assist the bread winners of this country, and one which I can assure you will bring happiness and joy and prosperity to the workers of this country.

1.20 p.m.

If a domestic of St. Philip has to pay one-third of her wages in bus fare a day and she is being paid approximately \$40 a week, that domestic will have five or six children possibly; so you can see that that money which she saves now from bus fare will go in assisting the workers in this country. Now you, the members of the Opposition, you are here today and I have no doubt, I can vouch for it, I can state unequivocally that you dare not oppose this. The time has come for the people in this Island to face the realities of life, to face the facts and to realize that this is the most careful island in the world, and I want to let you know that the people will not accept or receive wolves in sheep's clothing.

I hope that my people in the island of Barbados and especially the travelling public in this country will appreciate what this Government has done. In my opinion it is a unique case in the history of this House, and I can assure you that everyone regardless of what you, the Opposition, try to instil in their minds will know and time will come when they will in no uncertain terms let the world know that they appreciate all that this Government has done

under the able leadership of the Prime Minister of this country.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I want to speak about a Resolution before the House seeking to vote \$5 million to subsidize public transport during the current financial year. I would like to speak about this because I have heard two speeches one of which was about the Road Traffic Act of 1937, with some very commendatory remarks about the difficulties which the Barbados Labour Party faced in 1955, and the other speech was about the political accident in St. Philip South and the wolves in sheep's clothing who now have the confidence of the people of this country because when he speaks of those wolves in sheep's clothing he is speaking about the voters in St. Philip North and the City of Bridgetown. But I would say that this is clearly a matter of such importance that it deserves to be analysed in terms of what it sets out to do, and not to be analysed in purely political and vote-catching terms; although I would say for emphasis that it must be clear to all concerned that this is a part of the parcel of the tricks of 1976 with which the Government hopes to restore its flagging electoral fortunes.

Now I do not want to go back to 1937. I was very surprised that in the speech made by the Minister of Transport that the passing of the railway in that year was omitted, because I have always understood that it was because the railway was closed down that a bus system had to be re-organized, and perhaps the Minister can ask his advisers if that is not correct; but I will not inflict the railway on hon. members. I do not want to go back so far. I want to go back to 1973, February, when the King's Committee reported on the re-organization of the transport system of this country; and I want hon. members to note well the date when Mr. Worrell, the Secretary of that Commission presented the Committee's Report to the Minister. It was the 14th February, 1973. That was before the oil crisis, that was at a time when bus fares were considerably lower than they are today, that was some years ago — not an election year; only a few years ago and not at election time; and I am going to accuse the Government of a piece of calculated irresponsibility in pretending to implement the recommendations of the King's Report in this 1976 election year when the implications behind those recommendations have not been properly analysed or presented to the people.

Now for a long time, wherever public transport exists the question as to whether there

should be a uniform fare or mixed fares also exist. In general, very densely populated areas — I do not mean areas like Barbados; the only Island I think which would qualify as densely populated within the context to which I am referring is Hong Kong. In general, densely populated areas adopt a uniform fare, so that in New York which is physically much smaller than London but has the same seven million people, we have uniform fares for public transport. In London which is spread out — I think inner London is 700 or 800 square miles, and Greater London must be much more — you have mixed fares. In Calcutta which has 7 million people we have long had the Calcutta public transport. I believe that is the very first country to introduce a uniform fare for certain transport. These are densely populated areas dealing with millions; Barbados is not perhaps quite so densely populated.

The Commission did not seem to me to go into the problem of whether the density of population and the density in use of public transport could justify a uniform fare, but they may have had evidence available to them which is not available to me, and I do not want to quarrel about that.

I mentioned these things to indicate that uniform fare is not new in the world. It is not even new in Barbados because the hon. member for St. Philip North and Mr. Ezra Alleyne proposed in 1972 to the Public Utilities Commission that there should be a uniform bus fare in Barbados. One of those gentlemen is now an hon. member of this House and the other, I have every belief and expectation, will be in a matter of months; they are members of the Barbados Labour Party — and this at that time, was rejected by Mr. Wendell McClean and others who were spokesmen for the Government.

The hon. member for St. Philip North and Mr. Ezra Alleyne called for the introduction of a uniform bus fare and the Government rejected it. If we vote for this Resolution today you can see that our vote is based on historical respectability because we were the party who were calling for a uniform bus fare. Bear that in mind, Mr. Chairman. The Manager of the Transport can easily confirm for any who doubt this as a fact.

Now whether perhaps the Government under the new Minister feels that panic stations are necessary, the Barbados Labour Party made the promise in its Manifesto to introduce a uniform bus fare, and so on and so on. The Government

has decided to apply the uniform bus fare but at a stage three years after it was first suggested.
1.30 p.m.

Since then we have had the oil crisis, since the first suggestion. Since then we have had a raise in bus fares, and these are two matters which cause me to condemn the Government for irresponsibility. The King Commission originally suggested a 25 cents bus fare upon the basis that at that time some bus fares were lower than 25 cents and some were higher, and that a levelling off at 25 cents would discourage people to some extent from making the shorter journeys and give an increased revenue from the same three mile area about which the Minister has spoken, while people who have real hardship in coming from distant parts would have their hardship alleviated. That was the basis of the 25 cents recommendation, and they recommended that it should be introduced for 1974, stay in force until 1976 and then be raised in 1977, and this figure of 25 cents was arrived at before the increase in fuel costs which came about as a result of October 1973 increase in the price of oil. You only have to read the admirable and well set out reports of the Transport Board, one laid in this House as recently as November 1975 for the year 1974, to see that it is not only the increased cost of fuel which has resulted from the energy crisis, but there is an increased cost of all the inputs. The cost of tyres has gone up, the cost of the mechanical parts has gone up and there has been indeed an inflation.

I am going to ask the Government if it knows that this is a good measure, why did they not introduce it in 1974 when it could have been afforded a little better than today? Why did they not have it going in 1975, and why is it not now in force for 1976? The King Commission reported in February 1973; there were 11 months in which the Government could have introduced the 25 cents bus fare, why then do you bring it on the eve of an election? You will understand our slogan "No tricks in '76" when we see a Government that will do that. The Minister made a sly remark in his speech seeking to throw the blame on his predecessor when he says that since he has been Minister he has done everything he can to implement the King Report. That is a reflection on the previous Minister of Communications and Works, a reflection that may be justified, I don't know. In the same Transport Board report I observed that it has been very difficult for the Transport Board to implement certain efficiencies because the Minister of Communications and Works does not carry out

the infrastructure up at Transport Board Headquarters that is required before the Transport Board can get some of its new equipment, its new techniques, its new workshop techniques into operation. It may be that the Ministry was extremely inefficiently run until the new Minister took over; I have no doubt that is what the present Minister wishes us to believe. I have little or no doubt that it is his intention to convey this to the public and if possible to be praised by the Opposition for so conveying, but all I am going to praise him for is exposing the disunity which exists in his own Cabinet, because at least he has been frank where that is concerned.

Now we get back to the King Report. The Minister has said very little really and truly about the 25 cents bus fare in the King Report. I ignore altogether the speech of the other hon. member. He says very little. I want him please to look at paragraph 24 of the King Report. It has been laid on the Table of the House, Sir, it is already a document of the House, and I want to know how he thinks he can come in the House and make a speech about the transport system and not give the conductors employed on the three concessionaires' buses in this country some reassurance as to their future. The King Report says: "Consequent upon the introduction of the single uniform fare system, the Committee recommends that all new units added to the existing fleet or obtained as replacements should be equipped with facilities for collecting fares which would enable the vehicle to be operated by a one-man crew. The use of conductors would therefore be phased out over a period of time as new units come into operation or as any of the existing units are converted to accommodate the new arrangement." It is clear that the Government has the intention of doing away with conductors on buses.

I am going to say something about the Elite and Rocklyn buses. Those buses are old stock, as the Minister said. If you read Appendix V to the King Report, it is clear that the Government has no intention of running the old running board, tarpaulin buses; it is clear that the Government has every intention of replacing the buses of the Elite and Rocklyn with new stock and it is therefore clear that the conductors on the Elite and the Rocklyn will all have to be sent home. It is perfectly clear. It follows as night follows day if you apply ordinary logic.... (*Aside*)..... I hear a monkey chattering, Sir, are monkeys in order in the House of Assembly? Sir, I would like to speak without interruption.

It is obvious that if the Elite and the Rocklyn buses are too old to give proper service, that they have to be replaced by new units, and the King Report says that new units shall be equipped for one man operation. Draw your own conclusion. It is not only the new buses, it is the old buses, because the King Report speaks of converting the existing units to accommodate new equipment. How come have you heard nothing from the Minister on that? It is in the King Report.

Now the minibuses. Of course the Transport Board and the concessionaires have always been very hostile to the minibuses. I have never understood how it is the Elite and Rocklyn seem to manage very well without excessive competition from the minibuses, it is only the Transport Board that has to contend with the minibuses. I have never understood why you don't hear the same complaints from the Elite and Rocklyn as you hear from the Transport Board, but the minibuses will be dealt with in this way, according to the King Report. If they want to operate on Highway 1 or wherever, they will have to join a registered co-operative, the co-operative will have to apply to the Transport Board for a licence for the minibus to run, the co-operative will have to pay money to the Transport Board for every minibus, and the minibus driver will also have to pay a special licence fee as well. Well, it is understandable that this has caused consternation in the minds of the minibus operators. The policy of our Party has always been that the minibuses should primarily be used on feeder routes, but nonetheless we have recognised that there may be a place for the minibuses to supplement the Transport Board service and other people's service at certain times. We have had a debate in here to which the Prime Minister contributed, and as I recall contributed very ably, on the subject of minibuses and their proper use in Barbados. This was some six or seven years ago. I am surprised that a point like this has not been dealt with by the Minister in his speech, What reassurance you are going to give the minibus owners, what you are going to leave them in the way of feeder routes and so on, for always remember that diesel fuel costs substantially less than gasoline, the buses are being run now at a loss, therefore even apart from anything else I have no doubt that the Transport Board is convinced in its mind that the minibuses are going to be driven out of business by the operation of economics. I am convinced of that, but the minibuses play an integral part in the life of Barbadians at the present time.

To tell the minibuses that they will have to pay the Transport Board, stop at every bus stop

— because that is in the report — to tell them that is only again to cause alarm and despondency in the minds and bosoms of the minibus operators and Barbadians who depend on the minibus for their travel. A close examination of all the figures shows that the number of school children who in 1976 appear to be travelling by bus is approximately 15,000. This seems to be 15,000 school children who regularly use the buses of this country, there seems to be only about 35,000 people, adults other than school children, or including school children when they travel on weekends and so on, who regularly use the buses, perhaps 40,000 depending on how many travel to work on Saturday and other imponderables which cannot be estimated from looking at raw figures.

1.40 p.m.

There are about forty thousand, depending on how many travel to work on Saturdays and other imponderables, which cannot be estimated from looking at raw statistics, but perhaps you will find that there is an upper limit of no more than 50,000 Barbadians, including school children, who regularly use the buses of this country. That is about 25% of our population who regularly use the buses of this country. I am asking the Government seriously to consider whether the expenditure of \$5 million on transport, no details of which have been supplied to the House, represents the best priority on which you can spend it.

Now, I am going to give an example to the Minister of Health. He should be interested in this because his multi-purpose clinics will fail. The D.M.O's are not going to accept the conditions of service contained in the recent circular. I want to ask him and to enlist him particularly in this. There are fewer than 50 general practitioners in this country. The expenditure of \$5 million would more than cover the supply of free medical assistance for everybody in Barbados through general practitioners. It would more than cover the introduction of a free medical scheme in this country. Think about that and see whether you are getting your priorities correct in subsidising a transport system to the tune of \$5 million. I myself know, and not just believe, that if the electorate is so mistaken as to put those responsible for this Resolution into a further period where they may still be responsible, the bus fare will go up again. The King Commission said it should be 25¢ until 1976, and it should go up in 1977 and again in 1979. I know this is just an electoral trick, and that it will go up again if it ever achieves its purpose. All of us know that,

and we do not have to fool ourselves. The King Commission at a time when there was no inflation, at a time when there was no energy crisis, said that the 25¢ bus fare would have to be raised in 1977. You and I, Sir, will have no difficulty in ignoring the pledges given by the Minister and by the Prime Minister in speeches and, indeed, in respecting the Minister for not repeating those pledges in here — respecting the Minister for not saying that the 25¢ bus fare will remain forever and ever, and will never be raised again.

There is a big suggestion — I heard it in a speech made by the Prime Minister, I believe, at Mangrove about these 25¢ bus fares. He said you would live in St. Philip and you would never have to worry about bus fares because you would always know how much bus fare you would have to pay to go to Bridgetown. At any given moment you would know, but you cannot know forever that the fare would not go up. Obviously, it will go up. I am asking the Minister whether the expenditure of \$5 million is intended to be a recurrent expenditure. How much of it is intended to subsidise the bus fares and so on? That is what I am asking the Minister. Of course he has dealt with none of this in his speech.

Now, Sir, I want to deal with an expression which was made about the increases in spending power. It has not occurred in the speech of the hon. member for St. Philip South. That is another great mistake which the people in Barbados should not be asked to make. If the Government has to spend \$5 million on subsidising bus fares that has not increased the spending power of anybody. That money has to come from somewhere. All of the Government's money has to come from out of our pockets sooner or later. If \$5 million is found to spend on bus fares, there will have to be either an increase in taxation or an economy elsewhere. It is \$5 million that could have been used to subsidise rice, or to subsidise the cost of living generally; it is \$5 million that could have been used to save people from the cost of medical assistance; it is \$5 million that could have been taken off the income tax. You must remember that. It is \$5 million that could have been used to raise the allowances in income tax; it is \$5 million that could have been used to help take off the 5% sales tax, so it has not increased anybody's spending power. That has to be paid. The Minister is not paying it; the suppliers of the buses are not paying it; you and I are paying it, Sir, and sooner or later the accounting will have to be made.

Now, of course, it seems that the Government had some fancy hope that the Opposition would find itself opposing this measure, but I believe I dealt with that effectively at the start of my speech. I pointed out that the first people that put this forward were two members of the Barbados Labour Party before the Public Utilities Board. I do not want to detain the House for any unreasonable length of time, but I want to say that we do not oppose the taking over of all of the buses. We do not in any way oppose the re organisation of bus routes. Indeed, the taking over of buses is our initial policy. The question of uniform fare is a more difficult matter. The question of a low fare and a uniform fare are two different questions entirely. You can have the highest fare at 25¢ and the lowest fare at 5¢. You can reduce all of the fares, if you so desire. In all probability you could have reduced all of the bus fares so that the highest would have been 35¢ and the lowest 15¢. For \$5 million you could have brought down the fares around Bridgetown to 15¢, if you so desired. There are two separate questions: whether you should have a uniform fare, or a mixture of fares.

I want the Minister, since I heard him speak of this, particularly to take note that you cannot speak with one voice in one Department and speak with another voice in another Department. I have heard a lot of people saying anybody will now be able to go and get work at an Industrial Park in St. Philip because it will only cost 25¢ to get there, or to get work at an Industrial Park at Newton. They can live in St. Lucy and go and work at Newton, but the whole point in decentralising the Industrial Parks was to give local employment. That is the whole point of it, and the Government is being led into contradictory policies when it speaks of decentralising manufacturing industries in Barbados so as to give local employment, and then at the sametime say that you are going to make bus fares low so that people can come from all over the Island to work at such and such a place. There are all of these contradictions implicit and inherent in the Government's policy, which I do not believe the Minister of Transport has paid sufficient attention. The immediate effect of a uniform bus fare also is to increase urban congestion, because it takes away any incentive to decentralise business and industry. I would not say any incentive, but it takes away one of the incentives to be decentralising industry and business.

There will now really be no reason, the Minister can argue, to put an Industrial Park in St. Philip, since the people can go to town and

work. All of the contradictions appear to have been jumped into with both feet by the Minister, perhaps, not entirely understanding all of the implications. People snatch at quick solutions especially when they show up the predecessor and make him look to be a know-nothing Minister, a do-nothing Minister, a Minister whose penchant for putting his foot into his mouth is equalled only by his inability to carry out any reasoned policy even when a Report like this is placed in his hand.

Perhaps the hon. member for St. Michael South Central — I do not know — was right to wait for three years and then do nothing on the King Report. Perhaps it was an act of wisdom and consideration rather than an act of mere inefficiency. I do not know, but I am suggesting that the Government finds itself in an election year with its bag of tricks sadly depleted.

1.50 p.m.

It is trying to reach out to those few votes in the country — because the people in St. Michael will not be much helped by this — to those few votes in the country districts, the country areas which they feel may make the difference between success and failure.

Sir, I am calling on the Minister to say that he is not going to implement those parts of the King Report which deal with sending home the conductors. I am calling on the Minister to say that he will implement a policy for minibuses which will not leave the poor minibus owners from St. Peter and St. Lucy with an empty investment in their hands while the owners of the Volkswagen and Toyota buses that are brought in here and encouraged by the Ministry of Tourism to make a fortune out of tour operations are still allowed to continue to make such a fortune, because these are considerations to look at. The poor minibus owners in St. Peter and St. Lucy are not going to get any tour operations to recompense them for what they are losing now. They will be kept for the friends of the Minister of Tourism. They will not be getting any of these little side benefits like "Cow" Williams' brother. He should be driving a minibus from Speightstown to Bridgetown like the rest, but he has an advantage denied the rest, and it is these rests in St. Lucy and St. Peter and St. Thomas whom the Government is seeking to put out of business. I am calling on the Minister for an answer in respect of the minibuses. I want to hear if he is going to say that the minibuses will only be allowed to run if they are registered as cooperatives and if they pay a fee and each driver pays a special license to be allowed to drive the buses.

The Prime Minister said there are enough buses. The Prime Minister said we do not need anymore buses, we have all the buses already, more than we need, still the Minister of Transport said that 39 buses are on order. I do not know which is right. I am reminded of the hospital difficulties when the Minister of Transport said there were difficulties at the Hospital, that the second most powerful man was giving trouble and the Prime Minister said there is nothing wrong at the Hospital. I cannot understand this Cabinet with a forked tongue where *Primus inter pares* speaks with the right hand tongue, and then the much shuffled Minister, the Minister who is the joker in the pack every time the pack falls down, he finds himself on one side, speaks with a different voice. All these are questions for which we deserve answers and for which the Minister has given us not the slightest answer or intimation.

Sir, we are not voting against this Resolution, but we yet regard it as an irresponsible trick, and a calculated attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the electorate of Barbados in this election year, and we think that the Government should be ashamed of itself, Mr. Chairman, to believe that in every man in Barbados, not just in the City, so much resides the soul of a monkey that they are going to be taken in by a trick like this. I believe the hon. member for St. Michael South Central is going to get up and speak immediately after me. All I ask is that he does not call me a monkey. I only ask him that. Leave that for the electorate to deal with, and when he gets up to blister me, I ask him to pitch his words the whole way over; do not let any of it fall on the head of the Minister sitting in the front bench in front of him because I know he is who is his real target. He will only be abusing me to get at the Minister and because the Minister has shown him up or because he thinks the Minister has shown him up in connection with this very same transport system.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I have already said in this Honourable House that the Leader of the Opposition should give his brain to science, because the way that works I do not think it has ever come under medical scrutiny. He has got a peculiar brain and it would be interesting for scientists to find out how it works because it is a brain that only God could give to somebody like him. But I want him to understand that the first monkey talk came up when his father was defending a man in St. Thomas for shooting a boy and said that the boy looked like a monkey as his defence at the Court of Grand Sessions; so let us get this monkey talk straight now.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, when a man can stand up in the House of Assembly and tells an outrageous lie, a wicked and evil, a mischievous and malicious lie, what provision do the Standing Orders have to allow an hon. member to call attention to it?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely no point of order.

Mr. ADAMS: A former hon. member of this House is being maligned and he is a blasted liar, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And the hon. member is calling the Chair.....

Mr. ADAMS: No, not you, Sir. I said "he" not "you".

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He who? You must not impute.....

Mr. ADAMS: I could not be speaking of any member of this House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Both hon. members must take their seats. I want you to understand something and get it straight off the cuff. If you all are hon. members of this Chamber and are prepared to project to other hon. members this type of behaviour, what do we expect to project to the electorate of this Island? I am going to ask all hon. members to contain themselves and allow us to get along with the Resolution for \$5 million to subsidise bus fares; no monkeys, donkeys or carts.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am asking that the Leader of the Opposition withdraw calling me a blasted liar, not only that it is unparliamentary; he must withdraw it before I continue the debate. (*Interruptions*).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for St. James must adhere to Standing Order No. 33(6).

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Has he withdrawn? I have not heard it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In my estimation I have spoken before any withdrawal of the words, therefore the hon. member will proceed with his speech.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: That is not in the Standing Orders with all due respect. The Leader of the Opposition has called me a blasted liar. You cannot intervene and erase it from the

records. He must withdraw it. Your standing up or sitting up cannot make them withdrawn, and I am demanding my rights as a member of this House.

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order, you have ruled that the hon. member must proceed with the debate.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Mr. CRAIG: On behalf of the Leader of the Opposition, I take it upon myself to withdraw the remarks, and I will deal with him. You are a vulnerable character.

Mr. CHAIRMAN rose and the hon. member sat.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time is now 2 o'clock.
2.00 p.m.

PROGRESS REPORTED

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Subject to the withdrawal of that remark, 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.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There can be no point of order at this stage. I have already stated that the time is 2 o'clock p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to the SPEAKER. Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hour now being 2 p.m.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, —

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already stated that the hour is now 2 p.m. Therefore the Sitting is now automatically suspended until 2.45 p.m.

On the Resumption at 2.45 p.m.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Sitting is now resumed.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am sorry, Sir. Before the Sitting was suspended, the Leader of the

Opposition referred to me as a blasted liar. The Chairman up to the point of 2 o'clock did not call on him to withdraw that remark. I am drawing it to your attention that at the point when the Committee was reporting progress I was asking for a withdrawal of those remarks. He has to withdraw them in the House today.

Mr. SPEAKER: A subsequent motion will have to be made.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am seeking leave to ask certain questions which, due to my absence, I could not have given notice of earlier.

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no objection, I give the hon. member leave to proceed.

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:

- (a) the Cargo Shed at Seawell International Airport lacks covering outside the main shed, with the result that when it rains, all cargo off-loaded from aircraft become wet and that personnel dealing with the said cargo are exposed to the rains in trying to save certain cargo when it rains;
- (b) the drainage around the said shed is so badly designed that when it rains vehicles and personnel attending the said cargo shed cannot get to the loading bay because of the volume of water which settles around the said shed?

If the answer to either of the above is in the negative, would the Minister carry out investigations into the state of the cargo shed at Seawell International Airport? If the answer is in the affirmative, would the Minister state what steps are being taken to remedy the situation?

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:

- (1) the Home Agriculture Station in St. Philip has been used for agricultural shows during the past two years;
- (2) as a result of such use, the Home Agricultural Station has not been

used as an Agricultural demonstration station;

- (3) the station has been allowed to run in grass and the remnant of stalls remain from year to year?

Would the Minister state whether Government is prepared to

- (a) acquire a proper area in a rural district to establish a permanent Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition and fair grounds;
- (b) restore the Home Agricultural Station to its original uses i.e., Vegetable and food crop production growing and exhibiting crops suitable to agricultural holding in that area of the Island?

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:

- (a) in numerous areas of St. Joseph water can be seen coming through the road though not from burst pipes;
- (b) the existence of such water indicates that there may be underground springs in the various areas?

Would the Minister state whether Government has any plans to investigate the sources of the water which appears above ground when it does not come from a burst pipe? If there are no such plans, would the Government consider investigating these sources of water and wherever possible make plans to tap and drain the water into suitable storage areas?

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:

- (a) many agricultural weedicides and pesticides are still dutiable;
- (b) importers spend much time and money in getting certificates from users in order to satisfy the Ministry of Finance and Planning that such commodities are for agricultural use?

Would the Minister state how soon it is intended to remove the duty now paid from

agricultural equipment, weedicides and pesticides and poultry medicines in order to assist farming in general in the country?

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Will the Minister state the price per pound paid for milk on the 31st day of May, 1976 by the Pine Hill Dairy to dairy farmers?

Will the Minister state whether or not a directive was sent from the Ministry of Trade to Pine Hill Dairy to increase its price per pound paid to dairy farmers by six cents?

If the answer is in the affirmative, would the Minister state:

- (a) when was the directive sent to the Pine Hill Dairy;
- (b) whether or not the Pine Hill Dairy has complied with the said directive;
- (c) what increase, if any, was paid by the Pine Hill Dairy after the directive was sent out?

If the Pine Hill Dairy did not comply in full with the directive, what steps have been taken by the Ministry of Trade to enforce its directive?

If and when the Pine Hill Dairy complies with the Ministry of Trade directive, would the Minister state if the dairy farmers will be paid the balance of money due to them for milk supplied from the date of the directive up to the time of payment?

Will the Minister state what steps he proposes to take in the light of the above action by the Pine Hill Dairy to protect dairy farming in this country?

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:—

- (a) persons who have applied to the National Housing Corporation for loans to repair their houses since 1973 have not yet received the said loans and/or replies;
- (b) the cost of repairs have increased considerably since the date of application?

Will the Minister state:

- (a) the number of applications received in the years 1973, 1974, 1975 and in 1976 up to March 31;
- (b) the total amount of money required for loans in each of the above years;
- (c) the total number of loans and amount paid out in each of the above years?

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:

- (1) in numerous constituencies in the Island there are several persons who hold identification cards and their names do not appear on any of the issued Electoral Registers;
- (2) many persons have changed their addresses during the last four years and no new Electoral Registration has been done;
- (3) the Electoral Office has not been able to supply the requisite number of forms required for effecting transfers?

Will the Minister forthwith issue instructions to have enumerator check the entire Island and correct, where necessary, the Electoral Registers?

Mr. BOLDEN: To enquire of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that:

- (1) the road through Horton Village, St. Joseph was once the main public road;
- (2) the said road is now in need of repairs?

Would the Minister state:

- (a) whether the Government has abandoned its declared plans for fixing tenantry roads?

If the answer is in the affirmative, would the Minister state why?

If the answer is in the negative, would the Minister state what are the plans for fixing the following other roads in St. Joseph, Branchbury Tenantry Road, Blackmans Road and Melvins Hill.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Minister.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member again trying to revoke the old system? We have already decided that there is no need to read the question.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, since it is a rule that Questions should be called by reference to the number – a rule agreed on by a Committee which I nominated, I would not think of breaking that rule; but I notice that some other members got up and read their questions.
2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are trying to follow a plan and policy. Would you please comply?

Mr. ADAMS: You are trying to conform with my policy. Thank you, Sir. Question No. 44 to ask the Minister of Health and Welfare: Is the Minister satisfied that all food and medical supplies purchased on behalf of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in the year ending April 1975 reached and were used by the Hospital, and if not, what is the value of the missing articles or articles that cannot be traced?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 44 is as follows:

I am reasonably satisfied that medical supplies purchased during the year ending April 1975 were used for the purposes of the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. Some doubt exists, however, that the same holds good in respect of food supplies; but deficiencies in the systems and procedures for keeping the food records make it difficult to state with any certainty the quantities and value of the articles that might be unaccounted for. Measures are being taken to correct the deficiencies referred to.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister agree that although the amount of missing food from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital cannot be calculated with certainty, that it could be of the order of \$1 million?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I cannot substantiate that; I cannot agree with it.

Mr. ADAMS: Has the Minister instituted a proper survey by a firm of Accountants or otherwise to analyse what supplies of food were made to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital during the year in question, and if so, what was the value?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The matter raised has been studied by a qualified accountant, the

Financial Controller in the Ministry of Health and Welfare. A survey of the system was also done by the Nutrition Officer attached to the National Nutrition Centre, and from those circling from the Financial Controller who was qualified in the area of accounts, there is no firm estimate concerning the losses.

Mr. ADAMS: Then the question could be summed up as follows; food was stolen from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital but he does not know how much?

Mr. HINDS: Can the Minister tell us if in the survey that was carried out it brought to light that thieving at this institution had been going on long before the period mentioned in this Question? That is, the period ending 31st April, 1975.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not recollect any such charge or allegation.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us if the survey brought to light – we are not laying any charge or any such thing; we only want to know from the Minister if the survey that was carried out brought to light the fact that food was being stolen from the institution long before the period mentioned here. That is all we are asking. We are not charging anybody.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The survey – the investigation which was set and trained by the then Minister of Health and Welfare related to the period mentioned in the Question. It did not go into the history or pre-history such as the hon. member for St. Peter was referring to. It related to a specific period which was the year ending April, 1975; so it referred to one specific year.

Miss MILLER: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister say when the investigation was set in action?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: During 1975.

Mr. ADAMS: Be honest man. Before my Question?

Mr. SPEAKER: Oh!

Mr. HINDS: Can the Minister tell us, Mr. Speaker, if the survey that was carried out threw any light on the pattern or the *modi operandi* in the carrying away or the losing of these supplies?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sorry, Sir. I did not get the question good.

Mr. SPEAKER: Would the hon. member pose the question again for the benefit of the Minister?

Mr. HINDS: Can the Minister tell us if the survey brought to light the pattern or the *modi operandi* in losing these supplies from the Hospital?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: The survey highlighted certain deficiencies in the accounting procedures for these food items, and this is a problem. This is why I cannot state any exact value. It did highlight certain deficiencies which of course could lead to leakages.

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no further supplementary.....

Mr. HINDS: Check the records and see.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please do not argue with the Chair. Question No. 84 asked by the hon. member for St. Philip North.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 84 to ask the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport: Is the Minister aware that there are no Government-owned community and/or social centres (apart from King George V Memorial Park) in the constituency of Saint Philip North to serve the recreational needs of the youth of the districts of Brereton, Ebenezer, Church Village, Blades Hill, Marley Vale, Wellhouse, Padmore inter alia? If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister give urgent consideration to the establishment of community and/or social centres in the said constituency to satisfy the needs of the youth of the aforesaid districts and the constituency as a whole?

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

"I am aware that there are no Government-owned community and/or social centres apart from King George V Memorial Park in the constituency of Saint Philip North. However, there are a number of schools in the area which are extensively used by youth groups, clubs and organisations. Attached please find schools in Parish of St. Philip and the use to which these are put. Appendix A clearly shows that schools serve the purposes of community and social centres. Youth and community groups are encouraged to make the fullest possible use of schools and other public buildings in their area and permission for their use is usually given as a matter of course.

The Ministry is however looking at the entire position of community and social centres in the island with a view to satisfying the needs of the entire community."

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister state whether, having regard to his awareness that there are no community and/or social centres in St. Philip North, having regard to a newspaper report last week that the Government is considering acquiring property at Carrington Cable and Wireless facility, whether his Ministry would also consider using the facility thereat for supplementing the needs of the parishioners of St. Philip North?
3.00 p.m.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Although it is not a proper supplementary, because he is rambling, he is going by a newspaper, I do not answer newspaper reports in here, so just out of courtesy I will answer. The facilities for the community of Brereton in the implementation of the Government scheme for the establishment of youth training centres will be given maximum consideration.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister now tell us whether it is a fact that you have to apply for the use of these schools he has talked about three and four weeks in advance?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: It is not a fact that you have to apply for the use of these schools three and four weeks in advance. What is expected and asked is that adequate notice of the intention to use the schools, to avoid clashes with other groups and that the Head Teachers can be notified, should be given. That is all we ask. I think the member for St. Joseph knows that, at one time he got the use of a school in about three days' time.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of explanation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not now, no explanation.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I cannot allow the Minister to make allegations in here when in truth and in fact

Mr. SPEAKER: You have another opportunity to deal with the Minister and that; we are dealing with questions now.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state whether or not the conditions of insurance are attached to the use of these schools by groups who apply?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The condition of insurance is attached to the use of these schools by groups that are making money, or holding dances, or other functions for which money is charged. No insurance is attached to the use of these schools by groups who want to put on cultural, social or other community ventures, but the Government is looking at this whole question of insurance of buildings because the Minister is aware that it is posing problems for small groups who want to use the schools from time to time, and even in the raising of the small figure is a financial burden on the various groups. The matter is under active consideration.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state if this policy of no insurance being required is applied to the schools in St. Joseph?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As far as the Minister is concerned there is no discrimination between any parish in the island of Barbados, and St. Joseph is one of the parishes of the island.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state why I have personally had to insure the St. Bernard's School at Lammings in December, 1975, and if I wanted to use the St. Elizabeth School in Bathsheba I would have had to cover it by insurance as well, when both functions did not involve the making of any money, but were charitable functions for the people living in the constituency.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The Minister is not aware that the functions alleged to have been put on by the member for St. Joseph were charitable and were not for the purpose of making money. (Mr. BOLDEN: You won't stop lying?)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I will not have that behaviour in here from members. Behave yourselves while I am in the Chair. (*Asides*). Let us have some order, please. The hon. member for St. Peter.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, is the Hon. Minister for Education asking this House to accept the fact (*Asides*) I can't ask the question in peace, Sir. Is the Minister trying to convey to this House that due to the extensive use of the schools in St. Philip by the various groups, allegedly by the Minister, that there can be no hope of Government considering providing the community centre or a social centre sought by the hon. member for St. Philip North?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: All the Minister is saying is that the schools are available at the

moment for the purposes for which they are needed by social groups. The money in this country is not inexhaustible that in every village you can put up a social or community centre, and the whole needs of the community will be looked at in due course, but the Minister is saying, not trying to convey, that the schools if used and requested for use can adequately and at the moment meet the needs of the various cultural and social groups. That is what I am saying, I am not trying to convey anything.

Mr. SIMMONS: Sir, I have one more. In the light of the second part of the question, will the Minister give urgent consideration to the establishment of community and/or social centres? Am I now to understand that the Government is not considering the establishment, not the continued use, of any new social and/or recreational centres?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The Government is always considering the establishment of social and community centres, but the Government is also satisfied that the existing schools which cost quite a deal of money to maintain are not being used to maximum capacity, and therefore if there is a school next door, why set up a community centre? For what? To have two white elephants? If the Government is satisfied that the schools (*Asides*) white elephants, I mean two buildings not being used to maximum capacity. Go out and tell the people I say the schools are white elephants.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, in the light of what the Minister has just said, can the Minister tell us how many white elephants there are in the parish of St. Philip?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: If the member for St. Peter is so ignorant that he does not know what the expression "white elephant" means in an English context he does not deserve an answer.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, would you draw to the attention of the Minister of Education that he should be careful with the animal talk in here?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not deem that to be a supplementary.

QUESTION RE THE NEED FOR PLAYING FIELDS IN ST. PHILIP

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 87 standing in the name of the same hon. member.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, the question reads as follows:

To ask the Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport: Is the Minister aware that there is need for playing fields with all-inclusive facilities for cricket, football, volleyball and netball in the following districts in St. Philip North to wit: Church Village, Brereton, Blades Hill, Merricks, Marley Vale, Duncans, Parish Land? If the Minister is so aware, will the Minister give urgent consideration to the provision of playing fields in the said districts and further, will the Minister consider the acquisition of certain adjoining plantation lands for the use as playing fields?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The answer to that is, "Yes, Sir. Urgent consideration is being given to providing playing field facilities in the area of Northern St. Philip, and subject to the allocation of adequate additional funds it is proposed to provide playing fields in some areas."

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister care to identify now some of these areas that he has under urgent consideration?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: One area is Church Village. I am sure he will be glad to hear that, and then another area is St. Martin's. We are also levelling a field for the church at Beulah, and we are looking to acquire land for other areas to extend these facilities.

Mr. SIMMONS: Sir, in view of the fact that the Blades Hill area has a very heavy proportion of people, I would like the Minister to consider acquiring land in the Blades Hill area, just as he has done in Church Village.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The Minister will consider the request, but wants the member to understand that St. Philip North is not the only parish or part of a parish for which the Minister has responsibility. He has the responsibility for all eleven, who want playing fields and community centres too.

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister aware that St. Philip has been neglected since 1961 and this is now 1976? That there have been no social amenities given to the parish of St. Philip?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The Minister is aware that the member for St. Joseph is insulting the people of St. Philip who for 15 years on a democratic basis have been electing members to represent them, and to suggest that they have been neglected after the member has been elected democratically by the people for St. Philip is an insult.

Mr. BOLDEN: Is the Minister aware that the people of St. Philip have been so insulted by those whom they have elected that they have changed from electing Democratic Labour Party members and will now be electing BLP members as of now?

3.10 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: That question has no bearing, and it is irrelevant.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister how soon does he propose having the playing field ready for use in Church Village.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As soon as is humanly possible.

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 88 asked by the same hon. member for St. Philip North.

ROCK PROCESSING PLANT AT MANGROVE

Mr. SIMMONS: Question No. 88:

To ask the appropriate Minister: Will the Minister state (a) the last date on which the Government rock processing plant at Mangrove operated? If the said plant has been non-functional within the last year, will the Minister state what are Government's plans for the machinery on site? Will the Minister further state whether the Government received complaints about dust factor emanating from the plant during its period of operations and what steps, if any, (not including closure of the plant) the Government took or are taking to control the emission of dust from the said plant?

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, the reply is as follows:

The Government's rock processing plant at Mangrove was closed with effect from 3rd August, 1975 and the plant together with ancillary equipment have been sold to a local contractor.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister state what was the selling price of the plant?

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: I am not in possession of that data.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister telling the House that there has been a sale to a

local contractor and he does not know what is the price? It may have been a gift or an exchange, Sir.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: That question needs no reply.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know the name of the local contractor, or the person to whom the plant was sold.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: If the hon. member will wait and be more polite, I can give him the answer. If he does not, I would not worry to give him the answer. The contract for the purchase and removal of plant was awarded to Messrs. C. O. W. Williams Construction 1975 on the 10th September, 1975.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state what plans Government have for the area which once sited the crushing plant?

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, just to be courteous, I would like to inform the hon. member that land is not in my portfolio, and I have no responsibility for that.

Mr. BOLDEN: Will the Minister state whether there were any complaints about dust before the sale of the plant, and whether Government made any compensation to householders in the area?

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: The answer to that, Mr. Speaker, is yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The time being now 3.15 p.m., that brings an end to Question Time.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Private Member's Business.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Item No. 1, under Private Members' Business, is in the name of the Leader of the Opposition who is not in his place at the moment.

Items Nos. 2, 3 and 4 are in the name of the member for Christ Church who is not in his place.

No. 5 in the name of the member for St. Lucy.

Item 6 I do not propose to do at this stage, Sir.

Item No. 7 is under the name of the Hon. Deputy Speaker of the House, the member for St. Andrew. I do not know if the hon. member proposes to do that.

Item 8 was being done, and I am wondering if he proposes to deal with No. 7 at this stage.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker, we were dealing with No. 8.

Mr. SPEAKER: But 7 comes before 8, and that is what we want to get settled. We are coming down straight.

Mr. EDWARDS: But eight was being done before seven, and we came down straight last time, too.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is another sitting and the Acting Leader of the Opposition is doing it as procedural as possible. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, so we want the answer to 7 first. You are either ready or not.

Mr. EDWARDS: What I am trying to point out, Mr. Speaker is, that it was in that chronological order. I opted to do the second one first, and which was being done when Private Members' Business was completed at our last meeting. I would have thought that it would have been shifted around.

Mr. SPEAKER: In other words, do you mean that the Clerks at the Table have shifted them?

Mr. EDWARDS: I would have thought that it would have been shifted, and the one that was being dealt with would have come first. What I am saying is that on Item 8 the Minister of Agriculture, who is speaking on it, is not ready to speak. If hon. members want to continue and to postpone consideration for the Minister's reply, then they can do so. I would prefer to get this out of the way before I start to do 7. For example, the hon. member for St. Joseph was speaking on it, and if he wants to speak I would be prepared to do that and then postpone consideration for the Minister's contribution before I do 7. Otherwise, I will go ahead and do 7.

Mr. SPEAKER: If I understand correctly, the hon. member for St. Andrew would have to move now that Item No. 8, under Private Members' Business, be either deferred or that it should supersede Item No. 7, which would be the instant Order.

Mr. CRAIG: Sir, I think we are making too much out of this matter. Item No. 7 is the Item which I have called. The member for St. Andrew will decide whether he is doing it or not doing it. It is quite true that we were doing Item No. 8 when the sitting was adjourned, but what the member for St. Andrew seems to be contending is that Item No. 8 should be Item No. 1 now. It is at Item No. 7 now, and we have called it. At this stage, if the member is not going to do Item No. 7, then we can go on to Item 8 and he can continue with it. If no one is interested in making another contribution, I am not averse to getting up and moving that Item No. 7 be called and the hon. member can do it. There are several more important things to be done in here today. You will have a pretty long day, Sir.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the hon. member understood the point which I was trying to make. The point I am trying to make is that I have a Resolution which is being done at No. 8, which was No. 8 the last time, too. What I am saying is that the hon. member for St. Joseph was speaking on it. I want to have both Resolutions done. If we have one in process, the hon. member can complete his contribution and when we have completed that we could then start with No. 7, if the hon. member wants to complete his address, and then we could postpone further consideration of it.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, in order to get the record straight, you should not entertain any discussion whatsoever on No. 8 until we have decided how to dispose of No. 7.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker, this is unrealistic because, from what the hon. member for St. Peter has said, it would mean that we should not do anything after No. 1.

Mr. SPEAKER: At this stage, I think the hon. member for St. Andrew has to bear in mind that we are dealing with Item No. 7. Are you or are you not ready to debate it? If you are not ready we can move on.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am ready.

Mr. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that Item No. 7 be the instant Order of the Day under Private Members' Business.
3.20 p.m.

RESOLUTION RE EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution has to do with implementing a

scheme of employment for the youth of the country. Firstly, as I pointed out in the preamble of my Resolution, the Minister for Education and Youth Affairs did initiate action in ascertaining what are the needs of the youth of the country in respect of training. I think that I did listen to a report by the Minister which stated that some 5,000 young people have expressed interest in a training programme. What I am asking here for is not to be confused with the training programme initiated by the Ministry of Education. It is not to be confused with any other provision for the young people of this country.

What I am begging for, Mr. Speaker, is that whilst training is provided by the Government for the youth of the nation, there is the question of what happens to the young people after training is provided. We have had classic examples of young women being trained throughout the country in domestic science at the various schools in the rural districts where they spend some six months in training and when the training is completed these young people still experience problems in finding gainful employment.

It is true that the school meals programme has been absorbing some of these young people who are trained at the various centres throughout the country; it is true that some are absorbed in the hotel industry, but there is a large number of these young people who are trained who cannot find gainful employment. There are other training centres, even private ones. Just as private schools are encouraged to provide education to supplement the education provided by the Government, they provide training centres for training people in bed-side nursing and so on. This is a good thing, but when these people have completed that training few of them finds gainful employment. What I am asking for here, Mr. Speaker, is that the Government not only provide training for these 5,000 odd people who are registered, but that something be implemented whereby these people can find gainful employment.

There are a lot of people, perhaps some who have not registered to state that they are unemployed, who have not complied because they are more interested in employment than training, and therefore since the question put to them, I have spoken to some of them who have said that they are not looking for training but for employment. Since employment is a very serious problem in this country today, especially among the young people, I would hope that this Resolution would be taken seriously and that the Government would provide some means of providing employment for these people even if it

is taking some of the land and the buildings owned by Government on plantations. For example, we have a large portion of land in the Scotland district owned by Government which is not used to the maximum benefit of this country. In other words, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of it lying fallow. There is a lot of it where attempts were made to grow grass; the grass is not now growing and it is not utilised.

There are factory buildings which are not occupied in the Scotland district; there are buildings owned by Government in that part of the country where agro-industries of some sort can be established to provide employment for some of the young people of this country. The land can be made available to the youth; I am not now speaking of the youth camps which are being provided by the Ministry of Education. I am thinking of employing youth in agricultural enterprises on a farm on a cooperative basis as is done, say, in Venezuela where people are encouraged to come together in cooperatives, funds are provided to give them weekly subsistence, they are guided by experts and by trained personnel and they make a useful contribution to the economy of the country by the inputs which they have been able to make. There are certain estates set aside where young people in Venezuela are encouraged to produce food, vegetable crops, corn, maize or whatever, and at the same time they are trained to process on the spot and what they produce they process. This is the sort of thing which consideration could be given to.

3.30 p.m.

That is what consideration should be given to. I understand that we are to establish here a meat processing plant which will come into operation within a matter of weeks and which will have an emphasis on pork. In this country we produce pigs, and some of the best pork in the world. I do not know if it is the type of water that we use or not, but today we are importing into Barbados in pork products something like \$10 million a year.

There is nothing wrong with encouraging people to make use of some of these buildings in the old plantation yards to keep piggeries. There is nothing wrong with encouraging them to produce feed for the pigs by planting corn on the land which is lying fallow. There is nothing wrong with encouraging our young people to establish on Government lands poultry units on which poultry can be processed to satisfy the needs for poultry meat in the

country. Not so long ago we had the spectacle where the Barbados Marketing Corporation because of what they considered a shortage of poultry in the country imported — this was last year — which created a glut.

If we could encourage our young people to produce, rather than to import, we could assist our country by not having to pay out to the USA anything like the sums of money which we paid out for poultry and creating a glut. We would be able to plan our production programme rather than guessing at it. We would know what our potential is; and corn, which is the basic and main ingredient for poultry feed could be grown on the land by young people.

Although the financial outlay, compared with what the Government is paying out and which it may not be getting back in terms of production immediately, and while they are going through the initial states of production the return cannot exceed what they pay out, at the same time the Government would find itself paying out a wage to these people.

While you are going through the initial stages of production your return cannot exceed what you pay out; but at the same time one must consider what these people produce in the country which would otherwise have to be imported, and the funds used to pay these young people would be kept in the country; and there is the fact that this money would not be any drain on the Treasury because you will be assisting in creating employment and reducing the gap in your balance of payments; and therefore it would go down as an economic benefit to the country.

I do not think that any money spent on providing employment for the youth of this country should be considered as money badly spent. I think that it would call for some form of planning. I do not think that it could be done on an *ad hoc* basis. If the plan is operating on a pilot scale you will be able to assess its usefulness to the youth of the country.

I will go further. There was a lot of talk about the Parks and Beaches Commission recently and the number of people employed there. These people have done an extremely good job because they have been able to keep our country clean. I want to say that it is not true that the young people of this country will not be interested in that type of employment. I

say that because anything that can be done today to assist a young man to feed himself or a young woman to feed herself or his brother or sister or mother they will do.

There was a time when the young people of this country were not interested in cutting canes. I have seen people of 15 or 16 years old leaving Richmond and Combermere during the Easter holiday and going to plantations asking for a job, whether it was tying canes, loading canes or cutting canes. I have seen boys 15 years old going with collins to plantations to cut canes.

I am introducing that point to show that there is nothing that a hungry young man or woman would not do. Five or six years ago it would have been an insult to tell them to go and cut canes on a plantation. It is not so today. We were able to harvest our cane crop this year without bringing in people from St. Vincent or St. Lucia to cut these canes and tie them and load them on the trucks. The fact is that now money is needed, they are paid reasonable wages and they will do it.

This is not the time that you can say that our young people are not interested in manual labour. They are interested in manual labour and it is for us to provide employment for young people which is rewarding. The hon. member for St. Philip South earlier today made reference to spending power and the benefit of the \$9.60 which a man would save through the reduction in bus fares. His statement was criticised by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

I am also saying that employment in some form or fashion would not only increase the spending power of young people, but would give them a spending power which they do not have now. The spending power they have now is because their parents have a job; but the cost of living today in Barbados, as is the case in all countries of the world, is high; and the little supplementary amount which a young boy or girl can take home can add a lot to that of their parents.

In a lot of cases where these youngsters are walking the streets, their parents are unemployed or under-employed. The Leader of the Opposition said today that he thought that the \$5 million spent to subsidise bus fares could be used for something of a higher priority. His talk about not having priorities right is one thing. If the Minister of Communications and Works does not have his priorities right, as the

member for St. Thomas said, he does not have his priorities right himself; because when he talks about using the \$5 million in the field of Public Health, when he says to use that \$5 million for the employment of the youth of the country I would agree with him.

3.40 p.m.

I am not telling the Minister of Communications and Works that he should not give a standardized bus fare. I am saying, spend the \$5 million in standardized bus fares but look for \$5 million more a year to spend on the young people of this country. That is what I am saying; and that would be getting the priorities right because there is no point talking about the health of the country where we almost have a free national health service. There is no doubt about it. The fellow who does not want to pay for it today does not pay for it because it is provided by this Government.

What I am saying is that what the hon. member for St. Thomas is recommending that should be spent in national public health, he should be recommending that it should be spent on the young people of this country. I would have supported him because it is imperative that serious consideration be given to taking the young people off the street. If they are not taken off the street, Mr. Speaker, it is going to be very sad because a hungry man can be a vicious man and although Barbadians have a lot of tolerance and patience, at some time or other, if these young people continue to be looking for employment and feel frustrated because they cannot find employment in this country, they will become vicious. We do not want what is happening in Jamaica to happen here.

Some people may feel that I should not deal with this Resolution. Some people may feel that it is not serious enough to pay any attention to it, but I am telling you that at least ten young people come to me every day – and my home is out of the way. I am not in Central Bridgetown where they can get a bus to come and see me. They come to my home every day, at least ten a day, asking whether I could find some form of employment for them. I cannot go into my constituency any day unless two or three dozen young people come to me to say 'skipper, cannot you find anything for us to do?' And this is the pattern. So you can multiply seven days a week where ten people are coming to you and you are only one representative asking for employment; you can see what is happening; and there is not one member of this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, who would stand up here today and deny, if he or she has a conscience, that this unemployment situation is not serious

is not serious amongst the young people of this country. It happens every day. If we do not do something about it it is going to result in violence or something of the sort. I would not like to see it, but the people are hungry, they are looking for employment and, whilst I am supporting the \$5 million being spent on the bus fares which the hon. member for the Opposition does not feel is of high priority — I feel that it is a priority. I also feel that we should meet the other priority of providing — even if we have to spend that \$5 million a year providing some form of employment for the young people; even if you put them in the street to pick up the stones from puncturing your car tyres, let them get some form of employment, let them get food to eat.

The point is that the money is not going any place out of this country. It is circulating in the economy. It is true that one or two of the things which they buy would be imported but these are the necessities of life. Whether you import it or not they will have to buy it. If you can produce it locally you will not import it; and what I am saying is that if these people are encouraged to cut down your food import bill which is very high, and you paid them and they bought proper clothing and so on — and the cloth will have to come from outside — they are cutting down the cost of food which they will be providing here on an agricultural project, they can significantly reduce the cost of food and I dare say that if the Government can put the brains — and there are many brains and good brains — they can put them together to come up with a programme whereby useful employment could be provided for these people. I do not know what the recommendations would be. I would have to sit down, and, I would be pleased to sit on a Committee to come up with proposals to satisfy the needs of the young people as far as employment is concerned. I would be pleased to do that, and I know that as far as the money spent in this direction is concerned, it would be well spent.

There was a suggestion that we should have these young people placed in some form of national service. Not that they would be taught to use guns to gun down anybody but you would be getting them together, they would be given something on which to live, and they would be given some form of general training on a national basis so that they themselves could be equipped for the future. I am not talking about arms, but I think that we should sit around the table, have these problems threshed out, and come up with proposals to solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say here that I mentioned in the preamble to this Resolution that the Minister of Education did mention training for the young people and I mentioned that the young people do not only want training but they need food, drink and shelter.
3.50 p.m.

This was not intended to be a criticism of the steps taken by the Minister of Education. I want to point out here that the Minister of Education is responsible for training. He is responsible for the education of the young people of this country. What I am trying to establish here is that after he has trained them — and I compliment him on his efforts to get these people trained — after he has had these young people trained, what happens? I do not know if he can depend on private enterprise to industrialise the country, I did mention at some time previously that the industrialisation programme of Barbados had slowed down some time in 1974. I was told by someone very closely associated with the IDC that the programme accelerated its pace late 1975 and early 1976, but even with an acceleration in the pace of industrial development, even if we carried industries to St. Philip, even if we abandoned the agricultural project at Six Cross Roads as the hon. member for St. Philip North would want us to do, even if we carry the industries to St. Philip, we cannot provide them as swiftly as the needs of the young people of this country would warrant, because we depend on private entrepreneurship to provide these industries and I think, Mr. Speaker, that that is why we have not yet got in this country a proper vegetable processing plant.

Throughout the country we have people producing vegetables. We have even had the bad taste of seeing one farmer produce carrots and sheet the road with the carrots because there was no market for the carrots, but do you know, Sir, that whilst that was happening we still had people importing carrots in cans in this country, and we still had people working in Government Departments ordering these carrots in cans to be used in Government institutions? This has been happening in this country and farmers have been producing carrots and sheeting the road with them. Do you know why? Because we have not been able to get any private entrepreneur to come into Barbados and establish a vegetable processing plant, which can be labour intensive.

The Government started the yam processing plant on a pilot scheme. We have been able to export yams, and that yam processing plant

employs a considerable number of people; one product. We export carrots to Guyana, we export onions, we have not yet started exporting the cocktail onions, but we can do it because as it stands now we plant in October to reap from early February, March, April and early May. As my friend, the hon. member for St. Joseph will bear me out, if we planted onions in June we would have a smaller type onion which would be the type of onion which could be used for cocktail onions, because they do not bulb very well unless they are planted in October, November and December, because the bulbing of onions depending to a large extent on the length of the night, so where from May, June, July, August, where we have short nights the onions do not bulbs as large, therefore we can plant onions but we would get cocktail onions, but what is the point of getting the cocktail onions when nobody in Barbados wants to have a small onion to use in his kitchen, but there is still use to which the onions could be put. If we produce them and we establish a processing plant to process and can these onions, they can be put to use and we can have an export market. Instead of hotels importing cocktail onions to be used for cocktails we would produce them locally and satisfy the local market as well as an export trade.

I was dealing with carrots. Why should the school meals programme or the hospital use diced carrots imported into this country in cans when the young people of this country could produce and process all the carrots that we can consume, and provide some for export? I said the answer to it is this, because private enterprise is hesitant to establish in this country food processing plants. I say and I recommend that serious consideration be given to establishing food processing plants and making use of the young people of this country in these very plants because private enterprise is not going to do it and I call now on Government to give serious consideration to establishing several plants in this country, which will have two advantages. It will be providing employment for the young people, Mr. Speaker, and at the same time it would reduce the wastage which this country on a limited amount of agricultural land experiences. (Mr. CRAIG: Be careful, Joy, with this talk about agricultural land). You don't know what you are talking about, boy.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Who is the boy in here?

Mr. EDWARDS: Not you, Sir, you can rest assured that I would not be addressing you that way. Mr. Speaker, I said that it would reduce the

wastage which this country experiences from the produce of our limited agricultural land in Barbados. This is what I mean. We hear the BMC on Thursday nights, through Miss Andrea Gollop, telling you what is on special at the BMC, and when the glut is on you will see a special on cabbage at 20 cents a pound. which is very good for the consumer, but over and above that cabbage which is made available to the consumer at 20 cents a pound, and the BMC can market 6,000 pounds, another 6,000 is thrown under the pigs because there is no immediate market for it. 4.00 p.m.

The average person producing carrots, beets, and especially things like cabbage, tomatoes, depends on the rainfall pattern. Many people in Barbados do not have irrigation. When the small farmer grows some cabbage or carrots, he does that when every Tom, Dick and Harry is also producing things. We have had a little rain in the north today, and before this week is out you will see every small farmer trying to plant beans, carrots and so on. It means that, as far as beets are concerned, seven weeks from today there will be a glut of beets. As far as carrots are concerned, four months from today there will be a glut of carrots. Three months from today there will be a glut of cabbage. Everybody tries to produce when he gets rain. We cannot consume all that we are producing immediately they become ripe. If there was a means of processing what we produce, then that wastage would not be evident. Further encouragement would be given to agricultural co-operative enterprise, as far as irrigation is concerned. You would find that some vegetable farmers in certain districts would get together and do what the Shadow Minister for Agriculture has been preaching. We must form co-operatives and operate an irrigation scheme on a co-operative basis, because we know that there would be a continuous market for what they produce.

Mr. Speaker, what do we get? Let us wait until we get the rain; let us plant things and have a glut. (1) It is not rewarding the farmer; (2) It is a waste of lands, money and energy; and (3) We still have to import out-of-season what we could have preserved by having processing plants established. I am sure that the advocate for St. Philip North would agree with me that he would want to see a vegetable processing plant in St. Philip North. St. Joseph would want to see one up there, and everybody would be shouting for a vegetable processing plant, which could give employment to young people in this country. In St. Philip there is irrigation and good vegetable land as long as you can control the rice grass, the

nut grass, and the devils' grass. It is good vegetable land, but it would call for irrigation. The average farmer is chary about putting in irrigation because the cost of irrigation is very high today. At one point of time irrigation could have been put in for \$6,000.00. A proper irrigation system now to irrigate, say, 50 acres of land would cost something like \$50,000.00. It is rather expensive, so it would take a group to get together and irrigate an area for vegetable cultivation, but it would pay and be encouraging to the farmer where there is a market. There is a gap in our agricultural output.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry that I have to remind the hon. member that I think he is a bit off target. I am still to hear something about young persons and gainful employment.

Mr. EDWARDS: Thank you, Sir. I am showing the benefits that can accrue if young people can be encouraged to work in agriculture and in the processing plants. I am not merely telling you that there is need to have employment for the young people without making some form of suggestion. To tell you, Sir, and this Chamber that we should have a coal mine and employ the young people in coal mines, or that we should have an oil refinery and we should dig down into the earth and you would find oil would not be realistic. I am talking about what is realistic, what is reasonable, and what we can embark on almost immediately. My suggestion is that, since we have land at our disposal, and since we are importing a lot of the food we eat, and since we would like to reduce our food imports, then one of the answers is to establish processing plants and encourage the young people in this country to go back to agriculture.

I make the point that we cannot depend on private enterprise to establish processing plants for us. Look at the problems which we have had in getting the pork processing plant at Edgehill established! It was supposed to be an operation to employ the young people of this country.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am only reminding you that the Standing Orders still apply. You have three minutes to complete your speech. You have had ample time.

Mr. EDWARDS: I thought I was introducing the Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am working according to the Standing Orders of this House. Private Members' Business, Standing Order 30(7).

Mr. EDWARDS: All right, Sir. I am going to wind up. I am saying that there is a gap between production and marketing, and that gap is processing. This seems to me to be a good opportunity to get young people employed in the processing of agricultural, and if Government can establish processing plants in this country, then it could take some of its own land and encourage the young people to use land, whether on a co-operative basis or not, and do what is done in Venezuela. The Government would be able to provide the young people with a weekly minimum wage. From the profits they could repay the input that went into the project. I think that a Committee should be appointed to consider additional suggestions.

I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.
4.10 p.m.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, in seconding this Resolution, I have appreciated all that the hon. member has said, but I do regret to state that we were not dealing strictly with agriculture, and the impression I got was that his contribution was almost based fully on agriculture. Now we are dealing, Sir, with employment for the youth of this country

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I wonder if it is ethically correct for the hon. member to get up and second a motion which he now criticizes by saying that the member was not speaking on the Resolution, but spoke on agriculture.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is his privilege.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I am not responsible for the ignorance of the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will ask the hon. member to withdraw that remark and let us have a proper debate. Nobody in here is ignorant as far as I am aware.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, if it is your desire that I should withdraw the remarks, I withdraw them. But I am saying, Sir,....

Mr. BOLDEN: I would like that they be expunged from the records.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two hon. members are on their feet. I am the Speaker in here and I am to decide if it is to be erased or not. Let the hon. member continue.

Mr. WEEKES: What I am saying, Sir, is that I associate myself with the views expressed by the hon. member to a certain extent, but I want to say that with inflation throughout the world, even with developed countries you have unemployment, and when we consider the size of Barbados which is approximately 166 square miles and when we consider how densely populated this Island is, we should not come to the conclusion or give the community the impression that we the members of the Government are not doing our utmost to solve this problem. In New York with all the resources of that country, you have thousands who are unemployed. In the United Kingdom you have millions unemployed, and therefore to think that we are the only country with unemployment would be to a certain extent giving the public the wrong impression.

Now only a few weeks ago the Ministry of Education brought in experts to deal with the unemployed youth of this country, and the Minister of Education has a report on that matter. I do not think that we can deal with the unemployment situation of this country in an adhoc manner, and consequently the Government is doing all that lies in its power to solve the problem of unemployment. But again, Sir, we have to consider the resources of this country. We have only two industries to depend on — tourism and sugar.

Now, Sir, we are dealing with school leavers. The Ministry of Education hopes to deal with the unemployment situation in a comprehensive manner. If you deal with the matter in an adhoc manner, you will find out that approximately 100 people or less will be employed, and therefore it is a very ticklish and important matter, and one which calls for careful consideration. Nobody likes to know in any country that you have a large percentage of the population unemployed, and I who have come from the masses would say that it grieves me when I walk around and see the various youngsters at the various street corners, at the various shops and all of them are thinking about employment, but no magic can do it. It is something which we have got to realise is a serious matter in this country. It can increase the crime rate; it can do all kinds of harm to those who are in a better position. I do not feel that the Government can do everything possible to alleviate this problem. It is my opinion that the private employers must also assist the Government in trying to create employment for the youngsters of this country. All of us I know would be happy to know if the Government

could find employment for all youngsters, but there is one point which we must face and it is this: that every cent which we vote in here has to come from the taxpayers and as a matter of fact it is all well for imposters to go around the country and telling people that they can make hell into heaven, that they can overturn Barbados overnight.

The problem is this: where must the money come from? Where are we going to get it? None of us perhaps including myself likes to pay taxes, and when we are thinking of the amenities of life, better roads, more street lights, more water services and all those things, we have to think about funds.

4.20 p.m.

This Resolution has my whole hearted support, but I must say that this is a colossal task, and it is one which the Government will have to study carefully; and I have no doubt that with the present Minister of Education and with the very comprehensive report which he now has in his possession on this important issue, that something tangible will be done for the benefit of the young people of this country.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, surely Sir, one would have thought hearing the two speeches today from the member for St. Philip South, that his attire conveys the impression that Santa Claus has come to town. Now, I have spent some 10 years in this Chamber and on no occasion have I ever heard the voice of the hon. member on any two occasions on any issue on one day far less twice a month. I am told by some of my colleagues that he has to justify his relatives visit in the gallery here today to hear him speak and also to justify the very beautiful coat that he has on today.

Mr. SPEAKER: That has absolutely nothing to do with the Resolution.

Mr. CRAIG: I agree that it has absolutely no bearing on the Resolution, but that was only the preamble to my speech. If I were a backbencher in a Government and also if I become a backbencher in the next Government, which means that if I win a seat and they do not give me a portfolio (Mr. SMITH: They will not give you a portfolio?) If I were a backbencher in the Government or a Minister in Government for some 15 years and had the important portfolios of Agriculture, Lands, Fisheries, Housing and Communications and Works from 1961 until this day — if this Resolution were put before the

public of this country, the Barbados Labour Party could return to power on this issue.

Listen to the Resolution. After 15 years the member for St. Andrew, as a backbencher and as a former Minister, now brings in this Resolution, something which we preached in the past 10 years in our manifesto in which we said "time for a decision". Listen to the Resolution. Whereas there is an ever increasing number of young people leaving school and who are in search of employment — that is a fact. And whereas industry is not providing enough jobs to meet the employment demands of these youths — that also is a fact. And whereas they are becoming dissoluted, frustrated and concerned about their future, and whereas the Minister has been prepared to call upon the young unemployed people to register — not to get work for them — with a view to having them trained. There is nothing about work yet. The final part of this Resolution is that whereas these youths do not only need training, but also food, drink, clothing and shelter, be it resolved that this House call on Government to initiate immediately a programme whereby these young people can obtain gainful employment.

In the hon. member's address there was an aside that I did not understand; but I am going to show him that I understand now. It was he as a Minister just under 15 years, long or short, who owned four plantations in this country with approximately 1,000 acres of land, and the land at that time was producing food for the country; and the member for St. Andrew, along with his wicked Cabinet took it upon themselves to give the lands up to the money sharks of this country whereby he has become a millionaire in a very short time.

Now today he has decided to bring a Resolution and to make a dog eared speech in this Chamber. That is something that he should have been discussing with the Minister of Planning rather than taking some people's lands and giving them up and selling them in real estate and making himself a millionaire.

I am talking about the young people. As a matter of fact I do not believe that they come to your office today and tell you that you are a spent force. It is he and the Minister of Planning who are responsible for a Resolution of this nature while this party was saying for years that the young people were without employment. It is not a question that this Chamber has to answer for. It is a question for his Government. No oil crisis existed at that time. In 10 years the

Democratic Labour Party has introduced new standards of dishonesty in Government.

Mr. CRAIG: In 1966 when he was in a position to own all of these acres he should have been able to influence his Government's policy.

Mr. EDWARDS: I have never owned 10 acres of land.

Mr. SPEAKER: No point of order. That is a point of elucidation.

Mr. CRAIG: Let him keep denying that he was not any owner of land.

Mr. EDWARDS: I have never been the owner of a plantation.

Mr. CRAIG: I am saying that the hon. member has interests in these projects. It is widely known in this country that he has interest in four plantations. On no occasion did I hear the hon. member say in here that it would be possible to grow food on these lands to provide employment for the young people of this country.

4.30 p.m.

At no time. The hon. member is too busy with the big shots in this country and therefore denies the small man in this country the opportunity of really providing himself with a proper way of life. That is the problem.

Now he walks in here today with a Resolution — a shameless member of the other side — shameless is he to come in here with a Resolution talking about providing food, clothing and shelter for young people..... (*Aside*)

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Those asides you must keep to yourselves.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make this point. I never got paid for selling an inch of the very land that he is talking about, and he got paid for selling some. I can bring evidence to show where he took people to those plantations to sell some of the very land he is talking about. He does not have any sort of integrity about himself, but to come in here and talk, when he sold some of the land.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point made.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, it is commonly known in Bridgetown; it is a fact in Bridgetown that I was and still is a real estate agent. Now what is wrong if Nick Parravicino and Realtors Limited and Holiday and Generals Limited are registered real estate agents in this town and I have a company that is also a real estate company, and people buy land from them. He himself was involved in it. What are we to do with if I sold land, a house, race horse or a car or a donkey. That is my chosen vocation. What we are concerned about in here is this, that he owns or owned a thousand acres of land and on no occasion have I heard him raise voice in here about a processing plant to process these same carrots and beets that he talks about now whereby young people would be involved in earning their daily bread. At no time, Sir; but now in 1976 he comes in here with a dog-ear Resolution saying that he is interested in young people getting gainful employment and about a processing plant should have been brought about by the Government. He should have been telling the Government that long ago. He should not be saying that now, because he is the person as a Minister who sat in the Cabinet and made a decision, and this is what should have been hinted, but he was too busy with other activities. You talk about I sell land for you? Man, I wish I could sell for more people. If I heard of a plantation which was for sale now I would like to sell it. I earn my bread honestly; but what I am not going to do is this, I am not going to try to make fools out of this Assembly or make fools out of the country, because you are in here today talking on a Resolution about food, shelter and clothing for young people. We do not think about young people alone. We are called the champions of old age pensioners. We talk about the young, the adults and the older heads. We look after people, period; but you with a vote-catching Resolution come in here talking a bundle of nonsense wasting time from 2.30 until twenty minutes after four. Wasting people's time about your wanting to get young people to get meaningful employment. To whom should you carry that but to Cabinet? Who should be blamed but the Government? They stand guilty before the Bar of this country. They stand guilty for your Resolution in which you say young people want food, clothing and work or they will become frustrated; and you are begging them not to use guns now. You forget Sydney Alleyne in 1966 when all like you were saying that the Opposition should be sprayed with bullets and acid? And talking about you don't want any guns now? You have cutlasses and guns on the young people up in Norwood Plantation

shooting at them, and now you are talking about you do not want the young people to get dissolutioned. They must get dissolutioned when you have a government that has completely shocked its bolt. There is no argument to that. I do not pay the member for St. Philip South any attention because, you know.....

Mr. EDWARDS: On a point of order, Sir. It is unfortunate that members come in here to shelter under privilege to make statements which they cannot go outside and make. The hon. member said I had young people at Norwood Plantation shooting at them. This is a deliberate lie, and I would like you to ask the hon. member to withdraw such statement, because an hon. member — if he is honourable at all — cannot come in here to lie on another hon. member.

Mr. SPEAKER: All members in here are honourable. That is one; and when the hon. member for St. James was speaking he was speaking in general. He did not say the hon. member for St. Andrew. I am listening attentively because if he, you or anybody mash the crease, bales are coming off. Let the hon. member proceed.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am so glad to hear you say that you are listening to this speech attentively because when the member for St. Andrew and the member for St. Philip South were speaking I saw you dozing. It was a lengthy speech lacking in content and depth.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry. I was not dozing. I am aware of everything that is taking place, and I will remind the hon. member that his speech will have to be concluded in three minutes.

Mr. CRAIG: That is quite all right, Sir. The others could have had twenty minutes more. I am going to talk for three minutes and fix up you in three minutes.

Let me give the hon. member for St. Andrew another idea which the Barbados Labour Party had proposed ten years ago. This was the message from Bernard St. John — a circular — to the people of Barbados. No oil crisis, nothing at all. Things were going good, but the ten year Development Plan of the Barbados Labour Party was running out so your ideas were going out with them. Listen to what it says: 'In addition the evidence is now extremely clear' — 1971 Sir — 'that in the important sectors of the economy

Barbados is in a period of depression.' Five years ago, Sir. This was Senator St. John who had foreshadowed that Barbados was in a state of depression. I do not mind the Government members and some of their political parrots going around talking about an oil crisis.

The Prime Minister — I never believed anything he ever says — said there was no oil crisis. Senator Taitt said there was one; but I know both of them at the same time. Winston Jordan the cartoonist from the Nation will deal with them very well; put them all in a pot and throw some water on them and put them to boil. This is what he said, Sir.

4.40 p.m.

This is what he said, Sir. Moreover, not only is agriculture at its lowest ebb — the Minister of Agriculture at that time was the hon. member for St. Andrew — it was at its lowest ebb but he had plantations that used to provide the same carrots, beets and lettuce and cabbage and tomatoes to reduce the import bill of the country that you can can and sell to the tourists here in Barbados and put on the supermarket shelves and help reduce the price. You were not thinking about that then, you had race horses going around the paddock and building houses at Sanford. I was selling some of the land for you so as to help you, and help myself also, I want to be honest with you, but you were not thinking of anything so, you could not think of any policy then, but now that you are at your lowest ebb politically you run in here with a ripped up resolution. If I were in your position I would never have brought this to the House of Assembly, I would have had a word with the Prime Minister, I would sit down and tell him what the position of the country is like as far as I could see, the young people are looking for meaningful and gainful employment, and that you should have a processing plant as they now have at Warren and that you would make sure that you employ a number of the young people, as you say, who were not averse to cutting canes or work in agriculture, to work on your farms and you supply to the country with its vegetable needs you spoke about.

Mr. SPEAKER: That brings us to the end of Private Members' Time, 4.45 p.m.

Mr. CRAIG: That means I will be able to speak next Tuesday, Sir, if there is a sitting, if the House is not prorogued.

RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

*On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA,
seconded by Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE,
Government Business was resumed.*

RESUMPTION OF COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. SPEAKER: When the sitting was suspended the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it automatically reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. LOWE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At the time of the interruption the hon. member, the Minister of Education was speaking and had brought to my notice an offence which was committed. I am now calling on the Hon. Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the remark which was complained about at the time of the interruption.

Mr. ADAMS: As I understand it, Sir, the hon. member complained not that my calling him a liar was untrue but that it was unparliamentary. If it is in the debate, because that was my point, Sir, it seems to me it was not taken down by the Reporter at all, since it was an Aside when you were on your feet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was also on his feet. If he were not on his feet I would not be asking him to withdraw it.

Mr. ADAMS: I am not quarrelling with you, Sir, if it is in the official debate I would be glad to have it withdrawn. I do not think you would get it expunged so easily because it was a long exchange relating to it, but if the hon. member objects to being called a blasted liar on his account of events at which he was not present, I will withdraw it in Parliament.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That matter has been withdrawn and the hon. member may proceed.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, I think I object to being called a liar, but nothing that the Leader of the Opposition calls me will ever affect me. It is just that he must behave himself in Parliament. If he has an insatiable desire to be Prime Minister of this country I haven't got that. I was saying that in the Queen against Swain, his father who was representing the accused referred to the accused as a monkey and that he was shot because the defendant thought he was shooting at a monkey.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, I am objecting to this on the grounds at least of irrelevance. It is on record that people have been sent to prison in America for slandering George

Washington when he was dead. Unfortunately, we do not have these laws in Barbados, but what the Hon. Minister has said is a lie. In any case it is irrelevant, and I submit on a point of order that it is irrelevant to any business before the House. It is not relevant to the Transport Board resolution and I submit it should be withdrawn.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Mr. ADAMS: Irrelevance is not a point of order, Sir? That an hon. member is making a speech about something that is not before the House? (Hon. F. G. SMITH: You mentioned monkey in here first).

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am only replying to a speech made by him in which at one time in an Aside he said he heard monkeys chattering, and then he introduced monkeys in here. If now he is afraid of the monkey talk now that the truth is coming home, that is his business, because everybody who knew of that trial knew that this was a legitimate defence. Nobody is quarrelling with his father or slandering his father, his father was putting up a defence in a murder case to save a man's life and was saying that the defendant thought the black boy who was shot was a monkey. He was studying to be a judge in England, but he took so long to pass.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir, this is really overdoing it. Has this got anything to do with the debate, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am going to ask the hon. member.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Let us get this straight. All I am saying is that the public is waiting to hear the tape to hear me call the people in the City monkeys. I will pay for it if you will produce it and have it vetted by a proper and impartial bunch of people to show that I called the people in the City monkeys. Until you do that your credibility is ended.

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I would wish that we get on with this debate without hon. members trying to monkey with the monkey of each other's monkey.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think that is absolutely no point of order also.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I will pass on, but when you get people like the hon. member, even last week when I pointed out to him that he said that I was to make a speech at Sanford and when

they were calling for me I was scratching the earth looking for five cents, I pointed out to the member that I was at a Church Fair at the Rocks, he didn't even have the common decency to get up and apologise for making such a libellous and dishonest statement on a public platform.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir, he is misrepresenting what was said. I apologised for saying he was scratching about for five cents up at Sanford, I said I was sorry I got the place wrong where he was scratching for the five cents.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Do you see what you are dealing with? And he wants to lead a Government of this country without the basic decency.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will not put up with this any longer.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I have been in this thing long. When he was studying to be a judge and spending all these years to be a judge I was around here, so I wouldn't expect anything now from him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am expecting to hear something about this \$5 million to assist the people.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I won't be long, because as I say, the Opposition cannot deny or vote against this. They talk about priorities, and the member for St. Thomas is suggesting that the \$5.3 million should be used to set up a national health service. I am insured, I carry health insurance. Thank God I have not been able to use it. The man who has to go to work every day to earn his living has to go to work, but the man who is ill may not be ill for ten years. I think, Mr. Chairman, you have kept remarkably good health. Won't you as a poor person prefer to have your bus fare subsidise than to wait for 40 years then to get sick? Every person, every working man, every domestic servant has to find herself on the job; every labourer, mason, carpenter has to find himself on the job. He is going to introduce a scheme to take care of them when they may never get ill, when every single day of their working lives they can feel the effect of the subsidisation of the bus fares.

4.50 p.m.

If he is a socialist as he pretends — I know that he pretends to be a socialist. The party in

Oxford to which he belonged were not socialists. He was a liberal. He has never had any connections with socialism at Oxford.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I was the Assistant Secretary of the Oxford University Labour Club, and associate of Mr. Attlee, Mr. Gaitskell and numerous others. Cannot the truth come out of the hon. member even by accident?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order!

Mr. ADAMS: He is lying all the time and continually lying.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: You heard about Attlee and Gaitskell through your father because your father was a labour leader. Look at the member for St. Philip North nodding support. You were never a socialist.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must take his seat.

Mr. SIMMONS: I want this for the record, Sir. I was not nodding. I was grinning my teeth back at him. The last thing he said in here about an animal was to call somebody a common dog. (*Asides*) You said that when Mr. Craig was speaking just now, I was grinning as one dog back at another dog, Sir. I was not acknowledging the nonsense he was talking.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely no point of order!

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The Leader of the Opposition was never any socialist. I will give you an example, Sir, of what I have been trying to point out. The working-class man who does not have a car — the Leader of the Opposition has said in this House that Barbados has more cars per square mile than the United States, which in itself is a tribute to the economic advancement of this country.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation, Sir. There must be some stage at which something is done about the hon. member.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It will be a stage when the Chairman takes the Rules of this House into his hands.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, when one says that Barbados has more cars to the square mile than the United States, all one is saying is that Barbados is much more densely populated than the United States. The United States has three million square miles and only two hundred and twenty-two million people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order; it is a point of elucidation.

Mr. ADAMS: I got up on a point of elucidation. It is no tribute to Barbados; it merely means that Barbados is a small area with a lot of people and roads in it.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: What the Leader of the Opposition was pointing out was that per head of the population we had more cars.

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order. I never said so and it is **not** true, and I know the facts while the hon. member does not. I said it had more cars per square mile because I was relating it to pollution. The debate was about air pollution and the emission into the air when the relevance of cars to the square mile can be seen. If I were talking about prosperity, I would have talked about cars per head. Barbados is 166 square miles with a lot of cars emitting carbon monoxide into the air. The United States is a big country.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I, at this stage, think it is a speech. All matters will pertain now to the Resolution for \$5,359,920.00.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am relating things, Mr. Chairman, to socialist priorities. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that we should take the \$5.3 million and use it for a health service which, up to this moment, is relatively free. What I am pointing out is that it is the working-class man who has to get to his job. The domestic servant who has to travel from Bank Hall to the Garrison. I do not have any problems. I pay the bus fare for my servant. I bet you that the Leader of the Opposition cannot say so.

Mr. ADAMS: My goodness! Mr. Chairman, why does not the hon. member leave me alone? I do not have any servants anyhow, but go and ask Mrs. Isalene Gaskin of Enterprise Road if I do not give her \$12.00 when the week comes to pay her bus fare to where I live. Why is the hon. member lying about things which he knows nothing about? You may pay yours for different reasons.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am going to get the truth out of you. At least you are coming round to some sort of socialist thinking. Of course, you do not like me and give them backpay when you get, too. Get up and say that you are doing that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now the hon. member.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I will not be long, Mr. Chairman. In the view of the Government, travelling is more important to the working-class man. There were people at the M.C.W. when I was there who have worked for years and years and never had a day's sick leave. They need the money to get to work. Now, if you have two people in a house working in town and they were paying 65cents a day to travel from St. Lucy and go back home that would be \$1.30 each a day. Now that it is sought to change the fare, those two persons would pay \$1.00 instead of \$2.60. If they have to come to work six days a week, they would have to pay \$2.60 by 6 which is \$15.60, and now they would have to pay \$6.00. When we talk about applying it to purchasing power, it means that that family would have \$9.00 left over which they could use for some other urgent and necessary expenditure. When he gets up and tries to fool you that this measure is not saving and putting more spending power in the average worker's pocket, he is talking nonsense.

In addition to that, the person who is at that level, the domestic servant or the labourer, pays minimal income tax. If the Leader of the Opposition is frightened that more tax will come from him that is something else. When the money is coming to subsidise this, it is invariably not coming, except indirectly, from the worker who, because of the children he has and because of his condition, does not pay much income tax. As far as income tax is concerned, those of us who can afford to pay must pay to support the working-class in this country and to spread the money throughout the economy. Nobody, who is a socialist, can have any objection to this. I think the Government is right in accepting at this point of time that in the difficulty which people are experiencing to make ends meet, to save them having to put money out in terms of bus fares will in a subtle way — and this is where Barbadians, I must say regrettably, do not accept, unless you put money in their pockets, that you are doing things to help them.

Let me give you another example. These are areas in which this Government has contributed to the welfare of the people. In my constituency I had a man with four children at Harrison

College, all free thanks to this Government. New school books came in. Two children were in the Sixth Form and two lower down. When the term started this man was butting about to find out where he was going to get the money to buy books before the announcement was made. When he added up the cost of the books which he got, he had saved between \$400.00 to \$500.00 which he would have had to look for to pay for his children's books at Harrison College.

Mr. Chairman, this is another area, but because we did not give the worker \$500.00, he does not appreciate that, by the free textbooks system, he is saving money which he would have had to look for to meet the needs of the children. It applies right across the board. It applies to subsidised bus fares for children; it applies to hot school meals — 10¢ for a meal that cost \$1.20. When you say that this Government is not doing anything, you will find that the Government is not taking up the money itself. If I work out what this Government has done for the people and for families which are usually large; if we gave them \$60.00 more and made them pay the cost for the school meal of \$1.10; the true bus fare and the free books, then they would still be out of pocket by a few dollars. That is what this Government is suffering from. The people like to have money in their pockets, but when you save them from having to spend it, you have not done much for them, as they are told. When you subsidise housing and give them a nice 3-bedroom house in the Farm for \$10.00 a week, you have done nothing for them. Sometimes I wish that Tom Shark would get them. I would like Tom Shark to get them for a few years, and then they would know what life is all about. Do you know how sharks gobble up sardines when they swim across?

I am trying to save the people from a fate worst than death in falling for this nonsense which you hear all the time. What is he saying? He is Isaiah the prophet now. Next year it is going up. Do you see the defence they are now working? You cannot argue with the people that we are not saving money for families, but on the platform they will say: "Look at that Government. They gave you 25cents, but as soon as election is finished, up goes the fare again!" Do you not know that some people would fall for that and believe that he is Isaiah the prophet, or something so? This is what hurts me that, as a lawyer, I can see him developing a defence and an attack on this. Sometimes I feel that the Government should close every Ministry the first of an election year. What can a Government

committed to work for the people, do in an election year that cannot be characterised as an election gimmick?

5 p.m.

I am coming in here again next week with a Resolution for \$2 million to establish a Students Revolving Loan Fund that students can borrow money to go to Oxford and Cambridge. Is that an election gimmick too? What can you do? Sometimes I want to throw my hands in the air and stop doing anything; don't go to the office, and when they are running through my constituency like a drove of wild animals, go behind them. They are travelling in packs like wolves, three, four and five everyday in people's constituencies. They do not have anything to do, but we have Ministries to run. Come in South Central boy! (*Asides*) Charles Hinds never cared for poor people yet.

I do not want to bore you, Mr. Chairman, because the Leader of the Opposition admits that he cannot vote against it. I have heard some snide remarks coming from the hon. member for St. Peter, but they dare not vote against this. The thing I would like to try is what happened the last time the House met when you spoke against the exchange of a little piece of land for a poor man. The member for Christ Church West spoke and the member for St. Peter spoke, and then all of a sudden they looked around here and saw that we did not have a quorum and voted against it. I would like to leave you without a quorum and let you vote against this and say you defeated the Government. It would be a good tactic to have a bare quorum and let you with your eight vote against this. I would dare you to. If I were here as Leader I would try it, but it would not make sense. If you have any responsibility or good sense I would risk it, but they are so foolish that they would do it in truth and then the poor people who could benefit from this Resolution would have to wait for another period. You have shown yourselves so irresponsible that I would not risk it. Do you think I would deprive the poor people the opportunity to soon get a 25 cents bus fare?

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution for the standardisation of bus fares as has been pointed out, is a simple Resolution which seeks to reduce the amount of bus fares which people who are using public transport which is provided by the three concessionaires who have been identified pay. This Resolution is seeking to reduce the burden of bus fares which people using the system of transportation carry.

This is an extremely useful Resolution from the point of view of those people who have got to use this form of transportation, particularly when it comes to people who have got to travel from the farthest parts of the Island on whose shoulders fall the heaviest burden of busfares; so one can imagine the tremendous relief which this will bring to this section of the population, and I would be failing in my duty, Mr. Chairman, if I did not rise to support the intention behind this Resolution, that is, to reduce the amount of bus fares which people have got to pay.

The savings which this would mean to people who are going to benefit from it and a calculation would indicate that the persons concerned, if they are going to be using the bus service on the basis of five days a weeks, will be in excess of \$400. This is going to be very important. Now what is also more important is that not only is this important from the point of view of people who have got to go to work daily, but it is also important from the point of view of people who have got to come into Bridgetown or who have got to use the bus service for any particular purpose. One cannot stay at home and get certain matters done which may be matters of importance which that person has to conduct. It is obvious that people will be required from time to time to leave their home, and if you can think in terms of people coming from St. Lucy into Bridgetown whether to get a certificate from the Registrar's office, because there are things which cannot be had in St. Lucy because of the centralised nature of Government Departments and the whole number of operations, then one can therefore see what relief this is going to make to a number of people.

Mr. Chairman, I think it is a move for which the Government should be congratulated and one which I am sure the people of this country would be very pleased about. I cannot go along, Mr. Chairman, with the view that people would not appreciate relief when relief comes, because if at one state a person is paying a certain level of bus fares and he realises in the process of time that the impact is going to be reduced considerably, then I am convinced and satisfied that it will be a tremendous appreciation of this measure, and I am sure that on this side we do not have to worry about the Opposition's tactics in trying to impress upon people that this is just an election gimmick. This is a matter about which we are serious and I am convinced that the people of this country would recognise that this is a matter and a measure which is done in an honest

attempt to reduce the cost of living. When one is talking in terms of the kind of impact which this would have and when one takes into consideration the slice which bus fares will have on the pay packet of the people, the minute that is put alongside what it will now be, the fact that this does not have to come out of the pay packet, it is obvious that people will have more money that they can spend and be able to do things which they had not been able to do.

The question of taxation has been raised because we have not come in here and asked for \$5 million or so in order to see that this particular project goes through. These things have got to be paid for. There is hardly any measure which can be introduced by this Government or any Government in Barbados or in any part of the world which will not require some measure of taxation. Now all it calls for, Mr. Chairman, is obviously proper management and to make sure that people who are earning money at the level at which they are can afford to pay taxes. This is the whole idea and philosophy behind what we are doing, that the people who can afford to pay taxes pay taxes to assist those who cannot, and I would like to commend the Government for this very important Resolution, because it is meaningful and will make a very important contribution not only to the wellbeing of many wage earners, but also to their families and to the quality of life which we are striving to improve in this community.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, not so long ago, I was on a panel at the University of the West Indies discussing the problems of violence in the Caribbean and on that same panel with me was the present Minister of Communications and Works who made the statement the night that some people know how to use gimmicks to obtain power, but once you are in power you soon find out that they have no overall plan for the society. I am prepared to categorise this Resolution as an attempt to be a gimmick to obtain the votes of the electorate, and I go further. In his speech in introducing the Resolution the Minister said and I will quote his words: "that in an election year any Government worth its salt is always doing things to capture votes, and I make no apology for introducing this Resolution at this time."

Now on the Order Paper for today there is a Resolution at Item 5 of Private Members' Business standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy urging the Government to consider the introduction of a standard bus fare

throughout Barbados so as to reduce the cost of travelling.
5.10 p.m.

He gave notice of his Resolution of the 2nd March, 1976. He spoke just now and did not even refer to his own Resolution calling for a standard bus fare. In the same month of March we debated the Estimates. This Resolution comes before us in the month of June as a supplementary to Head 19(1). If the Government knew way back in March when we were debating the Estimates that they wanted to introduce a standard bus fare, if they had done their planning and their home work, one would have expected a provision for that in the Capital Estimates that were put before the House in March. Yet there is no allowance for any sum in the vicinity of \$5 million such as we are being asked to vote today.

What I am saying is that the member for St. Lucy thought of this idea. He introduced a Resolution on the 2nd March. The Estimates were debated in March and there was no application under any item for a figure like this. So all of a sudden between the end of that debate and today the Government has decided to come and ask for this money.

Now, on May Day, when the Labour College houses were opened by the Prime Minister, he said on T.V. that there would be two fare stages, one at 25 cents and one at 50 cents. He is head of the Government. He is Chairman of the Cabinet. This matter must have been discussed in Cabinet if the Government were planning this as a legitimate part of its policy and not only as an adhoc piece of legislation to get the votes of the public. If he had discussed this with the Minister of Communications and Works and members of the Cabinet, on May Day, not even a month ago, he should have been in a position to come before the public and say that Cabinet had taken the decision to standardise bus fares at 25 cents and not to tell the public 25 cents and 50 cents.

I understand that subsequently the Minister had to tell the public that they might have heard in another place and on a different occasion 25 cents and 50 cents, but I say 25 cents. I say that obviously there has been in the Government's conception no concerted plan as to how to deal with the transport system. In 1973 there was the King Report. In 1973 there was the bus fares inquiry at which the leading proponent for the increased fares was the Transport Board; and it is necessary for me to deal with some of the issues of fare structure in Barbados because, in my

submission, the objectives of a reasonable fare rate are three.

As the Minister knows, because he must have read the book on transport economics, the three objectives are the protection of the consumer, secondly the protection of the utility and thirdly conformity to the fare rate in the public or national interest. Those are the three bases for a reasonable rate throughout the world.

We must be aware that when we are dealing with these three criteria, one must not forget that public transport is not a commodity. Public transport is a service; and having regard to the socialist arguments you have heard today on both sides of the House, I would say that where the Government is providing a service of this nature you cannot expect that the predominant criterion would be profit, and therefore there would have to be some consideration of subsidisation.

As regards the history of fares I would go back to 1955. In 1955 the maximum fare was 26 cents. In 1958 the maximum fare was 30 cents. In 1964 it was 32 cents and in 1970 it was 35 cents. All of this predated the oil crisis of 1973 and the subsequent state of economic depression which has followed.

In 1972 at the public inquiry the Transport Board proposed to the Public Utilities Board a fare structure as follows: for the first stage, 20 cents. For any two stages, 25 cents. For any three stages, 35 cents. For any four stages, 40 cents. That was in 1972 when the fleet of the Transport Board was even smaller than it is today, when the fleet of the Transport Board, according to the evidence then was smaller because a lot of them were going out of use because they had become obsolete.

The fare structure proposed to the Transport Board in 1972 was predicated on three principles which at the time were said to be mutually inconsistent. The principles were that the fare structure should be adequate, that it should be as equitable as possible to the travelling public and that it should be tolerable.

Now, on the assumption that the fare structure should be within the means of the lowest paid worker and therefore on the assumption that one is trying to get a fare structure which is tolerable, having regard to the principles then enunciated by the Transport Board, I would have to submit that the 25 cents is within the competence of the average travelling passenger. If it is accepted that you have to look

at the highest rate, then you will see that 25 cents is within the financial competence of the average member of the public, and a priori, the lowest fair would also be within the competence of the average person. So to get rid of the 10 cents, 15 cents and so on, the Transport Board and the Government in its wisdom decided to standardise the bus fares.

I am not quarelling with the standardisation. I am not even quarelling with the 25 cents except to say that the Minister has not shown us — unless he would do it in his reply — how he has arrived at the figure of 25 cents having regard to the fact that the King Report was published in 1974. In the King Report, in Appendix 4 the Committee took some items. Let me take one — insurances. They predicated in 1974 that the cost of insurance would be \$350,000 from 1974 to 1980.

5.20 p.m.

In the same Appendix there is a Head, fuel and oil. The basis of the King's Report forecast an Expenditure in 1973 in respect of fuel and oil, in 1974 \$900,000; that is what it would cost the Transport Board or, assuming that it took over all of the utilities, that it would cost the new authority to run the three groups of buses, the Elite, the Rocklyn and the Transport Board — 1974, \$900,000; 1975 \$990,000; 1976, \$1,090,000, going up suddenly to \$1,500,000 in 1980.

Now at page 11 of the Report the King Committee — and it is important to read this, Sir. The King Committee say: 'Appendix 1 to this report shows a projected outcome from operations for the years 1974 to 1980 inclusive ending in terms of net cash positions. This projection is based on the following assumptions which are recommended elsewhere in this Report for adoption.' So before they made the recommendation, based on this was the introduction of a standardized bus fare of 25 cents.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have three minutes longer.

Mr. SIMMONS: All right, Sir. They set a single uniform fare rate structure at selected points; a reduction of the rate fare for school children, the operation of the entire transport system by a single concessionaire, settlement by the Government of all outstanding liabilities of the Transport Board, together with the Government bearing the cost of the initial

acquisition of serviceable units acquired from the Elite Bus Company and the Rocklyn Bus Company.

On the projection of a single uniform fare of 25 cents which was proposed, now listen to what they have come here with, Sir. In 1972 they said it is proposed for the years 1974, 1975 and 1976, 25 cents with increases 30 cents for 1977 — this is page 12 of the Report — and 1978. Twenty cents for 1979 and 1980, with the fares for school children reduced from 15 cents to 10 cents from 1974 to 1980.

So then this is part of 1973 projection that after 1976, forgetting questions of considerations of oil crisis, increase in maintenance costs, — in 1973 when the Committee had it clearly within its calculations that in 1977 and thereafter the bus fares would have to be increased; and we have not heard a single word from the Minister as to how he could come answering this postulation of the King Committee in 1973, and 1976 now that there have been vast increases in operating cost.

Mr. SPRINGER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to be able to take this entire Resolution out of the next General Election. That is the first thing I would like to do. Mr. Chairman, in the year 1962 I was appointed a member of the Transport Board and the minimum bus fare at that time was four cents, and I believe the maximum was 20 cents or eighteen cents, something like that; and for as long as I can remember, as recently as last year or this year on the floor of this House I asked for a reduced and standard bus fare. I even went so far as to say that if the Government did not find itself with enough funds as to subsidise bus fares, people in St. Michael and the urban areas who were for the most part better paid, better housed and better fed than the people living in the rural areas should be asked to pay a little more to relieve some of the hardships of the people living in the outlying districts.

I went that far because that was my feeling. I said it was unkind to ask a hawker to pay \$1.20 a day to come to Bridgetown to sell limes, lettuce and seasoning. I felt primarily, and I remember mentioning specifically St. Peter and St. Lucy, that there were people living in those districts and working in industrial parks in Bridgetown who were getting in in the vicinity of \$30 a week, and to ask those people to pay 25% of their salary in transportation, left them with nothing after purchasing lunch in Bridgetown. That was my feeling then and it is my feeling in 1976; it was my feeling, I believe, when bus fares moved from four cents to eight cents. I always

felt that transport was a service which had to be paid for in the same way that your health service at the hospital and your education in schools have to be paid for, and I do not compromise in any way with my feelings or with anybody on that issue.

Whether it can be called an election gimmick or not, whether it is in truth and in fact a gimmick or not, the fact is that when it is passed by this House of Assembly today and Senate vote for it on Thursday and the general public who use the public transport get in the buses next week, it will be 25 cents per trip. That to me is the important thing.

I have been unfortunate enough — if I can say that — to belong to a party that believe in gimmicks. But the gimmicks work. When we talked about free secondary education, that was a gimmick; but it works. Last year in the Budget when the Prime Minister said 'School books free', that too was a gimmick.
5.30 p.m.

When we said hot meals were free and we asked people to pay ten cents they argued that they were not free in truth because they had to pay ten cents. That too was a gimmick, but my advice to the Party to which I belong would be to keep gimmicking and keep giving the people services and benefits. That is important.

Having put that part of the question as I see it, Mr. Chairman, the next important phase to me is the nationalisation of the entire transport system of this country. I feel there are 1,200 people approximately up there working at some very unusual hours. You can always see a conductor or driver on the road, earliest in the morning or latest at night, and I would like to feel that not very far from now, even if it is going to be another election gimmick, that this mass of employed people who supply a service to the people of this country whether it rains or shines, whether it is election or not, whether there is a hurricane warning or not, that this mass of people who supply this service day in and day out be drawn into the regular role of public employees in its truest sense.

As a member of that Board I am aware that because of the large number of people employed, and because of the large number of people to whom you have to supply a service, that there are several and varied problems. I do not believe that standardisation of bus fares at

any level, even if it is free, is going to solve all the problems. As a matter of fact, I will not be surprised if in the initial stages problems are created. I have confidence in the workers of this country. I have every reason to believe that commuters who use the transport system will appreciate that they have a responsibility to make this scheme succeed. I can see at certain periods when the buses used to be empty with bus fares at 40 cents and 90 cents, I can see those buses travelling to and from Bridgetown with people in them, and while it is true that some people think that the only way to prove that a system, or for that matter any device, is cheap is to abuse it, I am sure that the people for whom this service is being supplied will appreciate it and I will expect, and I ask faithfully, that those people employed to manage at the top, to run during the middle, the transport system in this country, and the people who use it, to make sure that in taking advantage — and when I say taking advantage I do not mean abusing — of the cheapness of the rate, do not do anything to retard what I consider the most important phase of transport in this country, that is, its nationalisation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. EASTMOND: Mr. Chairman, I have heard a lot of talk this afternoon about gimmicks and winning votes, but I really wonder if the Minister has given very serious thought to this, the large amount of money to standardise bus fares, because in my humble opinion from what I have been hearing all around the place or in most quarters, it is not going to win them any votes, it is going to make them lose votes, and it is such a pity when one like me sitting on the other side of the fence can see quite clearly what is happening. It is a pity that some of the other persons who are there sitting maybe on the back benches, or even sitting at Cabinet, cannot sometimes look closely at some of these schemes and see the various implications. How this is going to make them lose votes for one is that the Minister should have brought a projection to this House showing what this is going to cost the taxpayers. We know that he is asking for over \$5 million, but as taxpayers I think we are entitled to know what it is going to cost us over a period of maybe three years.

I have heard that the bus service is supposed to be nationalised. If we are going into nationalisation and going into it this way, I think it is time that Government present us with a policy paper so that those of us who

have the desire to work and the inclination to make money will stop to let Government go ahead and do as they like, because someone has to produce the money, and we in Barbados cannot expect to go ahead with nationalisation and implementing plans like Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad who have natural resources. Our natural resources are the people of this country. When we go on nationalising various things in a very clever manner, what is going to happen? Again I repeat, the people who really want to contribute to their country will not be able to do so. I have worked with the Minister who has brought this before the House and I have known him to be a very level-headed person, but it is a pity that someone did not criticise some of the points or criticise the amount of money at this time, because when the Prime Minister is making statements about subversive action coming into this country and what will happen to us, one would think that the money is needed to protect the country, and at least it is time that we educate the Barbadians to be true nationals. If they cannot be nationalistic one wonders why.

5.40 p.m.

If they cannot be nationals, one wonders why. Perhaps it is because of the freenesses. Are we going to give people freenesses all the time instead of showing them how they can be independent, work for themselves, and make a true contribution to our country? People are taking all the freenesses you intend to give. You have had your lesson in the recent by-election where a lot of freenesses were given away. The people took them, and one would have thought that it would have been a lesson to the Government. Talking and trying to say we can do this and we can do that is fine, but bringing this matter to the House at this time, especially in an election year and especially with what is happening in the Caribbean area when we need to keep all the money we have in order to train our people to defend our country if — of course, one does not know really. Someone may be crying "Wolf, wolf" when there is no wolf, but we have to be serious.

I wonder what is going to happen to the few people who own pickups who have been earning a living through making trips up and down the country? What will happen to the private concessionaires? If they have not given adequate service, what is the position? It is sad sometimes that you find people in business, who can contribute something to it, merely holding on to their money instead of putting it back into services and giving the people better services.

Although these people may have failed in this aspect, it does not necessitate that there are not other individuals who could go into the bus service business, perhaps, with the same Government. Can the Government afford this? It is coming out of the taxpayers' money.

I heard a member over there on the back bench say that we only have tourism and sugar. If we only have tourism and sugar, then we need to make the people competent enough to work and bring in enough money to improve all the services to help this country develop as quickly as possible. If that is not done, where will this country go? To whom will it go? Eventually, one morning we will get up and find that we do not have a country. They have talked a lot about communism and I have even spoken on it, but I really wonder what the communists will do with this country. With all of the land being cut up, with no good policy for agriculture what is the position? We cannot get the Government to give us a policy on agriculture. They have the brains and they have the people to do it. Why cannot they bring a White Paper here and state what they are going to do with the taxpayers' money? Every minute there is an *ad hoc* this and an *ad hoc* that. It is not good enough, and this is why the people are going to reject them. They cannot fool the people all of the time by giving them this and that. The people are going to take it. If anybody gives me anything and it is free, I will take it. I am going to take all of the freenesses that are given to me. After you have taken all of the freenesses given to you, eventually, the day of reckoning will come. When that day of reckoning comes there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is not a question of taking away what I have and what other people have and let us all be equal. Regardless of how equal we are some people will thrive. There are other ways where they can get back the money. Let them go ahead with that and think it is the right way.

Mr. Chairman, if the trouble is transport for the working people, then the employers should pay the bus fares for their workers and the Government could give them a rebate in income tax. What is wrong with that? They should look into the fine points of these things, but it appears to me as though everyone wants to see how much money he can spend, what he can do, and how best he can do it. From what I can see, the taxpayer is not taken into consideration at all, and without the taxpayer in this country it cannot stand. We are needed, and we are the people who put the Government there. If one Government is not intelligent and sensible enough to understand

that they cannot go on giving freenesses all the time saying what they can do and how best they can do it, they will soon find out the position.

I am not against people travelling reasonably cheap on private transport. I agree that if private concessionaires are playing the fool, then Government should go ahead. But with 25 ¢ bus fare all over the Island, some people will misuse the buses. They will go from Bridgetown to St. Lucy and come back again and get all they want. It is going to be a big bacchanal. I say that it looks very good on paper. The Minister is very big-hearted; he has taken a very big step, but it is not going to ease the unemployment situation in the country. When you take off the few pickups that are now on the road, the men will have to look for something to do and there will be more unemployment. The few bus concessionaires may have been losing money and, perhaps, if you had offered them some money, or gave them buses and asked them to run them the situation might have been better. If you have proper auditors you must know whether or not you can make money. I do not know; the mind boggles, honestly.

One member spoke about increasing spending power. How, possibly, could a 25 ¢ bus fare increase the spending power? It will increase the spending power for some of the masses, or the poor people who are travelling, but what is going to happen to the other people who have already been overburdened with taxes? Some of them are paying 45%, some are in the sixty-something bracket, and others are in the seventy-something bracket. Is the Government really seriously thinking of getting back into this House or getting out of this House? As far as I am concerned, that is their business. I really wonder who they are fooling. If they are talking about spending power, then the people who have to put up this money to make the economy viable are the people who are already heavily burdened with taxes.

5.50 p.m.

We cannot go on all the time letting Government bring these schemes to us. It is about time that they should bring a projection paper and let us know what it is going to cost because it is not only going to cost \$5 million; in a few years' time it will cost more. Although it is for the masses, the masses want the Government to look after them in a better way than giving them this or that. It is better if they let the employers pay the bus fares for the workers and then the Government gives the employers a

rebate on income tax instead of asking us to take more taxes from the people, because it is going to cost more taxes. Nearly everybody is paying income tax; there are just a few who are not, and again it is not going to ease the unemployment situation in this country, and I am wondering what the Minister is going to do with the people who drive the pick-ups, because they have done a good job in this country in relieving the problem of travelling. We have to think about them because they are the people who came in at the right moment when the Transport Board was not competent and capable of running the system.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, we have been asked to vote \$5.3 million to get this 25 cents standard bus fare scheme off the ground. There have been a number of points raised in the debate by hon. members. There have been recommendations made by the King Commission and by others, but there are one of two points which I will deal with quite briefly, and I begin with the idea of a single concession. I believe that if this Government wants to show itself honest and interested in human beings and in this particular I make special reference to the bus conductors, the bus drivers and the inspectors, this is an admirable opportunity for the Government in my view to float what we call a giant cooperative. Let Government involve conductors, drivers and inspectors, all who now work in the industry and float a giant cooperative, let the Government put its all into it and let us see that we can really do something for everybody. If the Government loses this opportunity...*(Asides)* I understand there is no cabinet over there with collective responsibility and that each fellow is breaking for himself. What I am saying is that if Government loses this opportunity to float a giant cooperative to let all these workers see that it really intends to do something for them and let them feel they are part and parcel of a giant exercise in which they have been employed for a number of years and would have something to contribute for their own benefit, the Government would have been failing the people not only in the transport service or transport business, but in the general service that they are now trying to say they want to provide at 25 cents.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we have got to take into consideration what the Government really intends to do with people generally because of the present transport system. The Government up to the present has not told the private bus concessionaires, the Elite and the Rocklyn, that they are going to take over their fleet on a particular date or any particular time. There is

just this question of toying with them. I say it is beastly unfair to these private concessionaires, and if the Government intends to proceed on this basis of subsidising the bus fares, it ought to look at the Transport Board's liabilities. The Government in the same breath must come to this Honourable House after having looked at the liabilities of the Elite and Rocklyn Bus Companies and if it is going to subsidise bus fares should subsidise private enterprise as one might call it and the Government run transport all at the same time. You should be putting sufficient capital into the exercise to put each man on a proper footing and let us start to subsidise bus fares and see where we are getting, but as it stands at present you have the Elite owing away so much money and the Rocklyn Bus Co. owing away \$X and having to depend on the banks at this time, whereas the Transport Board every other morning and twice in the night can come and knock at the door of the House of Assembly and get money to subsidise themselves after they have all this top heavy, overburdened, unnecessary managerial and administrative staff. When you look at it, Mr. Chairman, if you are now going to subsidise the Elite Bus Co. and the Rocklyn Bus Co., Government must decide if it is running ten, forty or fifty buses and it is entitled to have an amount of staff structure to run that number of buses, and if Government is going to engage in this exercise it has to look to see whether or not it is employing at administrative level unnecessary staff at the Transport Board, and whether or not it should not structure the staffing of those other buses it is going to subsidise by having an equal number of qualified staff to see where we are going to get in this exercise.

This is not merely a matter of doing something to catch votes or something of the sort. As the hon. member for St. Michael North East has said, this is not going to gain anybody any votes, and I want the Government to understand that the taxpayers generally are particularly worried to know where the next amount of money is going to come from to keep this whole business going. If on the other hand the Government understands that it cannot make a success of the issue, I would invite Government to give serious consideration, if it is not going to form any cooperative, or if it cannot nationalise and run it as a service, to letting transport be in the hands of private enterprise, but with a big difference.

I have stated before that the Elite and Rocklyn Bus Companies are running without any problem, so to speak, apart from complaints of

the commuters, but if the necessity has arisen that bus fares must now be subsidised, and we believe in this, what we would urge upon the Government is to give consideration to granting a ten year or some reasonable time where people would invest money and try to make some sort of benefit, but if you decided to hand to private enterprise public transport, then the Government would have to establish its own transport fleet of inspectors and a semi-administrative staff to police these concessions and to police the routes and see that the concessionaires are giving ample satisfaction to the persons who have got to use the bus service; but the fleet of inspectors that would be employed would be a Government body responsible to a Government office and on no account would either of these inspectors who would compile the complaints and grievances of people make any contact whatsoever with the concessionaires. They would report right back to their head office which would in turn deal with the concessionaires and have things put right. If this were to be embarked upon, there would be the conductors, the drivers and the inspectors and others, and the Government would then compel those concessionaires to undertake a form of insurance to make ample provision for the pension and other rights of those workers engaged in that exercise. All of this could be carried out without costing the taxpayers of this country an extra penny.

6.00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, you and I will have to agree that with the Government's new scheme, the Government's new plan, we have got to extend our deepest sympathy to those bus conductors who will be begging their bread in the not distant future. The Government cannot deny this and the Government cannot fool anybody that this will not be taking place. We have also got to extend sympathy to the mini bus operators, the pickups, because you will find that under this scheme the pickups can only operate now between, let us say, Eagle Hall Corner, or from just as far as Paynes Bay to Bridgetown. They are not going to Boscobelle, they are not going to Pie Corner or Gemswick, St. Philip, to bring anybody to town for 25 cents. The pickups will now operate between Eagle Hall Corner, Hindsbury Corner and Bridgetown, and the buses will have to take over the long 25 cents trips.

We have got to be very careful about this whole business. We have got to look into the matter of these one man crews, having a single concessionaire and all of this. The Minister has not told us that the Transport Board has a fleet

of so many buses, although I understand that he attempted to say that we had so many buses on order or something like this.

The Prime Minister, as usual, as on the hospital issue, when the Minister got in here and said that so and so was so and so, I knew that he was speaking the truth. The Prime Minister got on T.V. and said do not mind them. They do not know what they are talking. Their heads are giddy. They have in too much egg power. So the Prime Minister apparently is saying that we have too many buses or words to that effect.

Mr. Chairman, the whole transport system must be the subject of a further study. There is no doubt that the whole thing is in a muddle, and the 25 cents issue is not going to solve any problem. Instead it will create more problems than those which we face at the present time.

Were it not for the fact that elections are around the corner — and mark you, Sir, there are hon. members on that side — I heard members of the public saying that they are so bright that they have guns that can shoot around the corner. So you will understand that this is election year and we are happy to be able to announce that the public in general is accepting it for what it is worth.

The Government should have come here today to let us know according to the recommendation in the King Report that we should have some three or five year projection so that hon. members would know that in the first year it is expected to cost so much, in the second year it is expected to cost so much bearing in mind the contingencies and whatever is likely to happen during the period, and in the course of the third, fourth or fifth years it is expected to cost the taxpayers of this country so much.

We have heard nothing of this, but today I notice that members on the Government side have turned out in full array so that the weight of their numbers can carry this issue through. On this side of the House we will not interfere with the Government doing anything from which the people stand to benefit. We are not so foolish; but what we have got to say, Mr. Chairman, is what the people are saying, and that is, no tricks in '76.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I am happy that the Government has decided on a change in the bus fares, but what I know is going to happen to people who live in my constituency, people who live in St. Philip South, people

who live in St. Andrew and in all of the rural areas of this country is that while some will enjoy the 25¢ fare on Government buses, they will still have to pay extra charges to get back from town either in the mid-day or on Sundays or on bank holidays; and my regret is that the Government has not put forward a comprehensive plan for transportation in this country.

When the former Minister of Communications and Works held that portfolio I wrote him a letter explaining the difficulty which the people of St. Joseph face, particularly early on mornings, late on evenings and on Sundays and bank holidays. I am now satisfied that this Minister never told the people of this country the truth about anything. He said that he had carried out a survey, and that it did not reveal to him that St. Joseph needed any extra transportation.

Today, Sir, he stood in his seat and deliberately lied when he said that no one has got to pay insurance to use Government schools; but I have said on a political platform in the City of Bridgetown that as far as the man who pretends to be a local preacher in the Methodist Church is concerned, God will do to him like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. The church will fall on his head before long. He lies, and lies consistently; and the problem with him is that the people can find out when he is lying. Nobody is going to vote.....

Mr. WEEKES: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The Hon. Minister for St. Joseph..... *(Laughter)* has called a Minister of Her Majesty's Government a liar and I am asking him to withdraw that type of remark. *(Asides)*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will proceed with his address. *(Cheers)*. The hon. member was referring to a Minister of the Methodist Church.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, yesterday was a bank holiday in this country. You usually dress up bank holiday donkeys. He has not got undressed from yesterday yet.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I am objecting.

Mr. BOLDEN: I am not calling any names. Let him find out who I mean.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: The hon. member can only be referring to somebody in this House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Minister cannot impute anything to what the hon. member had to say.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: So when he says that somebody in here is dressed up like a bank holiday donkey he means somebody passing the road?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will take his seat.

6.10 p.m.

What is the hon. member up on now?

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Allow me to hear the point of order.

Mr. WEEKES: While he has referred to some one dressed up like a monkey *(Asides)* or rather like a bank holiday donkey, I want him to know that the apparel belongs to the person dressed up like a bank holiday donkey, and that he has not in any way contributed to it, and that he cannot afford to buy one.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Absolutely no point of order.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I hope that the introduction of this standard bus fare would not inspire the Police Force to carry out further persecution of the mini-bus operators. Mr. Chairman, the country faces the situation whereby under the last Minister of Communications and Works he made a pronouncement that minibuses must go; with the result — as I have said time and time again in here — mini-bus operators have been harassed up and down the country, and I said that the Ministry in issuing permits are issuing permits without legal authority. There has never been any change in the Motor Vehicle Act in this country. The permits which have been issued are very vague and uncertain.

The Police at the Bridge and Harbour Stations have been persecuting mini-bus drivers in this country. I have had clients who have had as many as sixteen summonses in a day simply because of a pronouncement made by the last Minister of Communications and Works

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of explanation. He is talking nonsense. The laws of Barbados are here for people to obey. How could he have cases because of something I say? He can only have cases if there is a breach of the law. What foolishness is he talking? A policeman cannot prosecute anybody on

anything I say. He can only prosecute for a breach of the law of this land.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is a point of explanation.

Mr. BOLDEN: What foolishness is he talking? He simply does not even know the law. He himself came in here and tried to fool this Chamber. Does anybody talk any more foolishness than he? There has never been anybody to talk more foolishness than he in this country.

He came in here and said he would give one of his officers a year off to write a new Transport Bill. Up to now it has not come here yet. His time has come and he cannot fool anybody in here any longer. The Minister who took over from him came to this Parliament and said that he went in the Ministry and found the money voted by Parliament, and he came in here and told this very Chamber he could do nothing in the Ministry of Communications and Works because the only sum of money given to him left \$60 and he could not do anything with \$60.....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: If he found the money, it was there. I did not carry away any money.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must sit.

Mr. BOLDEN: It shows he could not administer the Ministry. That is what it shows. It shows who is the fool now. It shows that all the words he has in his mouth amounted to nothing. You did not carry it away but you did not know how to spend it. How come it a Minister could take over after you and find money in the Ministry when you said it was not there. What right do you have with a Ministry then? And come talking about foolishness?

He said over and over again that mini-buses must go. He piloted a Resolution through here and he came in here and introduced a form of licencing for mini-buses and said over and over again they are unlawful. Now we see why he is no longer Attorney-General of this country. The foolishness he gets up and constantly talks

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of elucidation. I was Attorney-General, there is no joke about that, and I was the first Attorney

General after Independence too. Those are facts man. That will go down in the history of Barbados; and even if you become Attorney General, you come after me. Even if you get it now I had it already.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, Sir Conrad Reeves was the first black man that rise up in this country, but where is his name held today? Like where yours will be held.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now both members will now deal with the Resolution and strictly the Resolution, if not I will use the appropriate Standing Orders on both members. I want hon. members to understand when I stand, all hon. members in here will sit.

The hon. member may proceed.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I want to see a comprehensive plan for transport in this country. I would like to hear the Minister give us the assurance that until Government can produce a comprehensive plan and an adequate plan showing how you are going to move the people in this country, that the mini-bus operators will not be persecuted. It is no mean sport that the mini-bus operators come in at a time when Barbados is suffering by the lack of sufficient equipment to move passengers as frequently as the passengers want to be moved; and when you find daily they have got to pay out to have themselves represented in court to save the little bit of money, this is ridiculous. But as I said, Mr. Chairman, we do not oppose standardized bus fares. That was our plan two or three years ago. We were calling for a standardized bus fare; but something that you must look at, Mr. Chairman, is that a standardized bus fare is going to bring a lot of problems.

I have asked before in here, what is the situation of the so-called inspectors at the Transport Board. If you have a standardized bus fare you no longer need inspectors. Those are people you are going to put out of employment with a standardized bus fare. With a standardized bus fare your bus conductors may go. What are you going to do with them? What is the cost next year? What is the cost in the year to come?
6.20 p.m.

The point about it is, Mr. Chairman, it is not right to come to the House and say we want a resolution for \$5 million to have a standardised

bus fare when there are certain problems staring you in the eye. The workers want to know what is going to become of their jobs; what are you going to tell them? You just do not come and ask for \$5 million. The member for St. Andrew in his resolution today spoke about young people wanting work. Will this position give work to the young people or will it create more unemployment? That is the situation. One member said he belongs to a party of gimmicks. This is certainly a gimmick, because if it were not a gimmick the Minister would have been able to lay out Government's plan on transport and tell us exactly what is going to happen.

Some months ago we said in here that when the Transport Board orders buses and gets the same fare as private concessionaires you were working a hardship against the private concessionaires, because the Transport Board would be utilising public funds. We asked then that private concessionaires be considered for some kind of grant to increase the transport fleet. We had no word on that. I wonder what is going to happen in St. Joseph. I am particularly worried about the people who keep complaining now about inadequate transportation in St. Joseph, because I know there is going to be serious conflict now between the buses and the minibuses. Will the minibuses come off the routes? Will they increase their fares? Will they stop running? Will they run a shorter route? Will Government have an adequate number of buses to take up the slack if the minibuses withdraw tomorrow or from the day the 25 cents bus fare is introduced? These are the things which I would have liked to have heard, and I hope the Minister will tell us exactly what plans he has in this respect. I do not know if they have found more money in the Ministry of Communications and Works; I do not know if there was a safe in the corner of the desk which the last Minister used to use or not.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, if you would pay back the Barbados Development Bank there would be more money to find.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: They would have \$97,000 more to use.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like hon. members to adhere to the Standing Orders. No hon. member in this Chamber must impute any improper motives to another hon. member. To

say that the former Minister had something in a corner is to impute improper motives to him.

Mr. BOLDEN: I have not said anything yet, I want to know if he will tell the public where he got the money from with which he bought the two spots of land which Frank Walcott sent to investigate when he went to New York. I will tell the truth about it, I would like you to stop taking money under the table now.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I got \$17,000 from Canadian Imperial Bank and I am paying it back now.

Mr. BOLDEN: Tell them where you ran the water to get the two spots of land, if you want to know something, you dishonest character.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I got \$17,000 from Canadian Imperial Bank; go and ask Mr. Foster. I can tell you, and I am paying it back now at \$500 a month.

Mr. BOLDEN: I know when you ran the water to get the land. Let us sling nastiness, you hypocrite.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, I have given both hon. members a lot of latitude.

Mr. BOLDEN: You will send me out today when I am finished with him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will be doing that. I will not accept this type of behaviour from either of you. As representatives of people this behaviour is most unbecoming.

Mr. BOLDEN: I am not finished, do not worry.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time has expired.

Mr. BOLDEN: All right, Mr. Chairman, I will tell him what I know outside and let him sue me in court. I will tell him when he ran the water and when he got the money, because I know about it. I will tell him a little more too, I will tell him about the plans that were laid out in front of me with his name on them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like both hon. members to leave the Chamber.

Mr. BOLDEN: I can go outside, I am not as crooked as he.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, the resolution here for \$5 million.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir, it relates to the behaviour of the House. This is a very important debate that we are engaging upon. I myself am guilty of having been led away by the heckling and so on of the hon. member and engaging in exchanges with him, but for the entire day there has been an abundance of personal reference by the hon. member for St. Michael South Central, and I respectfully submit that there are clauses in the rules of the Standing Orders of the House which enable you, Sir, to take certain action if a member consistently disregards the rules of the House; We are unable to carry on this debate on a level of decency. I have been in the House a long time and I don't believe that in one day I have ever heard a member abuse the father of another member, say another member owes the Development Bank money, talk about which servants he pays, and carry on such an extensive and disgraceful series of personal references that would be astonishing if we did not know the member in question, and I am submitting that Your Honour must consider Your Honour's powers. This is the Minister of Culture. Your Honour must consider Your Honour's powers to deal with hon. members who persistently disregard the letter and the spirit of the Standing Orders.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On both sides.

Mr. ADAMS: Sir, on both sides.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of privilege, do not let him get away with anything in here.

Mr. ADAMS: With great respect, Sir, if one man quarrels with three and four men, the three and four are not necessarily wrong, only one person on the Government side is quarrelling with the Opposition today, and he has made every hon. member's speech a speech in which there are passages and exchanges that the House could do without. The blame can't lie on all the hon. members on this side, only one man over there, Minister of Culture or not, is engaging in these arguments.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have already spoken and I am prepared to use the appropriate Standing Orders for both sides of Parliament, not one side only, both sides have been offenders today of the moral standard of this Assembly.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of privilege, so that the record will be made straight.

Mr. CRAIG: I was on my feet. What point of privilege there could be, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for St. James must not tell me, he is on a point of privilege and I must hear what is the point of privilege.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Don't let the Leader of the Opposition come into this House and pretend he is now self-righteous, he started out the debate.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the point of order?

Mr. HINDS: The point of order is this, Sir, that you as the Presiding Officer must know when a point of privilege suddenly has arisen according to the Standing Orders. You must know before you listen to nonsense and more of this harangue that has been going on for the day. You as the Presiding Officer must know, you are charged with that responsibility under Standing Order 76(5).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If you will read the appropriate Standing Order you will see when I intervene on that particular point of Standing Order 76(5). "The point of privilege takes precedence over all other business."
6.30 p.m.

A point of privilege takes precedence over other business.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, that is 76(1). Read 76(5), Sir. Do not read one ruling in exclusion.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member about to argue with the Chair?

Mr. HINDS: Not me, Sir. I have never done it before and would never do it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I hope you would never do it.

Mr. HINDS: I respect your ruling, even when I cannot agree with you.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Am I allowed to raise.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I want to hear.....

Mr. CRAIG: I am on my feet, Sir. I gave way to the Hon. Leader of the Opposition. The hon. member got up on a point of privilege, and 76(2) makes it very clear that he must seek the leave of the House or of the Committee, the Speaker, or the Chairman. The hon. member cannot speak without seeking your leave, Sir.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am seeking your leave on the same basis that you gave the Leader of the Opposition just now to get up and play that he is self-righteous and he is not offensive in this House when he is the one who started it. In the same way as he has privilege, I claim the same privilege.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well, the hon. member will now take his seat. This is now the complete end of the journey. Neither privilege nor anything else. If one had that privilege - (*Asides*) - It does not mean that because one is wrong I must allow another member to do the something. If that slipped me, it will not slip me again. The hon. member for St. James will continue his address.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with rapt attention when the Minister of Communications and Works introduced this Resolution. I knew quite clearly - (*Interruption*).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member may continue.

Mr. CRAIG: Not with this sort of interruption in the Gallery. After all, I am only human. After hearing this Resolution introduced by the Minister of Communications and Works seeking the approval of this Assembly for a sum of over \$5 million, it would surely have aroused not only the interest of members on both sides of the House, but I can assure you, Sir, and I believe you are aware of it, that it has aroused the interest of all of the people in this country. I am not prepared to get into these silly quips about any gimmicks or anything like that, but I am prepared to call a spade a spade. It is my view that the standardisation of 25¢ - (*Interruption*). I am being interrupted, Sir. There is too much noise. I agree in principle that there should be a standardisation of the bus fares in this country, and I want to make that abundantly clear.

Since 1969 I recall very well when the former Minister of Communications and Works in the last session came in here - you were a Parliamentary Secretary at that time - with a Resolution seeking some \$250,000.00 to subsidise the Transport Board. The records will show that

since 1969 I had advocated from this side of the House that the bus fares in this country should be standardised. I am voting for that, but I know, and I believe you are well aware of the fact, that in no way can 25 cents be a realistic figure.

In 1961, Mr. Chairman, when the present Government took office 15 years ago when things were not as bad for the country at the economic level, or to rephrase it when the country was not as economically unsound as it is today, when our balance of payments were not as bad as they are today, 30¢ was paid by a passenger to go as far as St. Lucy and Paragon in Christ Church. The 1974 Transport Board Report sets out very clearly that the fuel increase alone - this has nothing to do with wages between 1961 and 1976 - is something like \$233,000. In 1961 the bus fares to the farthest point in this country was 35¢.

Mr. Chairman, I say that the buses are new now; they are in good shape; the depreciation is not as great now as it is going to be in another three or four years, but I am confident that in three or four years' time any Government, whether it be this Party or the present Party in power, must seek from the taxpayers something like \$20 million to subsidise transport in this country. What I believe is that it is not the 50 cents, or the 65¢, or the 25¢, that the people are crying out about. What the travelling public and the people working in the industries are concerned about is the low wages which are paid in the industries to people who are travelling in the buses. Those people need a minimum wage of approximately \$60.00 to \$70.00 a week.

Now, if a girl who is working at Tiny Tots today - I am sorry that the General Secretary of the Trade Union and the member for St. Lucy are not in their places, because I am going to throw the blame in their laps for not negotiating for those young girls and young boys who work in industries like Tiny Tots, Mico Garments, and so on at Pelican Village where the girls do their smocking and so on. They earn something like \$20.00 to \$25.00 a week. Let us take a girl who lives in St. Joseph, St. Peter or St. Lucy, and has to travel to town to report for work. She has to pay something like \$1.30 a day or \$6.50 for five working days a week in bus fares and is earning \$21.00 or \$25.00 a week. She is the person who is falling and grinding under the yoke of the present transport system of the country.
6.40 p.m.

It is therefore Government's bounden duty that they should have a minimum wage not only for their agricultural workers. On one occasion

when I was debating a Bill relating to a labour clause and spoke about the hotel workers having a minimum wage, the hon. member for St. Andrew said he thought I would have suggested a minimum wage for all categories of workers. Nobody earning \$65 or \$70 a week is going to cry in paying \$1.00 a day bus fare which would be \$5 a week; but what is wrong is that it is the low wages paid in the industrial sites where the ones who pay the bus fare are the ones who are the heaviest hit. I would have thought that the Minister in introducing this Resolution would have told this Committee that there was going to be a white paper coming giving this Assembly the assurance of what they are prepared to do with the buses when they are in bad shape.

I want the Minister in his reply to give this Assembly the assurance, because I have always respected him for his boldness and forthrightness, that they have not got an order or they have not planned to order turn-stiles to put in the buses thereby throwing on the unemployment market an additional work force of approximately 200 conductors. I want the bold assurance from the Minister whether he as Minister or his Cabinet has agreed to, plans to agree to, or have set out to order turnstiles to put in the buses in the near future.

Secondly, I would like to find out from the Minister in his reply what provisions are made to keep this \$5,389 million down to this figure, because as I said earlier, there is no doubt in my mind that this is going to triple. According to the Government's economic planning over the years you have seen for yourself that water rates went up 400%, the land taxes escalated, the house rents in the housing areas escalated, and I know that this is only the beginning of things to come whereby the taxpayers of this country both small and big are going to suffer under the yoke of heavier taxation.

I agree in principle with the standardisation of the bus fares, but I would also like to know what survey they have carried out to arrive at the figure of 25 cents in 1976 when in 1961 when gasoline was 68 cents a gallon and diesel was 32 cents a gallon the bus fares to the farthest point were 35 cents, but in 1976 after losing money year after year on transport the Government can come in here and say they are going to standardise bus fares at 25 cents. I want to know what yardstick you have used to arrive at this figure. If the answer coming from the Minister is not one that can silence the mouths of the Opposition, then I will have to go on like how John Public feels about the Government. The

slogan "No Tricks in 1976" did not come from the hierarchy of the Barbados Labour Party; it was the little man, the man who is hard pressed in the streets that gave the member for St. Philip North that slogan. It is the small man who said we do not want any more tricks in 1976, and it is only yesterday in St. James that a boy brought this point to me. He said, Mr. Craig, how can Government afford to standardise bus fares at 25 cents? I believe, Mr. Chairman, that you in your going around and in your own business have heard people ask that question: how are we going to do it? If we do it they know that the burden of taxation is going to fall upon them at some level. It is going to end up as the Prime Minister once said in one of his infamous speeches, that you are going to get up one morning and find you do not own the country. Twenty million dollars have just come from Trinidad and the national debt is \$180 million. These are the figures you are talking about all the time and the Government cannot show anything that they have done to relieve the small man. Now the member comes up with what they have said, not us. You all say that we believe it is a gimmick. It is not the Barbados Labour Party to convince; it is the people in the streets that you have to convince how you are going to subsidise this.

What are your plans for raising the additional money and what is going to happen in another three or four years from now when the buses start to depreciate, when you have to change tyres and spare parts? All these things you have to think about.

One final point about the minibuses. Now I want to publicly salute all the minibus operators over the years for all they have done for the general public, and I say it is a disgraceful statement to be made by the person who has the fortune to be by accident the Chief Executive Officer of this country to have got on television and make the statement that it is not the Government's problems that the minibuses will have to go, it is their problem because the minibuses have been a problem to the Government all the time. I would say differently. The minibuses have been a help to the country because they have provided a service which nobody can say was not a good service whether operating as pirate taxis or otherwise. I have seen fish vendors with their fish not being able to get in any of the Government buses. No provision was made for these people, but when the minibuses came along those people from St. James, St. Peter, Oistin and St. Philip with their fish, their baskets with okras, tomatoes and vegetables were the ones who had to depend on the minibuses. I

want to know what provision is going to be made for these people. I would not be surprised when the Government is looking at the whole transport fleet of this country to hear them say they have to nationalise even the taxis in this country, because they are going to affect the taxi drivers in this country. When you compare 1976 as against 1961 when things were much cheaper and the economy of the country was better, how can you in 1976 come in here and say you are going to charge 25 cents from the farthest point.

I almost agreed with the Prime Minister when he spoke about 50 cents to the farthest point and 25 cents within a three-mile limit, but the Minister probably knows what he is about; maybe he was consulted on this, he had the experts to give him their views, and I am going to sit by but I warn that the public believes, not me, that this is another something which Government has set out to use on this occasion.

With these few remarks I am looking forward to the Minister (a) guaranteeing this Assembly that there will be no turnstiles ordered during the life of the Government in office within the next six or eight months, (b) saying that there are no files nor were there any discussions held for the purpose of bringing turnstiles to place in the buses thereby throwing on the country another load which the country cannot afford. I say to the Minister that, frank and bold as he is, it is a rather imaginative step taken by him on something which was advocated in here by me and my party since 1969 — that the bus fares should be standardised.

6.50 p.m.

I am a bit concerned about the 25 cents. My view is that it is unrealistic. I do not see how the Government will avoid additional taxation on you, Sir, every person in this country. That is my prediction and I look forward with anxious eyes.

I am going to support the Resolution on the principles of standardising bus fares, but I do not believe that 25 cents is a realistic figure.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Chairman, I have been here for 14½ years and never have I heard such conflicting views from the benches of the Opposition. We have had it said that this was an electioneering gimmick. We have heard it said that it was not a gimmick. We have heard it said by some members of the Opposition that the introduction of this Resolution was vote catching. We have heard it said by other members of the Opposition that it was not vote catching. I do not know why they cannot be consistent in their views. We have also heard it said that there was agreement on the principle of standardisation

at 25 cents. We have just heard from the hon. member for St. James that he would not like to see the people from Fitts Village, the people from St. James pay 25 cents for bus fare. Then he said that he did not agree with bus fares at 25 cents. He said that it was recommended in 1973 that consideration should be given to improve bus fares in 1976.

Mr. CRAIG: On a point of order. I can defend myself any time. If the hon. member is twisting what I said that I do not agree with 25 cents, what I did say was that as far as I am concerned the 25 cents appears to me to be unrealistic. I can take care of myself.

Mr. EDWARDS: He says that it is unrealistic. In other words I understand him to mean that 25 cents is not enough to pay for his constituents to travel.

Some time ago he voted against giving a right of way to the people of Fitts Village. In other words the people of St. James should not pay as little as 25 cents. He says that the people further out should have to pay 50 cents. What I am saying is that we are giving the people further out of a bus fare of 25 cents and he is opposed to it. Yet he agrees with the standardisation of bus fares.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, can the hon. member for St. James be opposed to a measure when he stands on his feet and says that he will vote for it?

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Chairman, there are people who say they will vote for things and yet they oppose them. We are asking the hon. member to vote for a standardised bus fare of 25 cents. He says that the question of standardisation was mooted by the Opposition; but he also infers that the figure is too low and that the people further out should be paying more. What I am saying is that the people in St. James are further out than the people in Black Rock. Therefore, he is saying his constituents should be called upon to pay a higher bus fare than 25 cents. That is the only logical contention and deduction. The member for St. Thomas has pointed out that according to the King Report people are going to become redundant.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time is now 7 p.m.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now automatically suspended until 8 p.m.
7 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: When the Sitting was suspended the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it automatically reverts.

Mr. Speaker left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. LOWE took the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At the time of interruption the Hon. member for St. Andrew was addressing the Chair. He may continue.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Chairman, at the interruption I was making the point that the hon. member for St. Thomas made reference to the King Report, and he inferred that the King Report would be implemented lock, stock and barrel, because.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Chairman. I repeated the Minister's words, that since he has been in office he was engaged in implementing the King Report. I do not know what is in the mind of the Minister. I repeated the Minister's words. I wrote them down and repeated them.

Mr. EDWARDS: Mr. Chairman, I am going to say what I intended saying. The hon. member pontificated and stated that the bus fares would be increased according to the King Report recommendation. He pointed out that the Minister did not give the assurance that the fares would be increased or that they would not be increased; and in his entire dissipation on the King Report he gave the impression that the Minister was bringing the King Report and throwing it to us for acceptance lock, stock and barrel, simply because the King Report recommended a standardize bus fare of twenty five cents.

We have sat here and listened to the Minister and never for one moment did he give the

impression that the King Report was to be accepted or implemented lock, stock and barrel. What the Minister came about here today was the standardization of bus fares at twenty five cents. The member also pointed out that the King Report was handed to the Ministry in February, 1973, and if this was not an election gimmick it would have been implemented before, or, that the Government waited until the eve of election to implement this.

I want to say that from 1973 until 1976 is not a long time because I will remind the hon. member that in 1954 there was a Report handed to the Labour Party known as the Richardson Report recommending the introduction in this country of a social security scheme. The Barbados Labour Party went out of power in 1961 and did not implement the Richardson Report. That was 1954 and 1961, which was seven years. The King Report did not take seven years for implementation. Aspects of the King Report did not take any seven years for implementation. It had to be studied in the Ministry and.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation, Sir.....

Mr. EDWARDS: You can only elucidate on something which you have said.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order. Sir, I wish we could stick to facts in here. I challenge the hon. member (a) to show that the Richardson Report was handed in in 1954. My belief is that it was handed in in 1960, and (b) that it has ever been implemented, because you do not have to implement every Report. You can reject some.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Point made.

Mr. EDWARDS: I am telling him it was not handed in in 1960. It was handed in in 1954. If he is ashamed of the fact that the Labour Party stood in power seven years after it was recommended that a social security scheme should be introduced in this country, and they did not introduce it, I will repeat it. It was introduced in 1954, recommending the implementation of a social security scheme, and it took the D.L.P. to introduce it.

The point I am making, Mr. Chairman, is that a Report handed in in 1973 had to be studied. If the hon. member knows anything about the operations of a Government, a Report has got to be studied, the experts have got to advise on it, and therefore to implement aspects

of a Report – not the Report, but aspects of the Report – in three years' time, I think that the Minister should be complimented for so doing.

The hon. member also talked about the decentralization of industry, and said that this would be a higher priority than the bus fares; that there would be no need for standardized bus fares or reduction in bus fares if you had your industries decentralized. I wonder, Mr. Chairman – even if you decentralize industries – and I would like to see industries decentralized – what is going to happen with the man who lives in St. Andrew and is working at Newton? Are you going to dismiss him from that job at Newton because you have decentralized industry? Would he not want a reduction in his bus fares? Right now if he lives in St. Andrew and he works at Newton he has got to pay \$1.30 per trip on mornings to get to Newton and \$1.30 on afternoons to get back to St. Andrew. (*Asides*) Mr. Chairman, there is one unfortunate thing about members on the other side. Every time you make a sensible point they consider it nonsense because all they have in their heads is nothing but nonsense.

I am making a point here which is a fact – unless the hon. member who says it is nonsense is not living in Barbados. I am saying that people living in St. Andrew, St. Lucy, St. Peter, who work at Newton, an Industrial Park in this country are paying \$2.60 a day to get to and from work. They have got to catch two buses; but you see he would not know because he has never travelled by a bus. He did not have the need to; so this would not affect him.....

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation. If the hon. member could understand what is meant by the decentralizing of industry he would have understood that the argument which I put forward was this: that it is not good enough to tell a man who lives in St. Andrew that he will have cheaper bus fare to get to Newton; that you must decentralize and put industry in St. Andrew; That is what is meant by decentralization, and that is what I said.

Mr. EDWARDS: All right. The point is, Mr. Chairman, I understand what the hon. member says. I am not saying that he was talking nonsense but I am saying that I am dealing with facts. What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that even with decentralization of industries the people who live in St. Peter, who work at Newton park or who work at Seawell will still (*Asides*).....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Hon. members must adhere to Standing Order 33(6).

Mr. EDWARDS: The point is, as soon as a new industry is established there are people looking for job opportunities and these jobs will be taken up. It may be a completely different industry from the one which the man who lives in St. Lucy has the expertise for. The man may be in Solar Dynamics or something of the sort, he might be trained for it but he still has to get to the bus. You are not going to have two industries doing the same thing, except it is processing food or something of the sort where you will need more people, or if you are making shirts or something of the sort. A man might only have the expertise for a particular type of industry, and the point I am making is that if you are decentralizing your industries it does not mean that the man who lives in Church Village, St. Philip, might not have to go down to Fairfield in St. Lucy to his job, because after all, we have industry at Fairfield, St. Lucy. It does not mean that the man who lives in Belleplaine would not have the qualifications for a job when an industrial park is established in St. Philip, and therefore the idea of a standardise bus fare is to give that worker an advantage to get to work; not a disadvantage. The man who is living in St. Lucy and has to go to St. George to work in an industry, it is costing him approximately \$1.30 on mornings and \$1.30 on afternoons – five days. It would cost him at the present rate \$686.

With the introduction of a standardised bus fare this is going to cost him \$130. The man is going to save \$556 a year. Someone on the other side said it would not increase his spending power, but \$550 is a lot of money to be able to spend in any language in food in a year, and what I am saying is that they are beating around the bush because they cannot come out and vote against this. They cannot come out and criticise it in any form, so they must find all other dodges. It must be an election gimmick, they do not agree that 25 cents is adequate to ask the man from St. James to pay in bus fare, but it is adequate to ask the man from Black Rock to pay to Bridgetown. What we are saying here is (*Aside*). You will always hear this, you will always get these interruptions.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is no interruption, at this stage we will watch the clock.

Mr. EDWARDS: I began at one minute before seven. I watched it too, Sir, and you

must pay attention to the interruptions we have had. I want to make a point here. I am concerned about the pickups. I feel that the pickups have been making a substantial contribution to the transport system of this country, and I am one who believes that they should not be put off the road. I believe that if the pickups contribute to the transport system that they should be subsidised too, and I will tell you why. I represent a constituency, part of which was thrown upon me, and a very difficult district called Orange Hill where the bus service is very poor. There is no doubt about it. The pickups collect those people who have to go to work at about 5.30 early on mornings. They will not get a bus until 6 o'clock. Then they experience difficulty during the day to get to and from their destination, and the pickups play a very, very important role.

Diesel is cheaper than gasoline, it is sold at \$1.46 a gallon as against \$2.00, and there is less consumption, more miles per gallon. If these workers who have to catch the pickups at 5.30 to get to their jobs are to be asked to pay more to the pickups than they are asked to pay to the buses, than those who are travelling at 7.00 and 8 o'clock — there are those who travel at 7.00 to get to work at 8.00 or 8.30 — who can wait for the bus. But there are some persons who have to get two buses, therefore they get the pickup at 5.30 from the rural district — and I represent a rural district and know that this happens — they catch a pickup at 5.30 when no bus is on the road to go to Bridgetown, then to get another bus to get to their work, so it is not fair to ask them to pay 75, 65 or 80 cents as the case may be to the pickup to get to one part of their destination, when the man who works at 8 o'clock can wait for the 7 o'clock bus. I feel that since the pickups are doing this important job, getting the people to their rendezvous on time, some consideration should be given to subsidisation of the services provided by the pickups.

I would like to suggest to the Minister that some sort of favourable consideration should be given to this, because the pickups provide a considerable amount of the transport service of this country and if they are supplementing or complementing the work of the buses, I think that it is fair to give them some form of subsidy so that they can operate and would not be forced to charge the same workers, because most of the pickups carry workers, and they would not be forced to charge the workers more than the workers would be paying the

buses, because I think the whole scheme here is introduced to assist the working classes of this country, the working man who has to get to and from his job. This is of high priority and I would suggest that the Minister look at this. I do not know what the answer is, but I am just pointing out that those who travel by pickup would be at a disadvantage, and some consideration should be given to subsidising these fares also.

Miss MILLER: Mr. Chairman, what I have to say will not take a very long time. The speeches in here today have taken a very long time, and I am very distressed because I have heard a lot of coarseness, a lot of crudeness, reference to monkeys and donkeys, even shorts, and I am distressed. This is my second day here and I am distressed. For too many hours we sit here and listen to abuse, there will not be any abuse or name calling or references to the animal kingdom from me, so what I say will not be long.

I wish to speak some thoughts on the business of the conductors. We all know that the majority of the conductors are women. I feel that we have to be very careful about the consequences of whatever we do in every aspect of our lives, including in respect to what we do in here. A lot of things have been done on the floor of this House in the name of the people by the Government of the day regardless of the consequences, and in the end it is not the people who sit over there who bear the cost, but in fact the people of this country, the workers of this country. Some years ago an unpopular decision was taken to burn sugar cane, and we know the outcome of that, because they did not heed the consequences and the warnings at the time, and I do feel that heed must be taken of this very serious consequence.

I am quoting from the King Report at page 15, paragraph 24, and the first word used at the beginning of that paragraph is "consequent".

"Consequent upon the introduction of the single uniform fare system the Committee recommends that all new units added to the existing fleet or obtained as replacements should be equipped with facilities for collecting fares which would enable the vehicle to be operated by a one-man crew. The use of conductors would therefore be phased out over a period of time as new units come into operation or as any of the existing units are converted to accommodate the new arrangement." The Prime

Minister of this country has himself finally admitted that unemployment is the one single bogey, the one desperate ill that must take the number one priority in this country. I am reliably informed that at September 1974 there were 230 conductors employed by the Transport Board. I do not know how many conductors are employed by the Transport Board today, but I should imagine that in the 18 month period there may well be more than 230 conductors.

I am not informed; I do not have the figures to hand at this moment to show how many of those conductors are women, but I think that common knowledge tells us that a good proportion of them are women. I find it difficult to believe that certain people cannot understand that the matter that is currently before this House could have, as a very serious consequence, the putting out of employment, at a time of gross unemployment, maybe, 250 people. The Report goes on to say, of course — it does not say anything about the redeployment of these conductors — that the Committee sees no reason why conductors should not be retrained as drivers for the additional units required or assigned for other duties. One conductress has been trained as a driver to our certain knowledge at this date. This talk about additional units is in great question.

The appropriate Minister has said in another place that there are 39 new buses on order. The Prime Minister said at a subsequent date and a more recent date, as recent as last week, that we had more buses than we needed and we did not need any more buses, so there would be no additional units. I am very concerned about the contradiction out of the mouths of two people who, it is assumed, would have been sitting around a Cabinet Table when this matter may have been discussed. Of course, the whole manner in which it has been presented leads us to understand that it has not undergone very much discussion in the Cabinet or anywhere else for that matter. It smacks of hurry-come-up legislation.

Mr. Chairman, the conductors in this country play a very real part. My motor car was down about ten days ago and, as I normally do when my motor car is down, I took the bus. It is 55 cents from where I live in Fitts Village to Bridgetown. I took the bus, and I saw the conductress one morning help no fewer than three old age pensioners on to the bus and do other duties which only served to bolster up my opinion that they do perform a very real service.

In the City of London I have seen conductors on buses performing a very real service, and I am distressed to this that there is very serious consideration being given to this business of what will in the end amount to laying off a whole category of employees. They would do away with conductors, and I am worried that one of the more serious consequences of the introduction of this standardised bus fare, what the King Report calls the uniform fare system, may in the end do us more harm than good.

Much has been said already today, and I do not intend to reiterate it. I do not see any need to reiterate the whole attitude of the Government in not implementing this before now; the whole attitude to the Government fixing of the fare at 25 cents; the whole attitude of the Government lifting certain parts of the King Report and not lifting others so that the public might properly scrutinise the whole business of the standardised bus fare. I should just like to have it on record that I should not like to live to see the day when, in Barbados, we do away with the conductors. I should be interested to know whether the appropriate Minister plans any redeployment apart from this business of retraining conductors as drivers. I do not see that at any time in the very near future that they could redeploy over 250 conductors into drivers, which would mean an additional 250 bus units! That is incredible to say the least.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON: Mr. Chairman, if we really wanted to look at the transport system and the single fare system that is being proposed today, I think we should look back at the transport system in Barbados for over 50 years ago when there were private concessionaires operating small vehicles called "flies". The Eckstein Bros., Madam Ifill, and A. E. Taylor operated buses on various routes throughout the Island. We had no actual concessionaires but whosoever will who cared to come and could provide a small vehicle carrying eight or nine people would provide transportation. There was no provision made for security, or insurance, and if accidents occurred the people would have to face their own peril without any compensation for what had happened.

In 1955 most of these people asked for an increase in fares. The then Barbados Labour Party refused to give 1 cent increase in the bus fare. I think it was then about 3 cents. I can only tell you about the route where I live. It was practically two miles: from the Green to Fontabelle, up Westbury Road to Passage Road on one route, and the other route went up to

Deacons Road. That was only for about 3 cents. They were denied an increase of 1 cent per fare. In other words, before the Government would allow an increase of 1 cent per fare, the then Government took over all of the vehicles. There has been a problem from them until now.

In 1961, when we took over the Government, I was then Minister of Communications and Works. There was provision made at that time in the Estimates for something between \$50,000.00 to \$60,000.00 to subsidise the project. In other words, there was an amount of money voted in the Estimates that the Transport Board could draw on to subsidise the fares. That was nothing to do with when they had to come to the House for large sums of money for purchasing buses. Five years ago, when I was the Minister of Communications and Works, there was a need for about 120 units to keep on the regular routes operated by the Government. We then had about 90 to 91 units that were in good condition. We had some old gasoline buses and some old Mercedes Benzs that did not stay on the road very long and became uneconomical for operation, which were disposed of gradually. Today I believe that the number required would be more than 120 for day-to-day use including school buses.

Mr. Chairman, I would agree that to make a single unit fare would increase the number of buses. I have discussed this personally with the present Minister and asked him if he has considered that reducing the fare to a single fare of 25 cents would not, on the long-distance fare, create more passengers and, therefore, require more units. Therefore there would have to be a capital investment for more buses.

As a result therefore there would have to be more than necessary a capital investment for more buses. The Minister has assured me that he has paid strict attention to this. This was personally and privately between the two of us and he has looked at this, and this is considered in the over-all plan. I do agree, Mr. Chairman, that 25 cents is a very low fare, but are the people in Barbados yet prepared to be their brother's keepers? As a member of the Government I could not see them raising the fare beyond what the shortest route would be. If you did that the people on your first stage would be subsidising the cost of the people on the longest routes, and I do not believe that people in Barbados are prepared to carry their brother's burden. They would say if you live in St. Andrew that would be your problem; if I live on a short

route in St. Michael this would be my responsibility, and therefore this is one of the reasons why we would have to consider the single fare which would be within the range of your first stage.

On the problem of the minibuses, Mr. Chairman, we have tried to phase these out from 1961, but a lot of these small buses have got in illegally. I would say that they have done a good job, because when we were in desperate need and were down to 90 buses and 120 were the minimum required, these buses did a good job, and I agree with the hon. member for St. Peter that the short run would be their run because they cannot make the long runs where it would not pay them to operate on the 25 cents fare. Overall I think it is a good idea and people will have to learn that all the people who use the buses use them for consideration and not only for their own purpose. They are people employed who take work for other people, and if they had to pay this out in taxation they would have to consider this. The only place that a Government gets money from is the people, and we have got to accept this. Taxation is necessary if we want our country to improve and to keep in line with other countries.

With those few remarks, Mr. Chairman, I agree with the single fare and I suppose nearly everybody in the country especially on the long routes would accept this as it would be beneficial to them, and especially to the workers who would benefit greatly from it on the long distances.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, when this Resolution was introduced in this House of Assembly previously and debated today it was my hope that a useful discussion would take place in this Chamber and I would have benefited greatly from it and would have been able to pursue my task in the Ministry of Communications and Works much more happily and with better determination. Unfortunately all that has transpired here today has been rather agonising for many reasons, and I need not go into them. But one agonising reason is that a whole day has passed debating a Resolution which has not yet been concluded and there are so many other things that need to be done by this House of Assembly. Misrepresentations, apprehensions, all these have come out in this debate, but I am at a loss to understand the reasons why people have misapprehensions, misunderstandings about a simple Resolution for \$5.37 million.

I would like to state here quite clearly that it is no intention of the Ministry of Communications and Works to put anybody out

of work. All those who have apprehensions about the introduction of standardised bus fares I would like to go home tonight and sleep peaceably and feel happy and assured that nobody will lose their work as a direct consequence of the introduction of this. There is nothing binding in the King's Report upon the Government or that the Government has to accept all the recommendations. In fact the Government need not implement any of the recommendations if the Government so sees fit, and therefore arguing on the premises that what has occurred in the recommendations of the King's Report is exactly what the Government will do is misleading. It is misleading because I have not stated that I intend to implement all those recommendations. The only one which I have drawn reference to is recommendation No. 4 which deals with the standardisation of bus fares at 25 cents.

I would also like to stress that last year when I assumed responsibility for the Ministry of Communications and Works I made certain comments both in this House of Assembly and at other places about the problems surrounding the transport in this country, how I saw it and what I intended to do about it. I would refresh some people's minds that I stated from early that I saw transport in the same light as I saw education and health, and therefore I would like to see Government treating this in the same way as they treat education and health. It is a social service which the people of this country require and Government should do everything to ensure that the people of this country get that service not necessarily in trying to make a profit out of the operation.

Last year I also drew to the attention of this Chamber when a Resolution was introduced in this House for money for the same Transport Board, that I was concerned with complaints reaching me about the heavy money which some people had to pay to get to and from their destinations, and I made it quite clear that I would be investigating methods of reducing the bus fares. I have sat in the Ministry of Communications and Works and have examined other proposals, and as I have examined these proposals I have become more convinced that the easiest method to implement was the 25 cents bus fare. I have here before me papers which I have taken to my Cabinet colleagues trying to get other proposals implemented where the amount of money Government would be called upon to look for would be far less, but then the mechanics of implementing these various proposals were real and difficult, and on

discussing these with the General Manager of the Transport Board and with members of the other bus companies, they drew to my attention that there were grave difficulties in implementing some of these. In fact, when the decision was made to have a standardised bus fare at 25 cents, certain financial experts in the country made certain recommendations in which they thought that we should do otherwise, but on re-examining some of these proposals put forward by these financial experts it again became quite clear that the simplest method to implement was a standardised bus fare. If these proposals and counter proposals had not been looked into or had not taken so much time to be looked into, as I had already promised the people last year, I anticipated that by January this year we would have had a standardised bus fare in operation. But there is a lot of red tape. When you put up proposals there are always counter proposals and you have to go back to the drawing board and re-examine them and all this takes time, and everybody has his idea about how things should be run. Even today we saw that nearly every person who spoke had a different concept which differs from the previous speaker about how things should be run and this does not make things any easier. It tends to make things much more difficult because you get many proposals put forward to you, you are expected in your capacity as Minister to examine each one of these proposals and to put forward your views why you would introduce them or not introduce them. That takes time.

I would like to point out that in my earlier remarks I made reference to the three commissions which were appointed by previous Governments to look into the Transport Board and the third commission which was to investigate the entire system of omnibus transport recommended three alternatives. These alternatives were (1) that the Government take over transport entirely; (2) that the transport be given to a private company under the umbrella of the Public Utilities Board; and (3) that the present arrangement which also obtained then be permitted to continue, that is, the transport being split between a Government Board and private concessionaires. The Government of that day was particularly interested in turning the buses back over to private enterprise, but they could not get anybody who was prepared to buy over the stock from the Government because it was valued at \$1.31 million. Therefore Government was forced to continue. At that particular time Government was not keen either to take over the transport entirely and maybe with good reasons, therefore the present system which obtains today was

permitted to continue. If that was so in 1956 where nobody could be found who would be willing to purchase the Government's stock at its value, then it is even more so in 1976 when the value of that same stock is now at a higher level. It would be difficult to find someone who would be prepared to buy all these buses, parts and so on for that type of money.

It is the recommendation that Government take over the Transport Board. It has been made long ago. It is not new. It is a principle that was included in the King Report, but it is not the first time that it has been mentioned. It is not the first time either that a standard bus fare has been mentioned.

I acknowledge that there are people who have made this recommendation and brought it into a new light during the last inquiry into increased bus fares before the Public Utilities Board; but I must say that it is not new. What is important to me is that we have reached a very important stage in the history of transport in this country now that we are going to standardise bus fares. It is true that the King Report mentioned it as far back as about 1974, and I would like to point out that there is no intention to increase these bus fares in the coming year. I would like to make that quite clear.

We appreciate that we would have to subsidise by a larger amount. With all the problems which have befallen this country as a result of inflation and the energy crisis, it is only natural to expect that we would have an increased subsidy in 1976, even if we had started in 1974.

The money which is being asked for in this resolution is to be used in a number of ways. One way is to meet the expenditure arising from the loss of money which would be incurred by the three concessionaires as a result of this 25 cents bus fare. It will also help to meet the expenditure for the printing and distribution of tickets. It will also go to meet some of the money that has to be paid for the new buses which we have mentioned last year; and I would like to remind hon. members that last year we voted a sum of money for the purchasing of 39 new bus bodies. There are seven chassis which I am told have already arrived in this country, and are now awaiting the bodies to be attached to them; and money will have to be provided for incidentals.

I am not in a position to go into all the details of the discussions which have been going

on between the Government and the private concessionaires as to how they will get their money; but I would like to say that since I have been in this House I have heard a lot of criticisms levelled against the Government for spending money in different areas and that the money should be spent otherwise. I am saying that \$5.37 million for this effort does not of necessity entail any additional taxation as some members have been trying to suggest. I consider that this is one of the good ventures in which money should be spent, and that is why I have introduced it and brought it before this House.

I appreciate that this proposal was made long ago, before the King Commission, and may be better attention should have been paid to its implementation. Mr. Chairman, there is a lot more that can be said in reply to what has been advanced here this evening about this Resolution. Unfortunately, as I have said, it has been agonising. I would not like to labour it any more, so making it any more agonising to the members of this Hon. Chamber.

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

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

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until tomorrow, Wednesday, at 12 noon, and that Today's Order Paper be the Order Paper to be used for tomorrow's Sitting of the House.

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

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

8.17 p.m.

