

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1971 – 76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 2nd March, 1976.

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

PRESENT

His Honour C. A. E. HOPPIN, (Speaker); Hon. C. E. TALMA, C.B.E., (Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of the House); Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON, (Minister Without Portfolio); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; Mr. L. S. CRAIG; 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); Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND; Hon. P. M. GREAVES, B.A., (Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance); Mr. H.deB. FORDE, S.C., M.A., LL.B.; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. A. MORRISON, (Minister of Agriculture, Science and Technology); and Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A. (Econ.), (Minister of Health and Welfare).

Prayers were read.

His Honour A. Da C. Edwards entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The revised Minutes of Tuesday 20th, January, 1976, and the Minutes of Tuesday, 10th February, 1976 have been circulated and are before you for your confirmation, and unless there are any alterations or corrections, they will be confirmed.

There being no amendments, those Minutes are duly confirmed.

I have the honour to inform the House that I have received from the Accountant General the Accounts and Statements for the month of November, 1975.

I also have the honour to inform the House that I have received from the Accountant General the Accounts and Statement for the month of December, 1975.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received from the Clerk of Parliament a letter written to him by the Secretary to the Cabinet with respect to the oath of allegiance by Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, M.P. It reads as follows:

“The oath of allegiance required by section 59 of the Constitution and section 62 of the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 12 of the Laws of Barbados, was taken by Mr. David Anthony Cathcart Simmons, M.P., the member elected on the 26th February, 1976, to serve in the House of Assembly for the constituency of St. Philip North, at Government House today, 2nd March, 1976 before His Excellency the Governor-General and Members of the Cabinet.

F. M. Blackman
Secretary to the Cabinet.”

Mr. David Anthony Cathcart Simmons has signed the Declaration of Qualifications, and I now invite the hon. member to take his seat in this Chamber.

I will ask the Leader of the Opposition and his deputy to conduct the hon. Member to this Chamber. (Cheers by Members and Gallery)

I will say at this time that I realise how members of the Gallery appreciate what has taken place, but this is not the place for you to show your appreciation by clapping. You can do so outside, but not in this Honourable Chamber.

The hon. member for St. Philip North escorted by the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. Member for St. James, entered the Chamber and took his seat.

I as Speaker, welcome the hon. Member for St. Philip North to his seat, and I hope he will carry on the traditions and live up to the standards of hon. Members that have taken their seats in this ancient Chamber.

LETTER OF RESIGNATION

Mr. SPEAKER: I have the honour to inform the House that I have received a letter from the hon. Member for the City of Bridgetown which reads as follows:

"His Honour C. A. E. Hoppin, J.P.,
Speaker,
The Honourable House of Assembly,
Public Buildings,
Bridgetown.

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I wish to resign from the House with effect from the 29th day of February, 1976.

I shall be grateful if you will take the necessary and appropriate steps to make my resignation from the Honourable House of Assembly effective as from the 29th day of February, 1976.

Yours faithfully,
ELLIOTT D. MOTTLEY, M.P."

I am satisfied that this is an authentic letter from the hon. Member for the City of Bridgetown.

According to the Standing Orders I direct that this letter be noted and appear on the Order Paper for the next Sitting of this House, and that it be recorded in the Minutes in due course.

PAPERS PRESENTED

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

The Estimates of Expenditure and Schedules of Personal Emoluments for the year 1976–77.

Also, on behalf of the Hon. Prime Minister, I am commanded to lay the following:—

- (1) The Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) Order 1976.
- (2) The Pensions (Amendment) Regulations, 1976.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

- (1) The Statement showing the sums advanced to the Postmaster General for the payment of Money Orders for the months of July to November, 1975.
- (2) The Statement showing Money Order Transactions through the Crown Agents for Oversea Governments for the months of July to November 1976.

12.20 p.m.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Prime Minister I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) Order, 1976.

On behalf of the Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$2,577,830 from the Consolidated Fund and to 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. 39, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Also, a Resolution to grant the sum of \$168,852 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1976–77, Part II – Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1976–77, No. 40, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

On behalf of the Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning, a Resolution to grant the sum of \$41,660 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1976–77, Part 1 – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1976–77, No. 42 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

On behalf of the same hon. member a Resolution to approve under Section 10 of the Barbados Harbours Act, Cap. 286, the Estimates of the Port Department for the year 1976–77.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the

sum of \$427,949 from the Consolidated Fund and to 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. 41, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice on behalf of the Hon. Prime Minister of a Bill to amend the Casual Employees Pensions Act.

On behalf of the Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act.

On my own behalf, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act.

Also, on behalf of the Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning, I beg to give notice of a Bill to grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of the Island for the year ending 31st March, 1977.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to provide for the implementation by the Government of the Agreement establishing a West Indies Shipping Corporation to which Barbados is a party and for connected purposes.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, a Bill to amend the Casual Employees Pensions Act, was read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act, was read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act, was read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, seconded by Hon. C. E. TALMA, a Bill to provide for the implementation by the Government of the Agreement establishing a West Indies Shipping Corporation to which Barbados is a party and for connected purposes, was read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSON, a Bill to

grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of the Island for the year ending 31st March, 1977, was read a first time.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I beg to inform you that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 52, asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph, is now ready.

Also, Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 76, asked by the hon. member for St. Thomas, is now ready.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to inform you that the Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 54, asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph, is now ready.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to inform you that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 72, asked by hon. member for St. James, is now ready.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to inform you on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, that Oral Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 80, asked by the hon. member for St. Thomas, is now ready.

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. G. G. FERGUSON: I beg to second that.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I did not hear congratulatory and obituary speeches called.

Mr. SPEAKER: They were called.

The question that His Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair, the House went into Committee of Supply. Mr. W. R. LOWE took the Chair.
12.30 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1975-76

No. 37

Resolution for the sum of \$128,447 — was called.

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

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

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the House tells us that the Notes are explanatory. Sir, the Notes convey to me that at some time or other the Governor-General found Government House in the same position as some of our poor folk happen to find themselves that is, being faced with a situation with the electricity and the natural gas services being disconnected. It would mean therefore, Mr. Chairman, that this Resolution is now seeking to reimburse the Governor-General for monies that he took out of his pocket to pay such bills so as to save Government House the embarrassment that this Government has occasioned to the Governor-General at last.

This is a state of affairs, Mr. Chairman, which we on this side abhor. We would not wish to see it happen to the Governor-General, we would not wish to see it happen to the poorest of our citizens, but as such, as it has happened, we are just asking the Leader of the House to give us the assurance that in view of the fact that the public service is now staffed with better type people, better accountants and whatever category of worker, one would expect that we would find that there is no lapse in the accounting or any other measure related with Government House. We beg the Government — if it is that they want to get rid of the Governor-General, we would beg them to find a better way out rather than have the Governor-General embarrassed by such services as electricity and natural gas being threatened with disconnection and things of that sort.

We are simply looking forward to the Leader of the House to give us that type of assurance that the Governor-General would be not further embarrassed by the present Government in this respect.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, it is quite clear that the Government has completely lost control over the way it is spending its money. I believe the same situation is going to arise when it comes to the Police Department, because only last week the electricity and the water were turned off in the Central Police Station; so obviously something has gone critically wrong with the Government, and if the Governor-General has had to take his own money to keep the services going, I do not believe there is anybody in the Police Department who would have done the same, but something has got to be done.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, if one looks at the Resolution which was circulated — I do not know if yours is like mine but mine says 'see Notes 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16' but one has got to look back at Notes 1, 2, 3, 4. If this is typical of how work is being done today one can safely see why the Governor-General found himself in this particular predicament, because I believe this is elementary, that somebody should have seen that these Notes are incorrect. So there is no wonder that the poor Governor-General was left to the mercies of the Light and Power Company and the Waterworks Department. (ASIDE) Well they would change those on the Government side, but I do not expect them to change those on this side, Mr. Chairman. (ASIDE) I would not worry to comment with my friend. He cannot see. If you look at the right side of the page you will see there 'see Note 11.'

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I would like to draw Your Honour's attention to the fact that the Resolution has been wrongly bound up. For example you have page 2 coming as one; so that a lot of confusion may arise in this one. To avoid any confusion I would probably ask, if members are willing to go on with this, all well and good, if on the other hand you object to the manner in which the Resolution has been presented, that it is upside down and is very confusing because Governor-General is on the second page and it has been badly bounded up; so that I am not going to sit here and go through a lot of unnecessary abuse for that because mine is like that too, and I would ask that further consideration of this matter be postponed, unless hon. members feel they would be willing to carry through with it as it is. (ASIDE) If members are willing to carry through and can understand it as it is I would be willing to carry on. If on the other hand a lot of noise and confusion will go on with something which is glaringly wrong but which we can still understand, well then we will not carry through.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I am quite sure that the Leader of the House would appreciate that since we observed this error on this side, we are quite willing to go with the Government. We are not going to hold up the Government on this. We can follow it.

This is not difficult. This is elementary. To me, it is quite true that the Leader of the House read it out and probably that is why he said Note 1 and finished with that, but we understand it over here. Do not worry. Do not burst your blood vessels. This is quite all right.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I believe.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the hon. member up about?

Mr. BOLDEN: I am talking about the Resolution or the motion put forward by the Leader of the House that.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There has been no motion at all whatsoever. The hon. member must either speak now on a point of order or take his seat.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I am the person who drew to the attention of the Committee that the Notes were not correct, but I do not like the Leader of the House talking about standing there for unnecessary abuse, because he is implying that somebody on this side is abusing him. All I said was that the paper was not in order.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is only the hon. member's opinion; it is not mine; so therefore the hon. member must not try to instil his opinion on this Honourable House.

Mr. BOLDEN: I firmly believe you understand, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.
12.40 p.m.

As long as the Leader understands that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, in order to regularise this matter, which is very important, I crave the indulgence of the hon. members on the other side. I am trying to regularise what I know is wrong. On the first occasion I did not move Head 1 – Governor-General.

I beg to move that Head 1 – Governor-General stand part.

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

Mr. HINDS: On a point of order, should the Leader of the House not first withdraw the former motion?

The question that Head 1 – Governor-General – stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 6(4) – REGISTRATION OFFICE

Head 6(4) – Registration Office – was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 6(4) – Registration Office – stand part in the various amounts listed, \$16,400, \$1,800, \$6,720 and \$1,200. The notes are explanatory and if there is any further assistance or explanation needed I will try to accommodate hon. members.

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

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, I believe the one point in this Resolution to which I would like to draw your attention is one which I have spoken on time and time again. It is with respect to the rental of these Xerox machines. If one were to look at it it must be seen that these machines are costing a very considerable amount by way of rental. I think that Parliament owns its own Xerox machine now and all that is required is for the purchase of paper and other equipment from the manufacturers or whatever, and I believe in such a case that Parliament is operating or should be seen to be operating at considerably less expenditure than you will find in the Registration Office or comparable offices.

What I am looking at is this, that we are paying according to the figures given us here, something like \$15,000 per annum for the mere rental of the machines. After all, Sir, it would very well be easy to try and find out what would be the purchase price of one or two of these machines and I am sure that the \$15,000 you now pay for the rental of these machines would go a good way towards the purchase price. In such a case in the long run it would be seen that a considerable saving would be effected, but it is the taxpayers' purse that the Government is concerned with and any time they can come to the House, push their hands in the taxpayers' purse and spend money without caring whether or not the best results overall are being obtained for the general public. For instance, nobody wants to deny the Registration Office an opportunity to act as speedily and as efficiently as possible, because it is a department that is very close to

the public and the demands upon the Registration Office are undoubtedly heavy indeed, but in an effort to meet these demands it does not necessarily mean that we must spend X + Y thousands of dollars when we could normally spend perhaps minus X as the case might be.

This is a matter which should not be merely mentioned on the floor of the House, but an investigation ought to be carried out, because we have an example with our own machines on these premises, and if we can find that we can find that we can operate our own machine then the same should obtain for the Registration Office. We know that the demand could not be as heavy on our office as on the Registration Office, but this ought to be investigated and not merely should we sit here and satisfy ourselves because the public will not know these things to get up and rise up and demand better for the spending of this money, but we should ask this Government not to persist in this waste of spending when we could effect a saving on behalf of the public.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that if we could get over this problem with respect to the Registration Office we would have done a very considerable job on behalf of the taxpayers of this country. But there is again the question of printing what they call the legal notices and the like. I believe that if this amount were doubled it would not be seen to be too much money because there are matters which appear in the Official Gazette from time to time but are not seen by the persons who have a direct interest in these matters, and we would urge that if it were possible to spend twice the amount of money to expand the circulation of the Official Gazette that this should be done. You will be surprised to know, Mr. Chairman, how many thousands of people in this country never see an Official Gazette. There are thousands of people like school teachers, some Ministers of religion and other categories of persons who do not see the Official Gazette, and one would feel that they would have a direct interest in what is published in the Official Gazette from time to time but you will find that its circulation cannot bear investigation, and Government ought not to be satisfied with so limited a circulation of the Official Gazette that has been functioning for so many years now. We need the people to be informed on every possible matter and Government must look at its publicity agencies and see what can be done.

Every school in this Island should be receiving the Official Gazette although it might only be read by the Head of the school, but if it is there and it is put in the school library the

young children would grow up with the interest and know what it is all about. Even some of our young teachers who have only heard about it would know. Neither at Erdiston nor on any training scheme devised for our teachers have they found it necessary to have the Official Gazette there. The importance that it is assuming year in and year out makes it the more necessary for Government to see to it that the Official Gazette is placed wherever possible that people can benefit from what is published therein.
12.50 p.m.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, there are a few points which I want to make under discussion of this Head in the Supplementary Estimates. The first is to endorse the speech of the hon. member for St. Peter in relation to the rental of Xerox machines. I think hon. members in this House do not recognise that the Xerox Corporation, outside of the United States of America, prohibit the purchase of their machines. Now, this is a restrictive trade practice, and the result of this restrictive trade practice is that Xerox command the sort of rental that one would not normally get if there was competition in the market for Xerox's products.

In some countries this matter has been dealt with by the passing of Restrictive Trade Practices legislation. Despite 15 years of government rule, the Government has not seen fit to protect the consumers of Barbados by passing proper legislation dealing with restrictive trade practices. As this Resolution shows, the Government itself is a sufferer as well as the people of Barbados by having to subscribe to high rentals in situations where we should be able to avoid this. There are circumstances in which monopolies ought to be prevented. Monopolies owned by the public as well as monopolies owned by private persons, if such monopolies are operating in the long term in a detrimental fashion to the public interest.

I am inviting the Minister of Trade, if he wants to make a real contribution to this country, to sit down in his office and do some proper analysis of the consumer legislation and the need for restrictive trade practices legislation to deal with this situation, instead of talking through his hat at all stages and not dealing effectively with what is necessary to be dealt with. If he wants some ideas, Mr. Chairman, we are quite prepared on this side to offer them to him in the interest of the public. That is one of the ideas that he may look at. I have spoken in this Honourable Committee before on the need for updating consumer legislation, and the

comments made by the hon. member for St. Peter underscores the failure of the Government to take up concrete suggestions from the Opposition from time to time.

I want to talk a bit about liquor licensing. The hon. member for St. Joseph has drawn to the attention of this Honourable Chamber on several occasions that there is a necessity for changing the Liquor Licensing Act so that people who are merely seeking renewals will get them automatically; new applicants will be dealt with administratively, and only those persons against whom there is any specific objection, either by the police or a member of the public, will find it necessary to appear in court on Monday morning or on Tuesday, or whatever day is fixed by the Licensing Authority. What has happened with our legislation is that once again we have copied from the United Kingdom legislation lock, stock and barrel without considering the waste of man hours and the inconvenience to the public which result from following that legislation.

Whilst I will concede that we have to balance the interest of the person who is seeking a licence against that of the person who may suffer from the grant of a licence without adequate consideration, I think the existing machinery is cumbersome, unnecessary, and expensive. I am not surprised that, in these circumstances, we are having to come for revotes or new votes from the Committee. We are again asking the Government to look at this legislation, to try to update and modernise it, and try and save people the inconvenience of standing in the sun, or sitting on the benches of the court, in order to get a licence granted to them from year to year.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, the present system of recording deeds and documents was affected when I was the Minister of Home Affairs and at that time in charge of the Registration Office. Up to that time the recording was done laboriously by hand. A lot of young and not so young ladies were taken into the Registration Office and a document was copied by hand. Now, that usually took six months and at some times longer than that, and we looked around for several ways of recording documents in the Registration Office. It was then decided that we would use a photocopier, and at the time, and I believe that it is still the case, Xerox was considered to be the superior copying machine in existence.

It was important, Mr. Chairman, that we should get a machine that would reproduce as

closely as possible and the best quality reproduction of any document that was produced for copying. I am not sure what goes on now, but at the time it was decided that some micro-filming would be done of these documents and they would be kept at the archives. I am not so sure whether that was ever put into effect, and I am not so sure if it is done now, but that was a decision several years ago when I was in charge of the Registration Office.

I am glad that the hon. member for Christ Church West spoke, because I got the impression when the hon. member for St. Peter spoke that it was possible for the Government to purchase a Xerox machine, but in fact that is not possible. That is a type of machine that is not sold here or in any of the countries that I know of outside of the United States of America. I do not have the technical knowledge or the ability, but it is still, I believe, the best copier that there is and that is why the Government is using the Xerox copier.

Now, this is in effect no charge to the taxpayer as such, from the point of view that all monies spent in the rental of this machine are recovered. Every copy made is paid for by the public in the same way as you pay for your birth certificate. Although the Government rent the property and we have to pay for it, we cannot pay for it out of any special fund because the Government do not operate that way. We have to come to Parliament for the money to rent this machine. At the same time, Sir, the money for the rental of this machine is paid into the Registration Office and into the Treasury.

Of course, I presume, it might be argued that if one were to purchase a machine other than a Xerox machine it might be possible to affect a saving by reducing the charge to a person who is purchasing a copy. That is very possible, but, as it is now, I think we would still like to get the best possible production of the documents that are produced, and for this reason the Xerox machine is used. I repeat that we vote the money here, but the money is recoverable outside.

The Question that Head 6(4) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 9 — Ministry of Finance and Planning — was called.

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

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

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, there is an amount here for \$8,100, and the Note states that this increase is required to meet the additional expenses as a result of the agreement between the Barbados Government and the National Union of Public Workers for payment of travelling to 9 Excise Officers at the West Indian Rum Refinery. One would have thought that the Leader of the House, in rising to move the passing of this Head, would have given consideration to the fact that the Opposition is entitled to know that this \$8,100 covers a specific period. I want to tell the Leader of the House, if he does not know, that we on this side of the House know that it covers the period November, 1975 to the end of March, 1976.

1 p.m.

If he does not have it in his notes or if it is in his notes and he cannot find it, it is a matter entirely for him, but that is the position and that is where we believe that the Leader of the House has a duty to this Honourable House to tell us. We are asking for \$8,100 to cover additional expenses, but this amount covers the period from some date to the other, and it is not going to work so in the future. When we did not have the type of strength we now have we did not stand for it, and you can understand what is going to happen as it goes on.

Mr. Chairman, there is also the question of \$6,000 for Subsidies, and all the note tells us is that that provision is required to meet the additional cost of Motor Spirit purchased from fishing outlets for use in the fishing industry and also for the purchase of canvas.

I do not believe that the Leader of the House knows what I am going to say, but he ought to be told. He must be taught even now in the last hours of his days. It is known, Mr. Chairman, that duty is paid on motor spirits that the fishing boats use from time to time, and as we understand it on this side of the House the Fisheries Officer has to issue certificates of use making up the statement that fishing boat "X", "Y" or "Z" used this amount or that amount as the case may be, so that there would be a refund of the duty that has been paid to the Comptroller of Customs. I very well remember when boats from the northern parishes had to journey into Bridgetown at one time to get fuel,

and there was a considerable amount of misunderstanding between the Ministry of Agriculture which is responsible for the fishing boats and the Comptroller of Customs. However we are still glad to see that despite the fact that the Comptroller of Customs has been again demanding that the duty must be paid, we have found a way through which it can be refunded to the boat owners, and for this we are very glad indeed. I think that is all that is necessary on which to make comment at this particular time.

The question that Head 9(3) Customs, stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 9 — MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING (4) INLAND REVENUE

Head 9 — Ministry of Finance and Planning (4) Inland Revenue — was called.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 9 — Ministry of Finance and Planning (4) Inland Revenue, stand part.

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

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, from time to time constituents and other persons in Barbados direct questions to me and ask me why doesn't the Opposition do something about income tax, and it is necessary to explain to them that although the Opposition can discuss Resolutions dealing with the Inland Revenue Department and the taxes which that Department collects, because of the Constitution of Barbados, no member of the Opposition can introduce into this Parliament a Resolution for the reduction of the rates of taxation or indeed to amend the Income Tax Act. Such would be a charge on the Consolidated Fund and we cannot do that. We can increase the tax but we cannot reduce it. We can only come into Parliament on an actual vote on a money Resolution and then move a reduction at that stage, but we cannot initiate a Resolution ourselves. Let me make the legal position absolutely clear.

Because of the system of parliamentary democracy which we have inherited and in order for Government to have control through the Executive and normally through parliament of the purse strings, the Opposition has a very limited role to perform in relation to financial matters, and therefore it is necessary for me to remind the public of Barbados that if we could we would have done several things in relation to the high rate of taxation of this country. Let me

put it this way. But I do take the opportunity in discussing the Inland Revenue Department to make a few points which stare this Committee in its face from time to time.

In 1971 the then hon. member for Bridgetown, who regrettably no longer wants to remain a member of this Chamber, moved a Resolution asking Government to give consideration to the removal of taxation of the joint incomes of husbands and wives, and of course there was an election, so the Government brought down an amendment at some stage and this Chamber has been bombarded with respective positions as to whose idea it was, whether it was Government's idea or Opposition's idea. Since that time, however, I have explained to the Government that the amendment carried out to the Income Tax Act in 1971 by the forty-second law of that year was only a partial concession to the women folk of Barbados, and that the Government persists in keeping on the Statute Book a law which discriminates against women, and despite the International Women's Year of 1975 the Government continues to ignore requests for amendment to this law.

Now under the existing legislation, Sections 15 and 37, although a married woman and her husband may return separate income returns, it is only in relation to earned income that there is any genuine separation of taxation. If the woman and her husband are working — I like to put these things in simple language so that the Government at least would understand — it is possible for her to go and get not only a separate assessment, but her income is treated as that of any other individual working and her rates of tax adjusted accordingly. If however the woman is a retired person and she has saved up during her working life time monies which she has on a bank and she is getting interest on that money, or if she has bought a few shares in some of the companies and she is getting dividends from those other than preference shares prior to January 1975, that retired pensioner, old lady, because she happens to have done the moral thing and got married, must have her income joined to that of her husband.

1.10 p.m.

I have spelt that out simply for the Government. I am begging the Government once more in the interest of women and as a concession, to be manly enough since they have the power — to take the opportunity even in election year, even without having the pleasure of being able to say that they did it — to amend the Income Tax Act. The Minister of Finance, the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, the hon. member for St.

John is responsible for this; and I am asking him to bring down a proper amendment in the interest of the women of Barbados which should not discriminate against them, and will not penalise them for being married women who have retired from their employment.

The hon. member for St. Michael South Central now says that he will be responsible for women's affairs. If that is so, let him go into the Cabinet and fight for an amendment to this Act. That is all I ask him to do. It is unfair to continue this form of taxation in these circumstances.

Recently, in the last session, we passed an Act to provide a corporation tax. Everybody now can see that although the corporation tax has saved the Government embarrassment in its day to day budgeting, it has been a disaster in dampening investment in the country. Inland Revenue deals with this. I am discussing Inland Revenue which deals with this.

We have gone on record as a party and have issued a statement that when we are returned to power we will give incentives in order to abolish the corporation tax because it has been proven to be a mere revenue-collecting item without any advantage to the economic development of the country in this respect.

I will show you that this Act is a miserly concession. Under the Act people who owned preference shares prior to 1975 are still being assessed separately; so what is being effectively done is to kill the preference shares market because only preference shares issued prior to January, 1, 1975, will have any real value; but preference shares holders in new companies will in the future be in a less favourable position than that of preference share holders who were issued shares prior to January, 1975.

That is the short-sighted type of legislation that one sees coming from the Government. Automatically what one would have is a depression in the market and a slowing up in economic activity; and the moment you get a slowing up in economic activity you are going to get the trend which has been occurring for many months past; and to that extent the "confidential chat" which did never ripen into a budget has failed. We were not given a real opportunity to look at the confidential chat and examine it, and point out before the deed was done the Government's errors in this respect.

It has failed in these respects, and I am asking the Government to further review the

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

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

HEAD 20(4) — ERDISTON COLLEGE — WAS CALLED.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 20(4) Item 7 — Operating Expenses — in the sum of \$63,000 stand part. It is in connection with Erdiston College as certain work is being done there.

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

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Leader of the House is in a position to tell us what is the truth with respect to this sum of \$63,000 that is now being asked for for Erdiston College. Now, I wonder if it is clearly a vote to reimburse the Treasury because the Leader of the House ought to be in possession of this type of information. We know that at one time Erdiston owed DaCosta and Mussons, they owed the firm of French & Co., it had owed Gertz Supermarket, Alleyne Arthur and Co. and other firms for service which had been rendered; but what we are saying now is this, that the Government well know of this situation ever since 1968. That is it. This \$63,000 is not anything that cropped up overnight. The then Minister was well in possession of the information that the accounts of Erdiston College were running in the red ever since 1968.

We believe that part of the problem, in addition to maladministration — part of the problem has been that the fees charged the students might have been considered too small for too long, and there was a time when the then Minister of Education who is now the Minister of Health, had it drawn to his attention that within eight months they had piled up an additional \$8,000 in credit that they could not account for anywhere whatsoever. That was between 1970–71 and all the Minister was then in a position to say was, to hold strain, he would wait and see.

Now, we understand that there was a Cabinet decision whereby the Treasury was instructed not to refuse payment of bills with respect to Erdiston College; in other words, that they were just carrying on and carrying on and paying and paying but forgetting that pay day would have to come — the day for repaying, for reimbursing the Treasury would have to come, and apparently it has now reached the point where the Treasury can no longer stand it and they must find \$63,000 with which to reimburse the Treasury.

1.30 p.m.

In 1972 it was discovered that they were \$30,000 in the red at Erdiston and I think it is at that time that it was a question of raising the boarding fees and so on, but the present Minister of Education has gone to Erdiston and has promised that he would increase these fees with a view to reducing this excessive indebtedness for which they could not account.

There is the question of the overseas students. Payment on behalf of overseas students as we understand it is made directly into the Accountant General's department and nobody at Erdiston or the Ministry of Education is really informed or brought up to date as often or as quickly as possible, so that in other words the Accounts of the Ministry of Education are not credited with these payments from overseas Governments with respect to their students. All of these things show a lack of administration, show a total disregard for the functioning and the proper running of an institution such as this, because one must understand if the Principal of Erdiston while in the midst of preparing his academic programme for his institution has to be brought face to face with the fact that there are no funds to feed the students, this cannot go for the furthering of the academic progress of this institution. We believe, Sir, that with a complement of something like 70 full time students this is a programme that calls for a whole time officer. We understand that a dietitian was brought in, but prices and costs have sky-rocketed after the dietitian was brought in. What makes it worse is that the farming and gardening that have been engaged in over the past years which helped to provide some of the ground provisions to reduce the financing of the institution have not been functioning for more than six months now, and when an attempt was made to resuscitate the process of gardening one found that disease ravaged the crops of cabbages and carrots and other things that were planted.

All these things have gone together to bring about the state of affairs with which we are now faced with respect to Erdiston and it would certainly serve us some good purpose if we could be told what the Government proposes doing in respect of Erdiston, because it is all right that we are now being asked to bail out Erdiston with this \$63,000, but what are we going to do tomorrow? What guarantees can we get now from the Government that they are going to streamline their affairs, to have the finances of Erdiston so managed that it will not be seen to be running into the red as we have been seeing it in the past years, because as I have already stated, this situation has been existing prior to 1968. What we need at Erdiston is someone who knows

something about food cost analysis. That is the type of thing which should be brought to bear on an institution like this. It is all right to have students pay \$2.50 for a meal that is costing \$3.00 to produce, but somebody has to subsidise it. Some of our old people who have to bear the burden of taxation that is imposed upon them will not be able to pay more. It is just a bit too much and they cannot bear the grind any longer, so we are asking the Minister to let us know that he has concrete proposals with respect to Erdiston so that we will not find the affairs at Erdiston demanding so much money or to be reimbursing the Treasury to the tune of \$63,000.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, let me first apologise for not being present at the time when the hon. member for St. Peter started to discuss this Item. Erdiston happens to be the only teachers' training college in this country, and to a large extent it is residential. I would like to say that my predecessor appointed, quite rightly, an advisory committee to advise the Ministry on certain areas at Erdiston and that committee is still functioning.

I would like to say first that as Minister of Education I am looking at the whole question of teacher training in Barbados and I shall shortly be setting up a committee so that the whole question not of Erdiston but of teacher training based on my investigations of primary and secondary schools to see how we can get more trained teachers into Erdiston and the in-service diploma at Cave Hill. That matter is going to be looked after. Furthermore, Erdiston is at the moment under-utilised and I have asked the Advisory Committee of Erdiston headed by Dr. Allsopp and other educationists to look at the whole question of Erdiston from a residential point of view to see whether or not we can abolish, if they so advise me and their advice is sort of based on a rational assessment of the situation whether Erdiston should be residential or not, because it is under-utilised in that with over 100 places for resident students I think at the moment there are between 67 and 80 students in residence. So I am looking at the question whether I can use the unused residential space to create more space for the training of teachers, because I am satisfied that the ratio of teachers in the primary system is not as high as I would like it.

As I said before, I am laying the emphasis on primary education which is the base for secondary and university education, and any student who does not have the proper basis of primary education is likely to suffer both in the

secondary and the tertiary stages of education. I do not think I need convince this Hon. House that with the increase in the cost of living and the increase in commodities it is extremely difficult to charge all students at Erdiston a figure which really is the cost of feeding them. Take for instance the question of the school meals system. We charge students and children 10 cents a day.

1.40 p.m.

To feed children, who are in the school meals system, is approximately over one dollar and something cents a day. If we charge parents in the school meals system the cost of providing a feed for the children who get it — at the moment we are feeding 30,000 children, and by April we hope to feed every child in the primary system in Barbados, and I think hon. members would like to know that we are trying to include St. Patrick's School, since the children there are poor students from the City; then you will see that if we endeavour to charge the students at Erdiston and students in the Government Training Institution what is actually the cost of feeding them, then in the present salary level which teachers in training receive it would be an economic problem for them.

In addition to this I, as the Minister of Education, am satisfied that, in several cases, it would be easier for students to live at home. Even the figure which they now pay of \$64.00 — \$64.00 in a household contributing to the purchase of commodities to feed your mother, father and children — most of these teachers come from certain economic levels — would be better than one individual spending \$64.00 in a residential institution. If they are living at home, and they bought the food or took the money that they have to pay to the institution, it would contribute more to feeding their own domestic household than if they were paying the money to Erdiston. But \$64.00 a term is certainly not in terms of what it costs to provide them with the meals per day, and it is certainly not economic or reasonable.

I think that we, in our own personal lives, realise that we cannot afford to feed our own families on the figure which the students are paying to Erdiston. We have had an exercise done, and we have found that it costs us nearly \$8.00 a day to feed the students in Erdiston with three meals. That is very reasonable. I must say that, as a result of this deficit, in January I took to the Cabinet a paper to increase the fees which students must pay for their feeding at Erdiston. (*Asides.*) It was increased considerably. It was more than \$70.00; it was a hundred and

something dollars. I do not have the figure before me, but we had to increase it.

As a result of a meeting which I had with the Advisory Council it was to come into effect from the next term at Erdiston. I will either have to come here for a subsidy, or I will have to charge the students what it costs to feed them. Let us be realistic. To feed somebody on \$64.00 a month today with three meals is unrealistic. Where can you get three meals a day for \$64.00 a term? You also have to give this sort of feeding to overseas students on a slightly higher figure. You cannot do it with the price of the various commodities. (*Asides.*) I am not talking about the school meals, I am talking about Erdiston. The school meals will cost about \$1.10, but the students will eat much more than that. It costs us roughly over \$1.10 for the school meals system, but I am talking about the students at Erdiston who are grown people.

Now, I am a realist in politics, and I want students to understand that if the taxpayers have to pay, then they have to pay for what they are eating even if I have to get a small subsidy. I have agreed, after protest from Erdiston, and Cabinet has agreed to postpone the increase of fees to the new term in September. What I am saying is that this deficit has been built up over the years because the amount charged to the students is not what the food costs. I can give you statistics to justify that. The number of students who were resident at Erdiston in December has been less than the full capacity of the boarding establishment, and there are not many nonresident students taking meals. The boarding capacity is 114 students, and the number of students in residence there for the past four years has been as follows:

1972-73	.	.	69 out of 114.
1973-74	.	.	63
1974-75	.	.	67
1975-76	.	.	76.

The catering staff of the College comprise of 1 Housekeeper, 2 Cooks, 11 Maids, and 1 Scrubber, who also receive meals free of charge.

You will see, therefore, that if you charge the students what is not the economic cost of providing the meals, apart from the other costs of running the Institution, then you will have to come to Parliament for money which will be a subsidy to the teachers in residence. If you are laying emphasis on training, if you are laying emphasis on improving things, then you have to consider the cost. The Cabinet has agreed not to increase it at the moment because there is no salary increase; therefore, my suggestion is to increase it from April rather than from

September when I hope that the new salary increase will be brought into being in consideration of the request of the students. (*Asides.*) There is no wastage of food. There may be in any institution the usual lack of administration at some time or other.

I think hon. members must agree that if you provide a service and you are not charging what it costs to provide the service, then the Government, at some point, has to take up a certain degree of subsidy. If I provide a meal in the Dining Room of Parliament and you are contributing to it and you are not paying what it costs in overheads and staff, then somebody has to pay and it is usually the taxpayer. I have asked the Advisory Committee at Erdiston to look into two points at Erdiston: the curriculum at Erdiston, and whether or not Erdiston should remain residential. In the efficacy and the importance of residential institutions, I have asked them to look into that factor because my job is to push more trained teachers into the primary system than at present exist.

I would ask hon. members to accept that this subsidy has been built up over the years because we have not been charging teachers in training what should have been the economic cost of running the boarding establishment. I am also looking at the point of whether we should give out the catering on contract. This is a global assessment of the Teachers in The Training Institution and whether it should be non-residential. We want them to look at the curriculum and say whether or not we should provide a cafeteria and offer it on contract to somebody to save my having to come to this Honourable House for similar requests in the future.

I repeat that I am asking hon. members to accept that this amount has been built up over the years because the students at Erdiston have not been paying what is the economic costs for feeding. At one time Erdiston had a surplus, but because of the increase in the cost of commodities over the years it has now dwindled to the amount which is now before this Honourable House. That is why it has never been brought to this House before. Over the years when commodities were low, there was no fuel increase, there was no increase in wages, and the institution, because of its agricultural and other inputs, could manage.

1.50 p.m.

This has been built up over the years because of the sudden increase in commodities, in prices of gas and other things used in providing

meals for school children. I am watching it, and looking at the whole point of how it can be handled, and the whole question of the residential nature of Erdiston in order to save requests like these coming before the Honourable House, because I am satisfied that Erdiston is basic for educational improvement in this country since the teachers at Erdiston are the teachers who go into the primary system which is my main thrust in improving the educational advancement of all the children in this country.

Mr. BOLDEN rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will not be allowed to speak.

Mr. BOLDEN: The Hon. Minister did not give anybody on this side a chance to speak.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: That is not true.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will take his seat. The Hon. Minister most decidedly did allow an opportunity for any hon. member to make his contribution. (Mr. BOLDEN: He jumped up and spoke.) That is not true.

The Question that Head 20 – Ministry of Education (4) Erdiston College – stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that the Resolution for the sum of \$128,447 do now pass.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1975–76 No. 38

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Chairman, the next Resolution is for the sum of \$630 for the Post Office, and the Minister of Communications and Works will move this.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Chairman, supplementary provision of \$630 is required as personal allowances for the Post Office under Item 3, to meet the payment of duty allowances to staff of the Seawell Airport Air Mail facility to the end of the current financial year.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

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

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

THE MOTOR VEHICLES AND ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) REGULATIONS, 1976

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, the next Item stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works, to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations 1976.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution was introduced in the House of Assembly a few weeks ago before the House was adjourned until this date. This comes as a result of an amendment to the Traffic Act passed by the House of Assembly during the early part of last month, the purpose being to allow us to employ traffic wardens and to put crossings in the vicinity of schools for the safe passage of children across the road.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that this Resolution deals with the question of establishing pedestrian crossings at schools in the city where the children's lives may well be in danger and therefore this matter during my predecessor's time was discussed and it was very unfortunate that during his time it did not come to the point where today a Resolution like this is before the House. We do plan, Mr. Speaker, if this Resolution is passed, to get these signs and pedestrian crossings ready for the new school term which starts after the Easter

vacation. As I said, I should like to pay tribute to the Young Women's Christian Association for the fact that they are doing this as a community project to enable students to escape any dangers which they may face from time to time. I think it is very laudible and I wish more voluntary organisations like the Y.W.C.A. would come forward and offer their services in so many areas in which they are needed, because I always feel in Barbados that the harvest truly is plentiful but the labourers are few, and there is a wide area in Barbados even today for the type of voluntary services which all organisations, not only the Women's organisations, but service organisations can offer to the underprivileged and the people of this country as the Y.W.C.A. is offering in helping us to man these busy pedestrian crossings where the youth of this nation may be in danger of being killed.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am surprised....

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: The hour now being 2 p.m., this sitting now stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. 2.00 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, if I may draw it to your attention, the House requires nine persons including yourself to form a quorum. If I can still remember how to count, there is now no such quorum in this House. We have now got it, thanks to the Chairman of Committees.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Sitting is resumed, and it is now Question Time. Question No. 52 asked by the hon. member for St. Joseph.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the Question reads as follows:—

To ask the appropriate Minister: Would the Minister state: (1) what provisions are made under the National Insurance Scheme to cover: (a) boat owners who go to sea in their boats? (b) Fishermen who go to sea in boats not owned by themselves? (2) Are persons falling in category (b) above liable to pay full National Insurance and therefore receive all the benefits under the National Insurance Scheme? If the answer is in the negative, would the Minister consider such changes in the National Insurance Act as to cover all fishermen?

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 52 is as follows:—

"1(a) Boat owners who go to sea in their own boats and who are between ages 16 and 65 years are insurable as self-employed persons under the National Insurance Scheme;

(b)(i) A fisherman between ages 16 and 65 years who goes to sea in a boat not owned by himself and is remunerated by a share in catch is insurable as a self-employed person and is also covered for employment injury benefit.

(ii) In any other case where there is a contract of service between the fisherman and the owner of the boat the fisherman is insurable as an employed person.

2. All insured persons are entitled to the benefits provided for by the National Insurance Scheme."

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware that many fishermen who fall sick or are injured do not receive the full level of national insurance as other workmen?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: No, Sir.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister carry out an investigation to satisfy himself that such persons are not compensated in accordance with the Rules of the National Insurance Scheme, and make the necessary provisions for equalisation of the rights of persons under National Insurance?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, as the answer itself contemplates, fishermen are insured under employment injury and everybody has to pay employment injury. The question then is that so long as the fisherman can make his claim and substantiate his claim he will be compensated. I am not aware, as I said at the beginning, that any fishermen have not been compensated to their full amount or not at all. I do not quite know what is meant by not compensated or in full at all. It presumes that they are given some measure of compensation. Let me assure the hon. member that when there is any compensation to be given the matter is gone into fully by those persons who are in charge of the National Insurance Fund, and the fishermen are compensated accordingly. I am given the undertaking that I will ask some questions from the Director of National Insurance and find out if in fact the charges that have been made here and now can be substantiated.

Mr. CRAIG: Will the Minister state if it is possible to provide ship to shore wireless equipment for the fishermen?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: That is not a supplementary Question. That is a different question altogether.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will decide.

Mr. CRAIG: I was only trying to get it in. It is not a supplementary.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, ship to shore equipment is quite good if they are on ships so that each can locate their positions just as you would be in a car and say that my car has stopped at such and such a street corner; but if a man just calls out a distress signal, unless he can give his position it is absolutely useless because it is like trying to find a needle in a haystack. There is the position where two boats that know exactly their positions can locate either one by simultaneous bearings. If I know where he is I can get a bearing. If the hon. member for St. Joseph knows where he is, he can take a bearing, and knowing our true positions, either one of us can take a cross bearing and locate exactly where the man in distress is. Otherwise it would just be a line and we would not know on which side of the line it is.

That is one side with the equipment. No. 2 is that it is very very expensive equipment, and now that we are starting to build bigger boats, they will be more adaptable to this type of equipment; but the average type of small boat — with salt air, not salt water as some may believe, but salt air — is destructive for the average boat today having electrical equipment. It is highly expensive, and far above what it used to be for maintenance and upkeep of the boats.

I have been having this problem, and I have been going into it just for the love of it; but it is too expensive from a commercial point of view for poor people to operate.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to draw to the attention of the Hon. Minister of Education that I could hear his voice in the background. Let us have some order in here, please.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am very glad that the Hon. Minister of Ports — I think that is what he is now — gave us that explanation. We know that he is an authority on this. You cannot stop me now because earlier you said that it was not a supplementary and the Minister got up and gave an answer. When these fishing boats are out

to sea and are in distress how do they communicate with the Coast Guard Station?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, that is not a supplementary question.

Mr. CRAIG: The Speaker has to determine that. You, Sir, have called on me to ask a supplementary.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are entitled.

Mr. CRAIG: Thank you, Sir. Would the Minister of Ports give us some answer? Since the Minister has told us that they cannot afford ship to shore equipment because fishermen do not know the position that they are in, how do the fishermen determine what position they are in for the Coast Guard to come to their rescue when they are in distress? (*Asides*)

Hon. G. G. FERGUSON: The boat may be in contact with the Coast Guard Station because there is a distress and emergency on the 2,182 kilocycles. It is kept clear on the hour and on the half hour for distress signals. It is on the hour for three minutes and on the half hour for three minutes, open for distress signals, and any ship can pick it up; but there is no means by which he can locate where a ship is unless the ship is in a position to give its position, latitude and longitude or cross bearings from any two land objects.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, we have heard about 2,182 kilocycles, and latitude and longitude. (*Asides*) Will you ask the Minister of Education to behave himself so that I can be heard in silence? If the position is that as the Minister has stated, that this equipment is too expensive, will the Minister state if he thinks that Government could subsidise it?

Mr. BOLDEN: We do not want to hear about latitude or longitude. Let us deal with the fishing boat which is in the water out there. Would the Minister state if the Government can subsidise it?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, you said that you did not want any confusion in this Chamber, and I agree with that; but if these kinds of foolish supplementary questions are going to be allowed, there is bound to be confusion in here. This has to do with National Insurance. What has that got to do with radar or radio equipment?

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, is he challenging your ruling?

Mr. SPEAKER: All of you will take your seats. I am saying that if the Minister does not want to answer, no one can make him answer. *(Asides)*

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, in the light of the answers given by the Minister without Portfolio, is he telling us that there is no direction-finding equipment at the Coast Guard Station?

Mr. SPEAKER: This question does not bear any relation to anything to do with the Coast Guard.

Mr. ADAMS: If I may say so, on a point of order, we have had answers about 2,182 kilocycles and three minute broadcasts on the hour and half hour to enable shore authorities to get a fix on the distress signals and use the direction finding to locate where it is even though the givers of the distress signal are out of sight of land and cannot give ship to shore signals themselves. What I am asking is, are we in Barbados saying that we have a Coast Guard Station that cannot locate distress signals at sea and we are spending \$2 million a year on it, that fishermen can go to sea and not seeing land we cannot find out where they are? Is that what the Government is admitting today?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question is out of order.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the statement given by the Minister without Portfolio, would the Minister state whether or not the Government is prepared to subsidise the instalment of direction-finding equipment in fishing boats?
2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: That has no bearing on this, and the hon. member has had his three.

Mr. BOLDEN: Yes. I had my three.

Question No. 54 was called.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, to ask the appropriate Minister: Is the Minister aware that: (1) there are many old persons, who, because they own a small house or plot of land, have been unable to receive a pension from the Government although they are too old to work and have no means of earning a living? (2) many Government pensioners are finding that their pensions are inadequate due to the high cost of living? Would the Minister therefore state: (a) how soon does Government intend to review the

means test as at present applied so as to include these persons who are in need of a pension and are not now receiving any? (b) whether the Government is prepared to review the pensions received by ex-civil servants and grant a pension to such persons commensurate with the level of salary paid today in the same posts? *(Aside)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Is not the hon. member trying to contravene the Rules? I do not want anyone to tell me when to tell him to sit down. I will tell him to sit down if I think it is time for him to sit. Just now the hon. member for St. Joseph did accordingly as the Standing Orders set out. Calling the number of the question. I will expect him to do the same this time.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 54 relates to old people who are in need of pension and cannot receive pension because they may have a little old house or a little plot of land. That is question No. 54.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Reply to Question No. 54 is as follows:—

1. Information available to me indicates that over the past six years only thirteen persons have had their applications for Old Age Pensions refused on grounds of ownership of property, and there has been no indication of any undue hardship resulting from those decisions.

The reply to part 2 of the question is Yes, Sir. To part 3: The Means Test is currently under review. And to part 4: It is the policy of the Government to review the pensions paid to ex-civil servants at the time of revision of salaries of government workers.

Mr. BOLDEN: Would the Minister state the area from which the 13 persons, according to him, over the six years have had their applications refused and the number of persons who have had applications approved over the last six years.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I do not have that information with me.

Mr. BOLDEN: The Minister is not coming square to the House in telling us that he knows a figure of people who have been refused but tells us he has not got certain information with him to bear out these figures?

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member trying to mislead the House?

Mr. BOLDEN: Do you mean me? Not me. I asked a question. I am seeking information. I cannot mislead while seeking information.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the question specifically asked or indicated that there are many old persons who, because of a small house or plot have been unable to receive a pension; and the information supplied me by the appropriate department indicates that over the past six years there were 13 such applications which were refused. If the hon. member wishes to know the areas or get that type of information I can seek to obtain that information for him. I am only saying I do not have it here; it has not been supplied to me, I do not have it here now. It was not part of the question, but I have no doubt that the information is available.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, is the information available to the Minister of such a quality as reveals how many people were advised by the old age pension inspectors not to put in an application because they were land owners and their applications would be refused?

Mr. SPEAKER: Two members are on their feet.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, a part of that question is not understood. Does the Minister agree that there is such an office as old age pension inspectors? (b) Does the Minister agree that people consult the inspectors before they send in formal applications? (c) Do the Inspectors keep any record of how many people they tell not to bother to apply because they are land owners and will not get the pension if they do? And if so, (d) how many people are in the position? There are four parts.

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, will the Minister investigate to find out if one of these 13 people live in the parish of St. James and if the person had applied time and again and had been refused time and again, and during 1975 on the specific instructions from the Attorney General the person had been refused and refused?

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would supply some information I would promise to investigate the matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 72. The hon. member for St. James.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this only has to do with roads and so on for St. James. Nothing much. That is all, Sir.

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

"There is is a drainage problem at Prospect Road which is currently under study and a scheme will be prepared for drainage and repair works to remedy this situation.

Repair work is being undertaken on Westmoreland Road and work will commence shortly on Carlton Road No. 1. Repairs have been carried out on the other roads mentioned in the Parliamentary Question."

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I really do not like to thank Ministers but I think we are well aware of the fact that anything they have done for the people of St. James is for the people of St. James, and I want to thank him very much. In the meantime I would like to know about how long ago they started repairs on the roads in Durants Village.
3.05 p.m.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: The repairs to the road in Durants Village were started some time last month.

Mr. CRAIG: This would be in the month of February and the question was asked some time in December.

QUESTION RE THREATENING LETTERS SENT BY C. TUDOR

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 76 asked by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. ADAMS: No. 76, dealing with threatening letters sent by Clement Tudor.

To ask the Minister of Housing:

1. Is the Minister aware that letters demanding payment are being sent in the name of the Manager of the National Housing Corporation to persons who may have been Debtors of the Corporation, but may now have valid defences at law to any actions for recovery of the former debts?

2. Has the Minister or the Manager, and if so which of them, authorised the use of the phrase "This is the last chance you have got to save your house" in such letters demanding payment?

3. Is any one by the name "C. Tudor, J.P." authorised to sign such letters?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 76 is as follows:

"1. No Sir. A form letter requesting persons in arrears with outstanding loans to call at the office of the National Housing Corporation in connection with the outstanding loans is issued to debtors under the name of the Manager, National Housing Corporation, by the arrears collectors employed by the Corporation.

2. & 3. No Sir. The phrase in question was added by a collector, Mr. C. Tudor, without the authority of the Corporation."

Mr. ADAMS: Is this Mr. C. Tudor, Mr. C. Tudor, J.P? Is this Mr. C. Tudor a Justice of the Peace? If this Mr. C. Tudor is a Justice of the Peace and he is sending letters with threatening phrases on them unauthorised by the National Housing Corporation, will the Minister take steps to have his position as a Justice of the Peace revoked? What disciplinary steps will be taken against this Mr. C. Tudor following this reply of the Minister?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The matter has been drawn to the attention of Mr. Tudor that he must make no such statements in letters of the National Housing Corporation.

Mr. SIMMONS: I would like to ask the Hon. Minister this question. Is he aware that a number of actions were brought in the High Court last year against tenants of houses owned by the National Housing Corporation, and is he able to tell us how many actions were Statute barred?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I cannot state how many were Statute barred but I can say the Corporation has collected a lot of money from a lot of people who had owed the Corporation for a very long time.

Mr. CRAIG: Is the Minister aware that the Prime Minister made it very clear that the people who were living in the houses should not pay the rents?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: The Minister is not aware of any such statement coming from the Prime Minister.

Mr. CRAIG: Is the Minister then aware that he should not be Minister of the National Housing Corporation?

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am aware that such ignorance should not come from somebody in here.

QUESTION RE A DEVELOPMENT ENTERPRISE FOR THE PURPOSE OF THE BARBADOS DEVELOPMENT BANK ACT

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 80 which stands in the name of the same hon. member.

Mr. ADAMS: This relates to whether the Barbados Development Bank is buying the Advocate.

To ask the Minister of Finance: Has the carrying on of a daily newspaper been approved by the Minister as a development enterprise for the purpose of the Barbados Development Bank Act Cap. 323?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: The reply is as follows:

No application has been received by me for the carrying on of a daily newspaper to be approved as a development enterprise.

Mr. ADAMS: Can the Minister say whether any negotiations have been entered into between the Barbados Development Bank and the Advocate Company Limited or the Thomson Organisation for the purchase of the Advocate Newspaper?

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am not aware of any, Sir.

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

Mr. ADAMS: Did Your Honour say that was the end of Question Time? I wanted to ask the Minister if he was aware of a meeting which took place only last night.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already ruled and I am warning the Leader of the Opposition who should know what to do. I am very sorry to see you do this, do not try it again. I have already spoken to members on the right, including Ministers. Question Time is at an end and we shall now proceed with Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Item No. 1 is in Select Committee, Item No. 2 is in Select Committee and Item No. 3 should be in Select Committee but the three months have expired and therefore in respect of Item No. 3 I can only move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on this

Bill. After three months if it has not been reported on by the Select Committee it stands automatically referred to a Committee of the whole House. If the Clerk will not summon the Select Committee the rules must be obeyed. I am informed that the Committee was summoned but no quorum has as yet been obtained, but the rules say after three months the matter shall stand referred to the whole House. It has to go to a Committee of the whole House and that Committee can ask for leave for it to be returned to the Select Committee. If people will not come to a Select Committee I believe the House should proceed to discuss it.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, this is a Private Members' Bill and I was the only person from either side who attended that summoned meeting of the Select Committee. I would agree that this matter should be re-committed to a Select Committee, because I think it is too important to be dealt with here and I would like it to be sent back to a Select Committee.

Mr. ADAMS: With great respect, Sir, the rule says it shall be referred to a Committee of the whole House.

Mr. SPEAKER: May I draw to the hon. member's attention that under Standing Order 62(6) where a Select Committee does not report to the House in the period set out in Standing Order 61(5) the House may commit the Bill to a Committee of the whole House and the powers of the Select Committee in relation to that Bill shall cease.

3.15 p.m.

Mr. ADAMS: Standing Order 61(5) is a misprint. (*Asides.*) Standing Order 61(5) is a misprint, you idiot.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. ADAMS: Obviously, I do not mean you, Sir. Nobody could put you in the class of the hon. member for St. Michael North West, Sir. Therefore, my motion is in order, Sir. I have moved a motion that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and this Bill be referred to a Committee of the whole House.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I have just moved that this Bill be referred to the same Select Committee which has not reported to the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has that been seconded?

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, you cannot have two motions. You must have one motion. We are going to vote against that, so there is no point in worrying about it. (*Asides.*)

The question that His Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on the Bill was put and resolved in the negative, the Committee dividing as follows:

AYES: Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON; Hon. A. MORRISON; Hon. P.M. GREAVES; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Hon. F. G. SMITH; Mr. LOWE; Mr. EDWARDS; Mr. WALCOTT; Mr. E. GREAVES; Mrs. EASTMOND and Mr. WEEKES
— 13

NOES: Mr. ADAMS; Mr. SIMMONS; Mr. CRAIG and Mr. HINDS — 4.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, all I can do is to move that this Bill be referred to a Select Committee consisting of the same hon. members.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

RESOLUTION REQUESTING LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE COMPENSATION FOR AN ELECTOR WHO IS PREVENTED FROM VOTING

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 5 standing in the name of the hon. member for St. James be the next Order of the Day under Private Members' Business.

Mr. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: When Private Members' Business expired, the hon. member for St. Joseph was speaking. I do not now see him in his seat. If any other member wishes to make a contribution, he may do so.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is in my name, and I have the right of reply.

Mr. SPEAKER: You can do so now.

Mr. CRAIG: If any hon. member did not get on his feet, I expected you to call on me to reply, Sir. I believe that this Resolution came in at a time when the small five on this side can

salute the member for St. Philip North. I also believe that had this Resolution been passed at the time a lot of people would have had a piece of change. It was clearly indicated that there were a number of people involved in the St. Philip North by-election with Identification Cards who went to the polls and were denied the right to vote through no fault of their own. This is exactly what this Resolution was about. I believe that because of the arguments which we put up in here time after time arguing that the registration was not as good as it should be — we quarrelled repeatedly about the Government putting a number of counting agents and presiding officers to do certain things who were members of the Governing Party; we quarrelled not only in the interest of the Opposition, but in the interest of the Government of tomorrow as well as the Opposition of tomorrow.

For example, last Thursday we saw young men and women with their Identification Cards going to the Polling Booths to be turned away. Let us assume, Sir, that 300 of them had been turned away, it would have been a different picture, one way or another, from the point of view that the present member for St. Philip North would have won much more handsomely. I am a little concerned about those persons who were, unfortunately, turned away, too. I have with me a couple of names, but I am not prepared to go into the matter in any great detail as far as they are concerned. Today what we are happy about is that with good machinery, young faces, fresh brains, with fresh minds, we were able to do a good enough job in St. Philip North to compensate for those people who were denied the right to vote.

3.25 p.m.

Now you can imagine that you were in that position, Mr. Speaker, and I have no doubt in my mind that it would not be necessary in a couple of months' time with you because there would not be a recount with you. I believe we are going to meet outside as old friends much to my regret; but you know I am one who would always wish you were here, but unfortunately that is the position. Imagine having taken some fifty or sixty persons out of the Homes and taken them to the polls and they are denied the right to vote. I feel these people should be compensated and a charge should be brought against the Presiding Officer or the Chief Electoral Officer. This is all this resolution is about. This is simply to protect the presiding officers, to make them understand that governments rise and governments fall, to protect the Chief Electoral Office and to make sure that the machinery at governmental level is the best.

Mr. Speaker, we had some six or seven members from the Government side discussing this Resolution. Now let me ask this question! Was it necessary to have all these? The hon. member for St. Michael North West picked up a lot of bogus laws and read and I heard the lawyers on this side challenge him and eventually he collapsed. I do not think it needed all this. We were out to protect the Chief Electoral Officer and the Presiding Officer and to make sure that the people who control the booths as Presiding Officers are people whom we feel should be impartial and doing a job for the country. You know very well what has been said about Banfield from St. Joseph. You get people like him walking about with cards in their hands telling you they are Dems and you cannot do anything about it. I would suggest they do not risk that with me in St. James because I would have to controvert the elections.

Mr. Speaker, why is it that you should have these people running up and down, giving up a day's work, denying their children the comfort of their homes and arms by going out to do their democratic duty and cast that sacred vote, then to be told that they cannot vote and absolutely nothing is done about it. I saw a list in St. Philip North with a number of people from Applehall in the South brought into the north. I am sorry I have not got the list with me, but you had this list of people coming in to vote in the north simply because they knew the people in the south at that time were members of the Government party. The new member for St. Philip North and a man called Pabbo and Joseph Mason had a list trying to find out if these people were in the north or south. There were almost 75 or 80 of them coming into the north to vote, and this leads me to the next question.

I am carefully watching the Barrow's and Moe's manoeuvres in this exercise with these overseas votes.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order, the hon. member knows very well since he has been in here for some time that you cannot refer to the Honourable Prime Minister as Barrow. Only a hooligan does that.

Mr. CRAIG: I was always told to respect grey hairs and I would like to do that. I am referring to a man called Barrow and a man called Moe. If there is a Right Honourable Prime Minister for the Leader of the House, he is not honourable for me and would never be. (Hon. F. G. SMITH: Whom are you talking about?) I am talking about Nigel Barrow, you idiot!

Mr. SPEAKER: I will ask the hon. member for St. James to make his discourse very carefully because I am listening.

Mr. CRAIG: If I contravene the Rules I know you will be the first to direct it to my attention. (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: I am ruling in here. I do not know who is Hoppin or who is Smith, but when I am satisfied a particular member is being referred to, I will deal with it. There are many Barrows and Moes.

Mr. CRAIG: Sir, there is Lawyer Smith and Sleepy Smith. However, I am very concerned with these registration lists being doctored, and all that this Resolution seeks to do is to protect the people who are Presiding Officers, because I have warned already that governments rise and fall, and it would be very unfortunate for a Presiding Officer to pay the penalty for what he is not guilty of.

3.35 p.m.

If a person is denied that right to vote, it is the duty of the Government to make sure that the registration list is correct and is an authentic document. I am not going to hold up this House much longer. On that note I am going to move that this Resolution do now pass. I sincerely hope that members on the other side will see the light and look at this Resolution in the context in which it has been brought before the House.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:—

NOES: Hon. F. G. SMITH; Hon. C. E. TALMA; Hon. G. G. FERGUSON; Hon. P. M. GREAVES; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE; Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD; Mr. W. R. LOWE; Mr. E. E. GREAVES; Mr. F. L. WALCOTT; Mr. R. StC. WEEKES and Mrs. G. L. EASTMOND — 11.

AYES: Mr. J. M. G. M. ADAMS; Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS; Mr. L. S. CRAIG; Mr. W. C. B. HINDS and Mr. H. deB. FORDE — 5.

Mr. SPEAKER: The first Order under Private Members' Business — the hon. member is not in his seat.

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I do not mind going past it, but I am not prepared to move that it be postponed. What I am prepared to do is not to call it. I will move that Order No. 7 be postponed.

Mr. SIMMONS: I beg to second that.

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

RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: That brings us to the end of Private Members' Business. The House now reverts to Government Business, and when the suspension was taken, the hon. member for St. Joseph rose in his place to speak on Item 2. I do not now see him in his place. Would any other hon. member like to make a contribution?

Mr. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, this appears to be a Resolution to make provision for traffic wardens in Barbados. I must say that it appears that a relatively momentous step is being taken, and I think that this approach to road traffic regulations can only be deplored for its patchwork nature and piecemeal approach.

Traffic wardens are almost being given authority to direct traffic and control traffic in respect of this very narrow area in the vicinity of schools, while at the same time they are being given uniforms and not being given any positive powers of arrest. I am one of those who is perfectly prepared to see a scheme by means of which trained members of the Royal Barbados Police Force would be released for more momentous reasons while traffic wardens are appointed to carry out some of the more simple duties connected with parking and the directing of vehicles. I am not saying that we should have an ancillary police force with powers similar to those of police constables. I am thinking of relieving the burden of the police force and giving powers to people who are capable of dealing with these problems in some measure more universal in character. I would have thought that legislation of that sort could well have been brought down to the House.

People who are in charge of car parks are in fact traffic wardens now, and these powers are being extended to persons in charge of schools. I suggest that the Minister would have done much better to equate all the powers to people who have control over the parking of vehicles. I do not think that there should be one parking attendant for schools and another kind of parking attendant for car parks. There should be one service. Give them one set of powers and let them deal with all of these subsidiary activities.

Road traffic Acts have been drafted and have been rejected, I believe by the Police

Department. When we go back to the days when the hon. member for St. Michael South Central was the relevant Minister, he was a failure in so far as this particular aspect was concerned. He was not the first failure and he was not the worse failure. Ministers formerly in this House also failed in this respect.

We are faced with a mass of legislation. We have legislation dealing with insurance, legislation dealing with the using of schools, and all the time in the background there is this proposed new Road Traffic Act. I hope that in the few months left to this Government the Minister will take these matters in hands and seek in the closing days of the Democratic Labour Party regime to bequeath some legacy of serious legislation which will be of benefit to the people of Barbados.
3.45 p.m.

Mr. WALCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I did not catch your eye before the House was adjourned, when I was about to speak, but, I do not have any objection. I think that this is one of the areas in which you are doing something. I agree with some of the things that the hon. member for St. Thomas has said, apart from the typical statement that he made about forecasting the future

Mr. ADAMS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I made no forecast. I have said that this Government will come to an end in a few months. That is not a forecast. Even the PDM might win it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point made.

Mr. WALCOTT: I am saying that it is a non-typical speech from the hon. member to make a forecast, but dealing with the specific matter of the road traffic, I think the time has come and it is right that we should have before us as soon as possible the comprehensive legislation. I agree with him that we have passed the stage of dealing with the motor vehicle and the Road Traffic Act in Barbados in a piecemeal fashion.

It may be a paradise for the lawyers in the matter of court cases but from the point of view of the travelling public, it is really becoming a nuisance. The traffic has reached proportions beyond the archiac legislation that was suitable for the jackass carts. We have passed that stage even from the point of view of habits. We are likely to have blockages in the streets both on mornings and on afternoons, people coming in and going out from work, that if there is an accident anywhere — I had the unfortunate

problem that I had to travel in to town and out of town on a very busy highway. I could not be diverted anywhere. If you go up Collymore Rock, if you go up Government Hill, if you go into the main road into Hastings, it does not matter which highway you choose; you cannot divert and go off the way. You will spend hours.

It took me a morning to get to work, which is relatively no more than at the maximum ten minutes but it took me forty five minutes to reach the City because of this problem of traffic. For instance, you have to do something about the attitude of parents sending children to school along a busy highway and a narrow place like Collymore Rock — that people are expecting to drive in and drive out with children into those schools and cause a tremendous blockage on either side; those who are going to the right, those who are going into the left, and this stupidity, a sort of middle class concept that people want to be able to drive their children up to a school step. This stupidity must stop. People must be made to understand that going to school is a job of the child. Going to school is not a chore for a child. If you want a child to go to school in safety the parents should not add to the national problem by blocking up the highway on mornings with more cars; more motor cars than children, because you find the type of car hooliganism is that somebody dashes inside and they want to dash out. They are always in a hurry; there is no waiting. They cut in to get into the school and they are cutting in to get outside.

Now there has got to be some rational way of looking at this. We know people want to get their children to school in safety. Some parents are living in the country and therefore they are bringing their children to school, but all the parents are not living in the country; some parents live near to the schools, and there has to be some rational approach to this, if not you will find you do not have the space to accommodate, because you are sending the children to school, and there has to be some areas for the children but you cannot have this luxury that you can drive in and drive out and cause serious blockages. I go this way and there is blockage, if I swing from there and I go through into a narrow highway into the Pine, there you have St. Winifreds School and you have trucks and lorries diverting from Government Hill going into an industrial area and into Christ Church using a shorter way, diverting, going through the back of Government House and therefore you go there and you find a blockage there and you have to reverse.

I feel this is something that the Government will have to pay some attention to. They are

small matters but they are matters that can create a lot of human wastage. Sometimes I hear members talk about wastage in other matters. The time you sit in a car on mornings before you can make a move you find that you face a blockage, and this is something to which we must pay attention. People try to travel earlier on mornings in order to beat the traffic but then if everybody travelled earlier on mornings you will find yourself back to square one. You are back to the same place that you were; the traffic block is there.

I think that there are certain areas which you have to make oneway streets. There is no point in making there by St. Winifreds a two way street because it is not wide enough to accommodate the flow of traffic. Maybe the police should look into that and make a one way street from some point so that the traffic would not converge because there is a terrific conversion when you reach the bottom of Government Hill. All the traffic coming down from Government Hill is flowing into Belmont Road; going into Tweedside Road there is one terrific over flow on that road, and I think that the Minister should put specific regulations about vehicles entering schools. Let the people go on and leave the children outside rather than this idea of driving the children right up to the school doors. That is something that should be abandoned.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that there is too much laxity and I hope that members of the House are not responsible for this. People are parking motor cars in certain places and yet they know it is against the law but you will have to inform the Police Department to be strict about traffic regulations. People are parking their motor cars opposite a bus pole. Now these buses are big buses and when the buses come and stop on the opposite side traffic is blocked.

Sometimes you get traffic blocks for a considerably long period because the buses are putting down and picking up people. I think we will have to instil some care. In New York they do not allow you to be so light about parking your motor car anywhere. They report you; and I think that you will have to insist in doing something which will prevent people from parking as they like, Mr. Speaker. You should insist and put heavy fines on them until they get out of the habit.

In New York you cannot park by a hydrant, because they know if they park by a hydrant and there is a fire, what is going to happen. Somebody's house must burn down because of

your carelessness; you park your motor car by a hydrant and go inside a house leaving a car there by the hydrant and inside you are having a nice time drinking and enjoying yourself. Some people will park their motor cars anywhere. They fine you in New York for parking by a hydrant.

I think we have to get a little more serious about this laxity of users of motor vehicles. I think that the people who use motor cars must be made to behave in a civilize manner, and this uncivilized approach to traffic parking anyhow should be stopped.

3.55 p.m.

We are living in a modern age and we are living at a time when there are a lot of motor cars on the streets and we should not permit people to do these things. I hope there are not many members of the House who are guilty of this kind of conduct, that because you are a member of the House you feel that you have a right to park your motor car in areas that would inconvenience people, but that you find a parking place so that the traffic can flow easily. I think this is an area, Mr. Speaker, that we can save a lot to make it more convenient for the travelling public. We do not have sidewalks, people have to travel on the street and there are a lot of roads without sidewalks. It is going to be difficult to get sidewalks tomorrow because you do not put down portable sidewalks, it takes time and money. I feel if the users of the road would do better things would be a lot easier.

Parking around curves is very dangerous and can cause fatal accidents. There is a blind curve there at Hastings, you cannot see the car at the other end but it is around the curve. It is against the law to do this. I believe more Traffic Control Officers should be utilised in order to drive these bad road users off the street, discipline them and make them comply with the laws. Some of the laws are there but people have been getting away with things and cause too many accidents. To hurt a person with a motor car and maybe put him out of work for some time is a bad thing. The fatalities sometimes maim other people for a long time and you do not know to what extent you are talking about fatal accidents. I think these are things we cannot ignore and I hope that apart from these Traffic Wardens — it is not a question of who you employ, it is a question of looking at the issue as an issue in itself — but you should attend to this question of traffic because traffic has grown to proportions in Barbados that we should approach it in a positive and scientific manner,

and I hope that the comprehensive legislation will soon be dealt with so that we can put an end to some of the ills we have in our society.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, despite the hasty passage of section (m) in the Order of Business, I would like before I start to address you on this matter of the Regulations to personally thank you for your welcome to this Hon. House of Assembly, and I pledge to uphold the ancient tradition with which this House has always been associated.

I would also like to quote the introduction of this piece of legislation which is of very recent date and has only just come into my hands. I make no apology for not having had the appropriate time to study it but I would like to throw out a few ideas and observations to the other side. First of all, this piece of legislation is not new in so far as I believe similar legislation exists in Canada, and the Hon. Minister of Education is well aware that an Inspector of Police had a course in Canada and recommended the implementation of legislation of a similar type of Barbados. What I am concerned about is the limitation of the Minister's speech towards a centralisation of traffic wardens in the City area.

It seems to me that following the suggestions of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and the member for St. Michael West we need to look at a total rationalisation of the traffic laws of Barbados. We need therefore to look at the rationalisation of the total situation to consider an extension of the traffic warden system on an island wide basis. I was therefore disappointed that it was limited to St. Michael, whether or not for partisan reasons or otherwise I am not in a position to say, I can only hazard a guess, but I would like for example to see the Government looking at the introduction of traffic wardens in places like Bayleys, Shrewsbury, Beulah, Princess Margaret School, St. Philip's Boys' and Girls' Schools and Ebenezer Primary School. *(Aside)* These may be localised issues arising out of the recent campaign but if you bowl a certain ball at me I will hit you back too. I feel, Sir, that the Government should look at those schools which are built right on to the main roads and concentrate their efforts at setting up wardens at those particular points, and it has to be done on an island wide basis. If we do it on an island wide basis in my submission it would provide employment for a vast number of people.

I understand the Minister's point about encouraging the service clubs, the Jaycees and

these people, to lend assistance, and one does not expect Government to be the all provider of employment, one expects the public to show some charity to Government and the Jaycees and these other service clubs could help. I would like to take it a step further. I would think that the Minister should consider along with wardens letting the most senior boys in a school accompany traffic wardens on their rounds so that the boys would get experience not only in controlling traffic and children crossing the road but they will get experience in disciplining young children. It would tend to build up in the children under whose care they come the sense of respect which is perhaps not the most paramount quality in existence among our people all over the world today. I would like to see, Sir, the system of wardens operating on a parochial basis, that is to say, instead of a situation where now, for example, we have the Parks and Beaches Commission operating in St. Philip but the vast majority of its employees are drawn from St. Michael.

4.05 p.m.

We have the Parks and Beaches Commission operating in St. Philip, but with the vast proportion of employees drawn from the St. Michael area. That may be for Party political reasons, but I have no idea. I am merely guessing. It seems to me that we should concentrate the employment within the district, parish, or constituency. You would provide work for the people in the constituency, and the people in the constituency would be in a better position to know at a more personal level the children whom they have to guide. They will get to respect the old people, as my friend has so generously advised.

I think that there is much merit in this Resolution regarding the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) Regulations, but I hope that the Government will take cognizance of some of the matters which I have raised, and in particular address its attention to doing something for the constituents in St. Philip North. *Interruption from the Gallery.*

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already warned visitors in the Gallery about the clapping of hands!

Mr. HINDS: Mr. Speaker, the traffic warden scheme is, undoubtedly, a good one, but I want to say that it is bound to fail if the people who are going to train these traffic wardens for their respective duties are the same people who now train the police to do theirs. My reason for saying that is that there are many policemen who are

sent on duty who do not know the meaning of these road crossings. If you were to go on Broad Street now and ask a regular policeman what is a zebra crossing he does not know. (*Asides.*) You may find a police who will know, but the majority of them do not know. If the traffic wardens are going to be instructed to do their duty as the policemen now do theirs — you will recall that the hon. member for St. Michael West has laid some emphasis on the traffic blocks that occur in certain areas. All the Minister has to do is to issue Regulations or instructions that there must be no parking on certain main highways between 7 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. The Minister's instructions must be policed, and the police must be sent on duty to put this motion into effect. Similarly, at a fixed time in the evening when traffic has to get out of Bridgetown, there must be no parking. What you will find is that a lot of policemen might be posted on duty, but they are taking up duty where there is no action. Where there is no action you will find policemen, but where there is heavy traffic and road blocks, you cannot find any policeman trying to relieve the congestion. You may find the motorcycle rider, who happens to be on the spot, and he will try his best to relieve the traffic congestion. Normally, you do not find the regular policeman on the beat trying to relieve these traffic congestions.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the drivers today have come to believe that they have bought the highway. It appears to me that there is an almost complete breakdown in law and order with respect to this question of traffic movement and the offences caused by vehicular traffic. We are talking about speeding up the traffic to keep it in motion so that an hon. member or anybody would not spend, perhaps, an hour to cover a distance that could normally be covered at a reasonable rate of speed in 15 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, there is the question of vehicles such as bread carts that are manually operated. You will find the horse cart, the mule cart and animal-drawn vehicles, you will find people pulling hand carts with lumber and so on. All of these people must be allowed to earn a living. I want to say that under no circumstances must any action be taken to prevent these people from earning a living, but as there was a time when certain heavy-laden vehicles could not pass along Broad Street under the Bridgetown, Holetown and Speightstown Act, we have to come to the point where these slowmoving vehicles will have to give way at certain hours of the day if we are to overcome this situation where we have this congestion of traffic. I must warn that full regard

must be given to the fact that the man who has a box cart, the man who has a donkey-drawn cart, or a mule-drawn cart must not be made to suffer, and he must be allowed to earn his living through operating his vehicle. However, we must say that we cannot expect to make progress in our traffic movement and to relief traffic congestion if we have to be battling with what now obtains.

The Minister must also address his mind to the fact that it is now the proud boast of some drivers that Barbadians for some reason do not drive on the left; they usually drive on the left centre, or the centre of the road. You will find that a vehicle will stall in the centre of Broad Street, and the owner or driver will be the proudest person in the world to know that his vehicle has stalled in the centre of Broad Street and has traffic blocked up. He makes no effort to ask anybody to assist him in pushing it to the side of the road, or to get in touch with a garage to have it removed. He is proud that it is his vehicle that is causing all of the congestion and all of the worries. That attitude must be got rid of. The police must of necessity call in drivers, as often as necessary in relation to their patterns of behaviour on the road, and have them sent to Central Station, or District A Station, as the case may be for lectures. If it is found that the lectures are of no use to these people, then their licences will have to be withdrawn or something of the sort, if we want to control traffic in the manner that we want to see it controlled.

We do not want to give any person a licence to kill, hit and run, and do as he or she likes. We want proper behaviour in our traffic pattern. We must of necessity take measures that on certain main highways there must be no parking whatsoever at certain hours of the day. You will see in Baxters Road, Tudor Street, and so on goods vehicles loading and unloading at peak hours of the day. The soft drinks trucks take up more than half of the road at one point, and then the people who work on them take up one-third of the rest of the road unloading the trucks without any regard to other users of the road.

4.15 p.m.

All these things must stop. The Minister must make provision for and have consultation with all these people in the trading business and make regulations for the times that these people will be able to use the highways, because they must carry on their business, the workers whom they employ must be employed, but we would like to reduce the inconvenience that is caused to the public as much as we possibly can. We cannot go on forever, Mr. Speaker, approaching this road

traffic problem in the slipshod way that the Government tends to do, but we have got to consult with everybody that is involved in the business, get expert advice, get the knowledge of the police who must play a very important part in this matter, and let us come with comprehensive legislation to cover as many of the ills as we now experience in our traffic operations.

I am one, Mr. Speaker, who has a very deep love for my own children and a very high regard for the safety of my children. That might not be said for every other person, and what I want to say is that this question of taking people's children and putting them back on the main highway could save a lot of accidents. We appreciate you cannot build pavements and foot paths to accommodate this situation in a day or night, but if we have "no parking" and the police are there to enforce this regulation in certain areas on certain main highways at specific times, much of the difficulties now experienced could easily be overcome. As for the wardens, I support what the hon. member for St. Philip North has suggested, that the services of the wardens ought to be made available to all the schools that are built immediately on the highway, because there is now no school that is so isolated that the children do not run into the difficulty of meeting with vehicular traffic, since at every school now there is some vehicle belonging to the Headteacher or others, and passersby also have their own vehicles; so the danger is greater now than it has ever been to the school population wherever the schools are located, and we would urge that the Government see to it that enough wardens are posted wherever the necessity arises for the safeguard of the little children who might come into contact with the traffic.

Mr. Speaker, greater emphasis must be paid to this matter in the schools, that is, the children must be better educated as to what side of the street they must walk on; they must be taught to look up and down more than twice before crossing the street, and all these things must now form part of the education of the children in schools. They must in the same way be taught in their homes, but unfortunately a complication must arise because all the parents themselves do not know which side of the road they must walk, furthermore to be able to instruct their children how to conduct themselves on the roads. It would mean therefore a comprehensive education of all the parents, of all the children, of the policemen and the wardens and each and every guardian who has some responsibility towards children in this country.

Mr. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am going to lend support to my colleagues on this issue and I would like to go a step further in saying that the Ministry must at this stage look around at some of these schools like Westbury Infants' and take into consideration whether they may have to do a zoning of these streets on which such schools are located and during the peak times when the children are leaving school to have the road completely closed to traffic. I am in support of the idea of having wardens. When I first saw this in North America I was very pleased to see it. I do not know what system they use, but I think that some parents work one week and some parents work another week and so on. We cannot think in terms of the Y.W.C.A., an organisation for whom we have the greatest respect, expanding to the point of going beyond St. Michael and the City, and I would like to lend particular support to the hon. member for St. Philip North when he made reference to the senior boys and girls at the schools participating in a venture of this nature.

The point I got up to make was that we must now examine the aspect of zoning some of these roads like King Street where you have Wesley Hall Boys' School. During the evening it is really something that would make you very concerned about the small children travelling across the road on the way home and to see vehicular traffic still going through. If there is a possibility of zoning such roads, closing them to traffic and diverting the traffic, I think it would be a good idea for the Ministry in conjunction with the Ministry of Communications and Works and the Ministry of Education to examine this carefully. We on this side are going to lend support to these Regulations, and whenever there is something that is worthwhile, you can rest assured that you will have my support.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, most hon. Members who have spoken, in fact, indeed all have welcomed these regulations and the motion which will give it affirmative vote of their coming into effect. Most members have emphasised the enforcement aspect of the Road Traffic Regulations. Some of the items that most members have spoken about are already covered by existing regulations, but I think it is a sign of our society that some of our regulations are more honoured in the breach than in the observance, and it becomes necessary to have an on-going system of education in relation to many aspects of our affairs, and certainly one of these would be the proper use of roads. It is seldom that we see organisations such as the Road Safety Association being given proper time on television and too often that we see the faces of Ministers that have little or nothing to say instead of

constructive work in other respects, and I would like to seriously suggest to the Minister to recommend to his colleague the Minister of Information, Tourism and Public Relations that there should be a decrease in the use of ministerial faces and voices and an improvement in the type of educational programme which is used from time to time.

I would like to see more programmes on the proper use of our roads, how to use the situation of our existing regulations properly, what they are all about and what one can do. I am aware of the fact that the police have from time to time given a series of lectures at some of the schools. I have heard some of the police lecturing from time to time at schools myself and have had the pleasure of sitting in the audience and other audiences and listening to them on road traffic regulations; but I think that the problem which confronts Barbados in relation to its roads can only be temporarily solved by some of the suggestions which hon. members make, but even an improvement in the road traffic education and of stricter enforcement of the existing legislation; there is still a much more fundamental problem which confronts Barbados in the ending of the Twentieth and the beginning of the Twenty-first Century.

4.25 p.m.

That problem, Mr. Speaker, was highlighted in the Physical Development Plan. The Physical Development Plan has still not received the proper approval of this House, and all of the legal requirements under the Act of 1965 have still not been fulfilled despite the fact that various Ministers have from time to time had responsibility for the Physical Development Plan. I believe that we made some progress when the present Minister of Communications and Works was holding the Ministry of Home Affairs. We got some progress in an enquiry taking place; but for the last two or three years the Physical Development Plan has been stuck in the Prime Minister's office.

I am sometimes amazed at how Ministers can think that the hon. member for St. John can do no wrong when I see so many aspects of his administration of his departments which leave a lot to be desired; and the more I see of how he administers his departments the less I believe in his credibility and wizardry. I cannot understand how, having taken over the responsibility for town planning, we have still not got the Physical Development Plan before this House, and there is reference to it from time to time.

I want to make the position clear that the Physical Development Plan having been talked

about some five years ago, we anticipated that we would have had a new spine road with feeder roads. Now we have heard no more about that. At that stage I believe that the cost would have been in the region of \$20 million. I reckon today that if you put into effect the recommendations of that plan, as subsequently modified by enquiries, it would cost the country something in the region of \$65 million; and if we are not careful we will continue to find that we are allowing sporadic development of the roadways which eventually would mean acquisition of land by Government in order to re-align the roads and improve the traffic position that will occur.

The problem which the Minister has to bear in mind is to see how he can correct what has been bad physical development planning in Barbados through no fault of anybody prior to 1969. It is a historical fact of physical development planning in Barbados. He must also seek in conjunction with the Planning Committee to prevent the construction of schools in such areas where there are major highways. If I may say so, if you want an instance, the Government is now acquiring Ferniehurst for another school.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, the Government is not acquiring Ferniehurst as such. The Government always owned Ferniehurst and it was formerly the residence of doctors of the Mental Hospital. I think that the hon. member is quite aware of what I am saying.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point made.

Mr. FORDE: If the hon. member wants me to say land adjoining Ferniehurst to be more exact, I will tell the hon. member that that is so. It was the estate of the late Mr. Jackman. It is the lands adjoining which the Government is using for a school at the corner of Black Rock and Deacons Road, Deacons Road and the main Black Rock highway.

In my view, it is a bad area for a school from a traffic point of view, not that you do not need a school. I am not discussing that. I am discussing the traffic aspect of the matter. What I am saying is that when Government is planning in the future for school construction it must bear in mind very strongly problems like road traffic dangers to which children will be exposed. I take the hon. member's point of order, but that does not in any way minimise the effect of the point which I am making.

It does not mean that in every case of acquisition of any site where a school is to be

constructed or has been constructed that the same problem has occurred. I do not think that any one would quarrel about the siting of the new St. George Secondary School. No one would quarrel with anyone having a school in the constituency of the hon. member for St. Michael South and near mine; but if they had asked me, I would have suggested that it should have been put on the 16 acres of land which the Government has at the Marine. That would be more ideal. It would be a better constituency in Christ Church West and we would not have the traffic hazards which occur at the moment.

However, there are not so many problems posed at the Garrison because a lot of the activity takes place in King's Road and near the site of the Museum. When it comes to the aspect of the implementation of this regulation, I must join with the hon. member who has suggested widening the scope of persons acting as traffic wardens, and probably having some comprehensive system. I think that the idea of the hon. member for St. Philip North is highly commendable to involve children as far as possible in being their own policemen and this is easier to implement in the City than in the rural areas. I have seen senior boys at some schools already doing this. Certainly I have seen it in St. Michael at Queens College and certainly at St. Winifred's which is a private school with a great tradition. I have seen senior pupils lending a hand and this is an example of what I would like to see.

The hon. member for St. Michael South Central made the point that the Y.W.C.A. is going to voluntarily offer their help. I would like to assure the member that I have never had any doubt in my mind concerning the alacrity of the women of Barbados in giving voluntarily of their time to the advancement of their country. That is one of the reasons why I always urge hon. members to pay greater attention to women in this House and out of it.

On a serious note, this is the sort of voluntary effort coming from a women's organisation that does not surprise me at all. I have seen an honest amount of work done by women's organisations, and that is one of the reasons why I think that the women have a strong case for equal treatment in our laws. I hope that the Minister of Communications and Works who is satisfied as to how well the Y.W.C.A. has performed, will join me in any future legislation coming down to this House to upgrade the position of the women of this community.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a brief intervention on this measure to speak from the health point of view. As is known, accidents cause injury and suffering not only to the person involved in the accident, but to parents and relatives, and it places a strain also on the health services, whereby increasing the cost of running those services.

I think that this particular measure before us is one which is to be welcomed because it is meant to safeguard and protect the lives and limbs of the young people of this country. It is a measure for which all Barbadian parents and guardians should be appreciative, and we all commend the efforts of the Y.W.C.A. in making this particular proposal.

I think that as far as the proposal is concerned, while it is welcome, it is obviously starting on a small scale; but there are many schools both in St. Michael as well as in the other parishes throughout this country where there are hazards presented to school children as a result of the flow of traffic on the roads, and this measure can be regarded in the nature of a pilot scheme; but if it is to be extended on an island-wide basis I fear that the resources will be beyond the Y.W.C.A.

4.35 p.m.

My own feeling on this particular matter is that the Police Department should be intimately involved in the operation of this particular programme. I am not necessarily saying that policemen should be responsible for the stopping and the interruption of traffic at the critical points. The point I am making is, because of the nature of the programme, I fear that if it is to be extended to serve all the children of this country we will have to find a much larger framework within which to operate this most desirable programme.

At this stage I welcome the initiative of the YWCA in making the offer for this voluntary scheme and I would just like to indicate to the member for Christ Church West that as far as the — (*Aside*) No. The Garrison Secondary School. That is in my constituency and as he said it borders his constituency; but I believe there are also problems which may be faced by children crossing the street, maybe as they go to the playing fields on the Garrison pasture; and there are many schools. There are young people from my constituency who go to schools outside the constituency and have to run the hazard of crossing the intersection of Collymore Rock, Culloden Road and Pine Road.

There are other instances throughout this country where schools lead on to very busy highways, and but for the grace of God many an accident would have occurred. I think that this particular measure is an indication of an effort on the part of the Government in conjunction with a voluntary organization to try to bring a service from which the people of this country will derive direct benefit. The point I want to draw to the attention of the hon. member for Christ Church West is that as far as the site for the secondary school on Deacons Road is concerned, it is not intended that the school would be on Black Rock side of the road but would be sited near to Deacons Road. This of course, does not negate the fact that some children will be crossing from that very busy highway No. 1 but the majority of movement would be on the Deacons Road side.

This, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated is a measure to be welcomed but I sincerely hope that there would be very close involvement of the Police Department in the operation of this particular programme, and I also agree with the contribution made by the hon. member for St. Peter when he expressed the view that safety measures and safety education should form an integral part of the school programme as it relates to the introduction of this particular measure. The two things must go together; education and the actual provision of the wardens to ensure safer crossing of the street.

Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, it is a bit refreshing to find that an item which appears as simple as the adoption of road traffic amendment regulations should generate the wide range of discussion which we have witnessed here this afternoon. It would appear that since the luncheon break many members have refreshed their energies to give stimulation to their tiring nerves and have been able to give this topic the attention and discussion which it so deserves.

However, when one looks seriously at the problems of traffic within Barbados it will take a lot of effort, a lot of money and a lot of time to find adequate solution to the problems. The roads of this country were obviously built to conceive and maintain at a time when there were no motor vehicles and the people travelled around in horse and buggies, on donkeys and mules and things of that nature. One of the features which you have to accept, however discomfoting it may be, is that within the last twenty to twenty five years there has been a rapid and incessant increase in the number of vehicles plying on the highways and streets of this country. While that increase has come about, the rate of improvement or the rate of removal

of obstacles on the highways and streets of this country has not been in keeping with the pace in the increase of traffic;

There are many reasons for this; obviously the land which would be available to permit a Government or anybody to increase the width of the road and to remove bends is not available due to the fact that many of the buildings which are massively constructed are on the very edge of the roads. In other cases the acquisition of land is a tedious and costly process which again makes it rather difficult for the type of improvement to take place on the highways of this country. In addition, the peculiar habits and taste of the Barbadian people make it even more difficult.

There are many vehicles which by virtue of their size should not be permitted to ply on the roads of this country; but the Barbadian, peculiar in his taste, is very aggressive in his individualism, and may find it very difficult to appreciate the necessity for restricting the size of cars which are permitted to ply on the streets of Barbados.

In addition to this you find that there are many more people nowadays travelling than in years gone by, because many years ago this was primarily an agricultural society, and an agricultural society is essentially a simple society. Most of the activity in an agricultural society occurs within the local community. There is very little need in an agricultural society for people to travel far from their communities, but with the changes which have come about within Barbados as a result of industrialization and as a result of the influence now acquired by many people in this country, the society is becoming more and more complex. It has given way to many other features which are common place in North American countries.

Unfortunately we do not have the elbowroom, we do not have the resources which many of the North American and European countries have, to permit us to adapt ourselves or to manoeuvre within the given set of circumstances and conditions.

When one looks seriously at the question before us, I would like to draw to the attention of the hon. members that this bit of legislation which we have before us was brought here primarily to accommodate the wishes of the Young Women's Christian Association. If we had deferred it until the Ministry of Communications and Works had gone through and made a total assessment of the needs and conditions attendant upon such a programme, we might have dampened the enthusiasm, and if anything,

thwarted their efforts to be of assistance to this community.

I do not want people to believe that this bit of legislation is intended to be the solution to the whole problem. Right now the Ministry of Communications and Works is examining the whole question of traffic wardens for this country. Unfortunately the Ministry of Communications and Works is not the Ministry responsible for the drafting of that legislation, and bearing in mind the large quantity of legislation which still is outstanding by the Ministry of Legal Affairs, it is obvious, or should be obvious that this will take some time before we can have a comprehensive Bill dealing with this problem.

There is nothing in these Regulations to prevent traffic wardens or the use of traffic wardens being extended to schools outside of St. Michael.

4.45 p.m.

I would like to assure the hon. member for St. Philip North that if he has fear about that I will take every step as soon as it is possible to have this system or service extended all over the island. This is essentially a pilot scheme, the legislation has been introduced to accommodate the wishes of the Young Women's Christian Association.

When one looks at the question of traffic in the country, we in the Ministry of Communications and Works are seized of most of the problems. I would not fool myself that we are seized with all the problems, we are now in the final stage of the presentation of the Traffic Act and I hope that when it is introduced into this Chamber for discussion ample opportunity will be given to hon. members and other members of this society to make any contribution which they consider worthwhile to make. In short, it is my desire that when this Bill does reach the House of Assembly in the very near future we will wish it to go to a Select Committee where all the necessary scope and inducement will be given to members in the House and other people to make a contribution.

As regards problems which have been raised by the hon. member for St. Michael West with regard to the condition of the streets, we have examined this issue very clearly in the Ministry of Communications and Works and we are awaiting additional traffic lights to implement certain changes in the Government Hill, Pine Road, Welches Road and Pine Hill Road areas. We are aware of the heavy congestion of traffic and the

confusion which occurs in the vicinity of Government House, and already the Ministry of Communications and Works and the Ministry of Education have made representation to the Governor-General to give up a bit of land or to permit students from those schools in Government Hill to use a passage-way within the confines of Government House thereby enabling the students to get away from the traffic. It is a very dangerous road with a big high wall and pavement on one side and a very dense proportion of traffic on mornings and evenings flying along that street. Unfortunately we are not in a position to say exactly how soon this request will be acceded to, because some members would know that Government House is the domain of the Governor-General and we have to take into consideration his wishes and desires as to what we may do with it.

When we look further afield and we take the whole question of parking in Barbados, we in the Ministry take the hint, as we always have taken the hint, that something needs to be done for parking in Barbados, but it is not easy. While we recognise that many people in Barbados, motorists, park their vehicles badly and anywhere, and that something must be done, we also recognise that there are not enough parking areas in Bridgetown or near Bridgetown where motorists can park their vehicles, so we have to be a bit lenient in our attempts to move these people off the streets because the question we have to face is where are they going to park their vehicles. They must come to town to transact business. We have had a look at the question of car parking in multi-storey buildings, we have looked at many other questions, having people park outside Bridgetown, but none of these has been completely resolved as yet, and in addition we are now awaiting our first shipment of parking meters which we hope to be in a position to instal later this year which would go a far way in helping us to regulate parking.

The problem of traffic and parking in this country is a very difficult one and while it may be easy for each one of us to entertain a specific aspect of this giant problem, it is not so easy for a solution to be found. Some of the solutions which are put forward when implemented create new problems for which no solutions are to be found and it is this type of stress which has been brought about by the narrow roads, congested roads, pedestrians on the road which taxes the people in the Ministry of Communications and Works and very often give us rather frayed nerves in coming up with some solution.

I hope that the hon. members in this Chamber while they may be critical of some of

the slowness with which these problems are resolved will bear in mind the gigantic size of the problems and the limitations in finance, in mobility as regards acquisition of land and the necessary improvements which may come from the acquisition of land, and while it is their duty to keep pressing on the Ministry of Communications and Works for improvements, they should bear in mind at all times that it is a problem which for some time must be a continual problem and we have to tackle it on a piecemeal basis rather than trying to tackle it at one time. We have to think in terms of the money, the personnel, the lands and other resources which will be required to make an all out attack on these problems.

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

MOTION FOR THE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA. Mr. Speaker, this concludes Government Business for today's sitting. I beg to move that this House do now adjourn till Tuesday, 9th March at 12.00 noon.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Lucy asked for leave to give notice of a Resolution on the adjournment of the House. Leave is granted.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give notice of the following Resolution:

"Whereas the present Government is committed to the progressive improvement of

all aspects of the living standards of the people of Barbados;

And Whereas an efficient modern low-cost public transport service is of vital importance to the further social and economic development and advancement of our people;

Be it resolved that the Government urgently and actively considers the introduction of a standard bus fare and that this bus fare for any single journey in and to all parts of this Island of Barbados be fixed at a level so as to reduce the cost of travelling."

Mr. FORDE: On the motion for the adjournment I would ask whether the Hon. Leader is in a position to tell us whether it is proposed to start the Estimates on that date or on what date. I think hon. members would like to have some idea.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: As the hon. member will recall, it is customary to grant at least two weeks, a reasonable period usually of two weeks, in order that hon. members may have an opportunity to consider the Estimates, so although I have not got any specific instructions as such I would suggest that we have two weeks.

ADJOURNMENT

The question that the House do now adjourn till Tuesday, next, 9th March at 12.00 noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
4.55 p.m.

