

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1971-76

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 23rd March, 1976.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.15 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. FERGUSON, (Minister Without Portfolio); Mr. R. ST.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Mr. W. R. LOWE, J.P., (Chairman of Committees); His Honour A. DaC. EDWARDS, (Deputy Speaker); Mr. W. C. B. HINDS; Mr. L. S. CRAIG; Mr. J. B. SPRINGER; Mr. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B.; Hon. F. G. SMITH, Q.C., S.C., B.A., (Minister of Education, Youth Affairs, Community Development and Sport); Hon. P. G. MORGAN, C.B.E., (Minister of Tourism, Information and Public Relations); Hon. P. M. GREAVES, B.A., (Minister of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance); Mr. H. deB. FORDE, M.A., LL.B.; Dr. the Hon. R. B. CADDLE, (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), (Minister of Health and Welfare) and Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M., (Lond.).

Prayers were read.

House of Assembly Tuesday, 23rd March, 1976.

MESSAGES FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE ACTING GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay Message No. 3/1976 regarding the illness of His Excellency Sir Winston Scott, GCMG, GCVO, Governor-General, and the designation of the Hon. H. A. Vaughan, OBE, Q.C., to act as Governor-General.

With Your Honour's permission, I will read the message.

"HIS EXCELLENCY THE ACTING
GOVERNOR-GENERAL
TO

THE HONOURABLE THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

His Excellency the Acting Governor-General, has the honour to inform the Honourable the House of Assembly that consequent on the illness of His Excellency Sir Winston Scott, GCMG, GCVO, Governor-General, Her Majesty the Queen has designated The Honourable H. A. Vaughan, OBE, Q.C., under the provisions of section 29(1)(a) of the Constitution, to perform the functions of the office of Governor-General for the time being with effect from 21st March 1976.

H. A. VAUGHAN
Acting Governor-General.

Government House
Barbados
22nd March, 1976."

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to authorise the Minister of Finance to borrow, by the issue of Treasury Bills, further sums of money not exceeding \$30 million.

I also, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Savings Bank Act.

Mr. Speaker, in both of these instances, in so far as the Resolution and this Bill are concerned, copies are handy and can be circulated. I have made preliminary consultations, but the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has not yet replied. If they are willing to deal with these

two measures at a later stage in the sitting, it would be possible for us to avoid returning here on Friday around three o'clock. It is purely a matter for hon. members. As far as I am concerned, I can come in here every day from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. I think the interruption will come from that side where you have the lawyers and big business men.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

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

Whereas it is written in the Preamble to the Constitution of Barbados that the people of Barbados declare their intention to establish and maintain a society in which all persons may, to the full extent of their capacity, play due part in the institutions of the national life.

And Whereas by the said Constitution it is further declared that every person in Barbados is entitled to certain fundamental freedoms irrespective of sex etc.

And Whereas the better to effect these lofty ideals it is necessary, from time to time, to take stock so as to ensure that the women of Barbados at all times receive, in all aspects of the life of the Island, no less favourable treatment than is meted out to the men of Barbados.

Be It Resolved that this House requests the Government to appoint without delay a National Commission to inquire into and report upon the status of women in Barbados and to recommend what steps ought to be taken by this House and the Government to ensure and maintain for women equal opportunities with men in all aspects of Barbadian society; and in particular, and without restricting the generality of the foregoing, to inquire into and report on:

- (a) The citizenship and immigration laws, policies and practices so far as they affect women;
- (b) The position of women in the civil and criminal laws, and specifically the laws governing matrimonial property, marriage and divorce;
- (c) Income Tax and Estate and Succession duty legislation in so far as the same affects women;
- (d) Labour laws and the role of women in the labour force of the Island;

- (e) The employment, placing and promotion of women in the public service and in the private sector.

And Be It Further Resolved that the said Commission be mandated to report to the Government within a year of its said appointment and in any event not later than March 1977; and that the said Report be laid on the Table of this House immediately thereafter.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

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

1. To ask the Minister of Communications and Works:

Is the Minister aware that the following roads in St. Philip North are in dire need of repair:

- (a) the road leading from Lucas Street into Gibson's Land?
- (b) the road adjoining Duncan's Tenantry Road leading to Congo Road?
- (c) Fortescue Road leading from Blades Hill to Bayfield?
- (d) the road running through Chapel Tenantry?
- (e) the road leading from Carrington Road into Edgecumbe Tenantry?

If the answer is in the affirmative will the Minister take active steps to ensure the immediate repair of the said roads?

2. To ask of the appropriate Minister:

Will the Minister state (a) the last date on which the Government rock processing plant at Mangrove operated? If the said plant has been non-functional within the last year, will the Minister state what are Government's plans for the machinery on site?

Will the Minister further state whether the Government received complaints about dust factor emanating from the plant during its period of operations and what steps, if any, (not including closure of the plant) the Government took or are taking to control the emission of dust from the said plant?

3. To ask the Minister of Communications and Works:

Is the Minister aware that the cross roads at the junction of Mangrove, Oldbury and Foursquare in the constituency of Saint Philip South have been the scene of a number of serious collisions in the past six years?

If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister immediately install traffic lights at the said junction for the safety of all persons using these roads? Further will the Minister state (a) the number of collisions at the said junction between January 1, 1970 and March 19, 1976 and (b) the number of persons who have (1) suffered personal injuries (2) died?

12.25 p.m.

To enquire of the appropriate Minister:

Is the Minister aware that:

- (1) Crane Beach and Foul Bay Beach are used as bathing resorts by the residents of the respective areas?
- (2) that there are no facilities for changing clothes at these beaches;
- (3) that there are no life guard stations at these beaches? If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister forthwith consider the erection of beach houses with changing facilities at these beaches and, further, establish life guard stations at the said beaches?

FIRST READING OF BILL

On motion of Hon. C. E. TALMA, seconded by Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON; A Bill to amend the Savings Bank Act, Cap. 324 was read a first time.

RESUMPTION OF CONSIDERATION OF THE RESOLUTION THAT THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY APPROVE UNDER SECTION 10 OF THE BARBADOS HARBOURS ACT, CAP. 286 THE ANNUAL ESTIMATES OF THE PORT DEPARTMENT FOR THE YEAR 1976-77

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

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 2 is the instant Order of the Day, to resume debate on the passing of 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.

When this matter was last discussed, the Leader of the Opposition was addressing the Chair. I do not now see the hon. member in his place.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, before one begins to deal with the details of this Resolution, it must be recorded once again that the original idea to have a Deep Water Harbour in this Island started during the political regime of the party to which I have the honour to belong, and it was in my submission through the foresight of the then Premier that today we are in a position to see the returns of the investment made by setting up a Deep Water Harbour in an Island which previously had no such natural harbour which could accommodate shipping of the quality and quantity which now berth at the Bridgetown Port. Of course it is regrettable that for the last few years of the Estimates, despite the token provision of a memorial to Sir Grantley Adams, there has been nothing done positively by way of the establishment of a statue or by even naming the Harbour after the one who set it up. Undoubtedly the fact that up to 1971 the economy of this country made some progress to the extent as to afford the Government an opportunity to continue the capital works programme initiated by this party since 1971... (Asides) I am on Port, Sir, and not wine either!

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like hon. members to know that I do not want any disturbance in here today. I am warning hon. members on both the Government benches and the Opposition benches. Every hon. member has an opportunity to make his contribution, and every hon. member must be allowed to make his contribution peacefully.

Mr. SIMMONS: I am indebted to Your Honour. I was saying that in budgets subsequent to 1971 the Hon. Prime Minister has been frequently saying that the economy of this country has made little progress, and I believe that reputable economists in this community have agreed that in real terms the economy of this Island has not been as progressive as one would have hoped, having regard to the earlier solid

constitutional and economic foundations which had been laid during the regime of our party.

Sir, we are asked to vote a substantial figure to deal with improvements at the Port and the proposed Government take over of the Port Department. I would wish to draw to Government's attention that unless Government is prepared to be excessively vigilant at the Port when they decide to run it, the pilferage which has been a feature of the Port in the last few years will perhaps increase. The take over of the Port in itself is an attempt by the Government since it boasts of its socialist traditions to get under its purview one of the commanding heights of the economy, if the Port can be classified as a commanding height of the economy. I wish the Government to be aware that if we consider this in terms of a nationalised industry, the history of nationalised industries in other countries which have mixed economies and in which the private sector and public sector are expected to operate cooperatively has not been happy, and of course I am in favour, and want it made perfectly clear and well understood, of the nationalisation of certain industries. But the Government has got to embark on a programme of education especially among the workers at the Port who will be directly affected, to inculcate in them a sense of belonging; make them understand that the Port is theirs and that if there is stealing at the Port they are in fact stealing from themselves.

12.35 p.m.

Experience at the Port has shown perhaps that this is an attitude which should be ingrained in the workers for whom this industry provides work because it has not been understood in the past that any act which operates to the prejudice of the nationalised industry operates to their own individual prejudice.

I am sure that the Hon. Minister without Portfolio who has had oceans of years of experience of matters concerning ports and maritime matters generally, is aware of some of these problems. I am also sure that the hon. member at a personal level has demonstrated that he is a strict disciplinarian and that he will bring some of these policies to bear during his tenure of office and while the Port remains under his management and control.

I wish the Hon. Minister to be aware that there is pilferage at all ports, and the Bridgetown Port cannot be excluded. We are not saying that it is the port workers themselves who are necessarily involved in high level pilferage; but

those who work in the courts daily see cases of those people who take things out of the Port.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair. Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair. (Cheers).

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to congratulate you on your first day in the Chair. I would have left it to the end of my speech — the best wine for the last. What I am saying is that such pilferage that occurs at the Port seems to us who are in practice in the courts to be organised from outside of the Port, and these people connected with the Port Department are only on the periphery, or are not directly concerned.

I think that the Government should heed the warning given from this side and have proper security down there. We cannot stop it altogether. You have pilferage at ports all over the world. The second thing I want to draw to the Government's attention is industrial relations between port workers and the Barbados Workers Union. We would hope that there will be as few persons as possible who would suffer by way of displacement with the reorganisation of the Port; but we would urge the Government as speedily and as meaningfully as possible to see that those people who are displaced as a result of the Government's action suffer as little as possible.

I believe that there are certain matters which are *sub judice*, and I do not think that it would be in the best interest of anyone concerned to expand on that any more; but I would like to indicate that there are certain industrial negotiations taking place, and I hope that the Government will not take the opportunity of such industrial bargaining to make political mileage out of such negotiations. I just want to draw these two points to the attention of the Government, and I wish them the best in their management of the Port.

Finally, we have seen in this country the operation of nationalised industry and in the operation of statutory boards a system of patronage running riot and getting out of hand. I believe that a member of the Government sought once to complain that there was inefficiency in the Sanitation Board because the Government put on that Board a number of party hacks, otherwise known as yard fowls who made it very difficult to conduct negotiations involving the Sanitation and Cemeteries Board.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I think that the hon. member is way off course now. He has drifted far enough from the point.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thought that the Hon. Minister was following me. If the Hon. Minister does not appreciate that I am saying that we do not want to see on the Board a number of people running the Port who have nothing to contribute other than a DLP passport to the Port which will enable him to do as some of the other members of Statutory Boards do, I cannot be blamed. I was trying to develop an argument. I was not straying from the Port. Mr. Deputy Speaker, you should well be aware that I, like you, know a little bit about horses; and we know that at the Garrison when a horse is running you have to steer a straight course I was only trying to say that since the Port has made so substantial a contribution to the economy of Barbados over the last 14 years, that the Government should try to get the very best personnel to manage the Port.

I think that it is time that it should be seen that the system of patronage has developed in the West Indies. I believe that some members on the Government side acknowledge that these things have not turned out to be the best interest of the country as a whole. It has not been in the best interest to sectionalise or polarise their decisions purely on the basis of party affiliation.
12.45 p.m.

I am only making a plea to the Hon. Minister to use his good offices with the Prime Minister and whoever is going to be responsible to make sure that he gets the best possible assistance in running the Port.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it gives me great pleasure on behalf of the members on this side to offer you, Sir, our heartiest congratulations on your assumption of duties, even on a temporary basis today. I think this is the first day that you have been actually performing, you have been elevated to the office but you have in fact performed only now, but we are sure that by reason of your past experience as a member of this House, both as a Minister and on the back benches, that you are sufficiently cognisant of the rules governing this Hon. House as to do only your best during the time you occupy the Chair. We are sure that you will be impartial and that you will protect the rights of the minority which is part of your function whenever you sit, and we would like to say

from this side that we will at all times be co-operative to you and to whoever is in the Chair.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, unlike the hon. member I would like to associate myself at the beginning with the remarks made by the hon. member for St. Philip North with respect to extending to you congratulations on your taking your place for the first time, if I may use the English expression which is related to the House of Lords, the Woolsack. Of course I do not believe that is applicable in the House of Commons.

During the course of the member's speech he referred to the question of severance pay stating that he hopes that Government will settle as speedily as possible and as mercifully as possible the matter of severance pay for persons who might have lost their jobs or are severed as a result of Government action. I do not think it is as widely understood as it should be on whom the onus for making severance payments lies. This is general throughout Barbados, because from time to time even though we have had the severance pay in operation since the beginning of 1973 and retroactive to September 1969 yet we still have all kinds of problems with the matter of severance pay.

I do not want to speak on this as a separate subject but merely in response to what the hon. member said.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member will only be allowed to speak on it in response.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I am not asking for anything else.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thought that was understood.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: I just want to make this point, that when a person is severed it is the responsibility of the present employers to pay the severance pay, not the responsibility of the person taking over the operation. In this case it is not the responsibility of the Government to pay severance pay to any persons who may be severed, and I understand there are only a handful of people, four or five people, but it is not the responsibility of the Government to pay severance pay to those persons, it is the responsibility of the persons who carried out the operations at the Port

previously. I want to make that point clear and apply it in general, that it is the operators of an enterprise whose responsibility it is to pay severance pay to persons who may be severed.

The other aspects of the matter which he raised I will leave to the Hon. Minister who will reply, particularly the question of the position of the Board to run the Port.

Mr. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am joining the remarks by the other hon. member concerning your assuming for the first time the role of the Chair, and I certainly look forward to Your Honour's ruling on such points as may come to you from time to time.

I wish to have a brief look at what is happening in the development of the Port as a very vital arm of the livelihood of Barbados. I think that hon. members must recognise that unless Port charges are kept within a reasonable figure then invariably the cost of living in this island will increase from day to day. One would hope that the plans which Government has now initiated in relation to the Port would lead to a rationalisation of the charges that are current in the Port, and that one would not see the increase occurring in the cost of living resulting from increases in these charges that one has witnessed over the past years. One would hope that Government will now insist on a higher standard of productivity and efficiency and would weed out as much waste as possible. Indeed at several levels of our national life there is a strong case which can be made out for an increase in productivity and the removal of all waste. What a better place to begin than at the Port Department itself.

One would hope that Government would give some incentive to the working force, particularly in the Port, that they will feel part and parcel of industry. I was a bit saddened myself to see that the takeover of the Port resulted simply in the shift of the shares from a few people to the Government itself owning the total share issue of Port Contractors (Barbados) Limited. I believe that one must involve the Port workers and indeed workers in industry in general in feeling that they have a direct interest in the ownership of the enterprise for which they work, and until it is true to say that State ownership is to some extent ownership by the people, yet one has found that where there is not a personal and direct ownership of shares by the workers themselves the incentive seems to be less. There is no reason why if Government is dedicated to the

principle of co-operatives that one could not have seen a greater participation by the workers themselves by way of co-operative ownership.

On this point it is regrettable that the Union has had to feel it fit to refuse Government's offer to have a member on the Board of Port Contractors. I would have thought that if Government is dedicated to the principle of workers' participation in industry that they would have been more than mere tokenism in the appointment of one representative of the Union on the Port Board. When I talk about participation in industry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not only speaking of industry in the sense of manufacturing industry, I am using the word in the wider import of the term to include the whole commercial enterprise of the country and the only way that one can see progress along these lines is by greater participation at managerial and at directorate level and the workers themselves in the whole exercise. Obviously the Union cannot be pleased that it has been offered only one director on the Board of Port Contractors.

12.55 p.m.

Government has passed a Port Authority Bill, I believe, and I would wish the Minister to let me know whether Government intends to rationalise the services provided by individuals and organisations in the Port. So far everything has been left to go on as it has been going before, with the exception of the change in share ownership and the appointment of one or two people to the directorate. What I want to hear from the Minister is whether Government has any proposals for itself taking over the stevedoring and other services which are ancillary to the running of the Port Department as a whole, or is this exercise merely a paper exercise and there is really no shift in direction of the Port Department. If Government has any such provision, I should think that Government should look at the Port, as the hon. member for St. Philip North says, as more than a political exercise. It should really be more than this. One must be conscious of the economics of the matter and the significant economic and regulatory role which the Port plays in the life style of the Island's economy as a whole.

I would wish the Minister not to believe that simply because it is now a governmental organisation that, certainly, we on this side, or the people of Barbados, would be satisfied with any drop in the standard of efficiency which had been manifested before and which, as I said earlier, leaves room, also, for some improvement.

Now, we have paid quite a lot of money for this Port, or we continue to pay quite a lot of money for this Port. At the time when it was built a lot of people had their doubts about it, and such is the political fortune of Government that what I consider to be the greatest act of vision on the part of the Labour Party was the demise of the Labour Party Government before it could capitalise on the good work it had done. Yet, history will record that this and the expansion of the work carried out at the Airport were acts of foresight in laying the economic foundation for the succeeding Government to make some political capital out of.

Now, I see it is proposed in these Estimates to have a net increase in some items that we are talking about, and one realises that the capital charges are still very significant. I want to know how Government is funding the long-term repayment of principal and interest in this respect and, perhaps, the Minister will tell us what new expansion is taking place in the Port, and what arrangements are Government making for paying off in the future the debt which will occur. I am not one of those who believe that today's generation must bear the total debt for tomorrow's people to enjoy the sweets; therefore, there must be a certain amount of borrowing so that we can have our debt charges extended over a period of time so that future generations will themselves be able to pay for some of the things that we have built in our lifetime. To that extent the Minister must have proposals to tell what is going to be the refinancing of the whole Port exercise, particularly now we are contemplating further expansion.

I want to talk a bit about this expansion, Sir. It seems to me that when the expansion was thought of, in the first instance, at that time there was a boom in trade in particular and probably in world trade in relation to Barbados. One must remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Barbados had acquired a reputation in the Caribbean of being a tremendous transshipment Port for goods to other areas in the Caribbean, but since the break up of the Federation in particular one has seen the other units of the erstwhile Caribbean Federation establishing their own Deep Water Harbours. Despite the fact that containerisation of cargo has occurred, it is true to say today that Barbados has lost its prime location as a stop-over point for ships off-loading and shipping goods to other territories. They still now go to the other territories, and a lot of the volume of goods coming to Barbados now seems to originate with CARICOM and to be off-loaded, in fact, under CARICOM within the inner carenage as such.

I want to know what are Government's plans. I wonder whether the Minister could tell this House Government's plans at this stage for the use of the carenage and inner carenage facilities, and whether it is proposed that the inter-Island trade would, in future, be dealt with at the Port expansion and, if so, what proposals Government have for ensuring that the inner carenage is used in the whole overall complex for other Port facilities which are provided for small boats and, possibly, yachts. It is obvious that we must now look after the yachting trade as an economic exercise in its own worth, and probably also as an arm of the tourist industry. There are some ill effects of the yachting trade which I hope we will be able to contain, but I think in the long run, provided we can contain those disadvantages, there should be no reason why we could not benefit from a proper yachting trade and having a proper marina for yachts which would want to berth here from time to time.

It is no doubt true, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in the last three years there has been a slowing up in the volume of cargo passing through the Bridgetown Port. It is a bit unfortunate that this should have occurred just at the time when there are plans off the drawing-board for the expansion. I still believe that if the expansion is carried out and we can show ourselves a greater efficiency in the turn around of boats, and we can show that we can off-load and load cargo without causing too much of a delay to shipping and in a more efficient way than is done in some of the other Ports, with whom we are in competition, we would be able in those circumstances still to command some of the transshipment trade, although we would not be able to command all.

It is a fact that at some other Ports in the Caribbean, I believe, in Trinidad which was worst than us before, all of a sudden Trinidad recouped her position and went ahead and was actually receiving and sending out cargo at a lesser charge than we did. It became quicker at one stage. There is now a bottleneck again, in Trinidad and a serious bottleneck, too, at the present moment. But I saw some figures a couple of years ago from the Port Authority in Trinidad which indicated that they were lower in their overall cost than we were. (*Asides.*) The Hon. Minister without Portfolio says this is not so. I wonder whether he has the comparative figures available. What I can tell him now is that I will concur with him that the recent figures I have seen from the Port Authority in Trinidad show that it costs more for ships to berth, load and

unload in Trinidad than it costs for ships to do a corresponding job in Barbados. Despite that comparison, I would say that there is still room for us to try to increase productivity, and that is where management and workers are so important, because by increased productivity we can attract to ourselves the ships on the turn around that are necessary to keep the Port expanding.

1.05 p.m.

Now a contracting Port, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will mean not only a limitation on the number of persons employed, but it can well mean an increase in the cost of goods supplied from the Port. I am very concerned about the limitation which is now occurring and the contraction which is occurring in the number of workers at the Port. I believe that the Port Management prior to the take over had begun to discuss with the workers' organisation ways and means in which they could cushion the shock of redundancy. I have never considered the severance payment provisions as more than a temporary solution to a long term problem. When a worker loses his job or is retrenched under the severance payment provisions, provided that there is retrenchment *per se*, then he is entitled to severance payment, but he is still without a job, and therefore our duty and the Minister's duty in so far as his portfolio goes must be to ensure that there is no reduction in the labour force as this will affect the livelihood of workers unless the reduction is vitally necessary because of increased productivity, and there are alternative avenues of employment for the persons who are being laid off.

This is the sort of criteria I would like the Port Department to impress at the moment on the Port Contractors Board and on the Union as a whole, and it is the sort of criteria that the Port Authorities should in future make sure are followed. It is, as I said, an undoubted fact that in the future more and more containerisation will become the method of transport of goods, and the new proposals for the Port, I understand, have taken this into account. I would like to warn the Minister though that it would be a mistake in the new proposals which have not been made available to this House or to any Committee of this House for us to clutter up the Port or the new facilities with buildings which are merely administrative or indeed in some instances shopping facilities, and forget that we have to think in the future of expansion.

Speaking for myself it seems to me that some of the factories were built too near the Harbour. I am sure that many of them were

sorted out on the basis of having no other location that would have been reasonable for them. It seems to me that you just gave I.D.C. some land and they built factories or allotted factory space as people came along without proper rationalisation of how they were going to expand industry in that area. For instance, I would want the Minister to tell me whether the shrimp plant and the shrimping fleet as a whole should not have berthing facilities in that area, which would have been better than having the shrimp boats coming into another area and then the shrimps being transported to a processing plant somewhere removed, just as you have the deep freeze and cold storage located near the off-loading section. Perhaps the Minister will say whether in future planning it is envisaged that adequate cold storage and blasting facilities will be provided in such proximity to the Port that there will be a saving in time and in the product that will be processed at the factory as well.

The Opposition will vote for this Head of the Estimates. The Port is something that we have great sentiment on. We are not only sentimental on it, but we realise the significance, and we do not intend to starve this Minister of supply, nor do we intend to register any disapproval against this Minister as we have had to divide the House on other Ministries where we feel there is no efficiency being shown. The Minister can take it that we have no vote of censure against him, as when the Opposition divides we divide either because we are not satisfied with the efficiency, we are not satisfied that the money is properly used, or we are satisfied that other things are going wrong for which the Minister should take ministerial responsibility.

Last night, Mr. Deputy Speaker, coming on to the early morning when there was the guillotine on the main Estimates, we demonstrated in no uncertain terms those Ministries: Trade, External Affairs, Tourism, Caves Authority, and about five of the Prime Minister's portfolio in which we consider there is great waste, inefficiency, bad government, bad administration, and we hope that this point was taken very strongly.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I too would like to join in the congratulatory remarks which have been showered on you in your new post. Over and above that, for fear less this sitting may proceed longer than anticipated, I am asking leave to suspend certain Standing Orders. It should have been done earlier.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Leader of the House is seeking leave to suspend certain relevant Standing Orders, and unless there is any objection, leave will be granted.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, first permit me to congratulate you in attaining that office. Secondly, I believe Your Honour has been in the Chamber.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the hon. member objecting to leave?

Mr. BOLDEN: I am speaking on that, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Leader of the House is seeking leave, and unless you are objecting you cannot speak.

Mr. BOLDEN: I have to lay my objection, but I do not have to get up and say "I object". I believe it is common courtesy to allow me to introduce myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may say so, there are certain traditions which I believe we all should follow. If the Leader of the House at the beginning of the sitting did not seek.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What I would like to find out from the hon. member is whether he is speaking on a point of order or objecting to leave being granted.

Mr. BOLDEN: I am going to object to leave being granted and I am saying why.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then would you address the Chair on a point of order?

Mr. BOLDEN: If Your Honour wants me to address you on a point of order I will.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Leader of the House began the House this morning, he did not seek leave to suspend the Standing Orders. If before the luncheon adjournment he finds he wants leave to suspend such Standing Orders, common courtesy demands that he should discuss it with somebody from this side giving the reason, rather than just getting up and asking for leave. He just cannot now get up and say he is asking for leave to suspend the Standing Orders, and Your Honour should know above anyone else that it should be objected to at this stage. He just cannot treat us like somebody who has no right to be in here. I heard when they met at Headquarters last Tuesday that the Prime Minister's remarks were

that he did not want to come back to Parliament, that down there is nowhere for anybody. The Leader of the House should have taken the necessary steps.....

Hon. C. E. TALMA: On a point of order.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Joseph is already on a point of order.

Mr. BOLDEN: The hon. member should have known what he intended to do and could have held discussions with us. Even before lunch he could have asked somebody to come over and say that something has arisen which makes it necessary that we suspend certain Standing Orders, and we would know what is going on; but do not come in here and day after day at the last minute take everybody by surprise and then the Chair goes along with it. On behalf of the Opposition I am objecting to the Standing Orders being set aside at this stage because it is unfair to members of this House to treat us in this manner.

1.15 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member's point is well taken. There has been objection for leave being granted to have the Standing Orders suspended.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I thought that the hon. member would be pleased to get out of here early. I am making a motion. So far as the Resolution is concerned, I think that the two things referred to.....

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: I am speaking on the Resolution. The Minister without Portfolio who is responsible for the Port will reply for the Government. I am giving some information. The original \$12,403,200 and \$6,239,000 were redeemed on the 15th March, 1973 and the 1st February, 1974, respectively. At the redemption date the short fall of the Sinking Fund for the loan was \$9,254,337 and \$4,284,175.30 respectively.

It was agreed that the short fall would be financed from the Treasury and that the Port Department would reimburse the Government over a period of 20 years at the rate of 9 per cent per annum, the reimbursement being made half yearly on the 15th September and on the 15th March; this is credited to Revenue under Head

10, Loans and Advances, and the interest is credited to Head 8(25).

The amount outstanding to be reimbursed by the Government at the 31st March, 1976, is as follows: Short fall, \$9,254,337, and the amount outstanding, \$8,328,903 and the short fall, \$4,284,175, and the amount outstanding \$4,069,967. This is the present state of the loans.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does any other hon. member want to make a contribution to the debate on the Resolution? *(Pause)*.

Hon. G. G. FERGUSSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened very carefully to the hon. member for St. Philip North and the hon. member for Christ Church West, and I appreciate their contributions to this debate as far as the Bridgetown Port is concerned.

The member for St. Philip North mentioned about pilferage. I would like to say that pilferage is something that goes on in ports all over the world and Barbados is no exception; but Barbados has nothing like the high amount of pilferage that goes on in other ports of the world. The pilferage that takes place in Barbados is low as compared with what takes place in other ports. I would like to see pilferage in Barbados as nil. I do not like to see any at all, but this will never happen because in my own experience pilferage starts very often on board ships, and the percentage of people that will enter a broken package are many as compared with those who break it. If you can manage to land your cargo in good condition and get it in the warehouse, you will find that it will be in reasonably good condition. If you get packages broken, then you have problems, because the type of person who will enter a package that is already broken and take out something would not have broken it. So, if you can avoid the breaking of packages, you can eliminate a lot of pilferage.

I would like to see pilferage reduced to a minimum in Barbados, but you will have to make sure that there is no pilferage on board ships. Once you have pilferage on board ships you always have short landings and pilferage in the island because of the easy access to broken cargo.

With regards to Government taking over the Port Contractors, I would like to see the people working at the Harbour realising, as the member said that it is their Port. I see inefficiency in many instances, and although it is hard to believe, it is true that lots of people engage in these occupations do not feel that it is something belonging to them, and they give it less care than

if it was somebody else's. I am sorry to say this, but it is true..

Some of these fellows feel that if it is mine nobody can ask me anything, so I do as I like. If it is somebody else's I will take greater care. I have noticed it in the Fishing Industry that some people have the idea that if I go out in Mr. So and So's boat I will care it. That is far from the truth. I have found that most of these fellows would have to learn that to care somebody else's belongings, they would first have to be able to care their own; but they have the attitude that something being mine, nobody can ask me anything about it. This is unfortunate in our society, and I would like to see it eliminated.

What I have discovered in certain businesses which pay bonus on the profits made, is that they get far better results. I will give an instance. At the Seawell Catering Service, they run their business on a bonus basis. They do not have this amount of trouble because if you have a fellow who is a slacker, and who is not prepared to do his work, the other workers will get rid of him; and that is what I would like to see in more businesses. If you have drones in the hive the other bees will run them out because they will just destroy the honey.

1.25 p.m.

The hon. member for St. Philip North also mentioned the composition of the Board and the question of picking 'yard fowls' to put on Boards. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am a Barbadian and I believe in Barbadians first. You talk about CARICOM, but I like to tell people straight, CARICOM or anything, but I believe in Barbados first, then CARICOM or anything can come after; I believe in Barbados first but I believe in our people reaching the highest heights of anything. In other words, if I have a friend and he is competent and capable of doing a job as good as anybody else I see no reason why he should not have it. If he is not competent and capable and there is someone else competent and capable I will tell him to go and equip himself and be competent to do the job. It is the same thing as I would figure in the CARICOM area with purchasing commodities in our area.

I believe in a bureau of standards and I believe that people in our area must produce as good as anybody else if they want their commodities sold and not to be third rate, not to have our people having to purchase third rate stuff because it is within our area. Our area must learn to produce stuff as good as anybody else if we want to get it sold. This is my honest feeling

about it, then I would say all the restrictions to buy in your area would be well worthwhile enforcing because the goods would be as good as any you can buy from any other area.

Most of the members of the Port Contractors Board are members who have been operating on that Board prior to the Government being the sole holders of Port Contracts because these are people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who have the experience, they have the knowhow, and I believe in running a business, it is a commercial enterprise, and with its investments it should make money. If it has been making money before in the hands of private enterprise I want it today to be able to make just as much money, if not more, in the hands of the Government and not to fall because it is Government. Because something is Government it is "we wun" and it will usually drop through if you do not give it the necessary care and precaution it requires. I am prepared as Minister responsible for it to see that the best care is taken of these things that the people in this country can derive the benefits necessary in this enterprise.

The hon. member for Christ Church West spoke about the charges being kept within a reasonable figure. I agree with him, and if there is one person who can say here today that the Port is a blessing to every Barbadian that person is me, because if we did not have the Bridgetown Port today and had to still go on with the old 40-ton lighters pulled with 26 and 28 oars and four men or towed by launches with the cost and upkeep of them today commodities would be a lot higher because the actual cost of a ship anchoring in Carlisle Bay would not bring in any revenue, but the cost of maintaining those lighters to ferry commodities in and out from that distance would create a far higher charge and all those charges the consumer pays for, so we will always try to keep it down. We are still in competition with the other islands. We are not the only people with ports, there is Trinidad right alongside of us. Our geographical position with regard to commodities coming from Europe puts us in a first class position to be used as a trans-shipment port. We are the first land call, but I should say that the rates — to answer one of the questions asked by the hon. member — that Trinidad is one of the ports that produces oil and would be able to sell oil at a far cheaper rate and I would think that this might be one of the reasons why our commodities have dropped in coming here during the last two years, because most of these ships would go on to Trinidad, and I suppose it is a question of 'I scratch your back and you scratch mine,' you get your fuel from there but you use

my port as a trans-shipment point, but all these are things that go on in business. They have the fuel, they can sell you fuel at a cheaper rate and we have to buy it at a higher rate and sell it at a far more expensive rate than they would be able to get it in Trinidad, therefore this would be one of the attractions that Trinidad would have on us today, but port for port and charges for charges the Port of Bridgetown has always been cheaper than the Port of Trinidad. The handling charges, harbour dues, towage and dockage have always been lower.

The hon. member for Christ Church West also asked about the plans for the careenage and mentioned a yachting haven. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I love ships, I love yachts a lot too, but I differ with lots of people's ideas in Barbados as far as marinas and yachts are concerned. I am quite familiar with it. Barbados' geographical position again is outside the line where the wealthy yachts would come, especially small yachts. We will have very few yachts coming here, most of our yachts would be yachts that leave the United Kingdom and Spain and come down here every year around December and January. In December, just before Christmas, at one time there would have been not less than 40 or 50 small yachts anchored in Carlisle Bay off the Yacht Club and Holiday Inn, but most of those yachts belong to people who have saved their life's earnings and so on and do a little riding, a little sailing and a little of anything to make their voyages around the world. They are not wealthy people, so Barbados will never be able to derive very much from that class of yacht, having a marina. Barbados is too far east, it is outside the chain of the islands. In Antigua where a lot of yachts are based, those yachts would come from Antigua sheltered under the mainland of Guadeloupe, Martinique, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, through the Grenadines, up to Grenada and possibly up to Trinidad with very little open channels between. The mere 100 miles of open water between Martinique and Barbados, or St. Lucia and Barbados, or St. Vincent and Barbados make them seasick. What we will have to do, if we did take them from a marina here, would be then to fly them back to Barbados but with small yachts it would be bit rough for them. I have my doubts very much about Marinas unless you want to use them for your own, so investing heavily in a Marina I would be very cautious and careful about.

With regard to the inner basin and building a shrimping harbour, this is one of the first things that we considered when we were talking about the extension of the deep water harbour. I had

included in it a fishing centre, anything of the draught of 20 feet to look after shrimping and to attract the Japanese or big companies to come in here with tuna and that sort of thing, but we could not get any funds. They could not produce any figures; in other words, we had a shrimping industry which was in the years when we had a marketing corporation and there were facilities. With things like that you would have to have the facilities first to attract people. Nobody will lend you funds, the IADB or any other loan agency is not going to lend you funds unless you can give them a projection of figures, of the money that is going to be made, because it is a business investment, and if you cannot produce figures of how you are going to make money, what it is going to cost against what it is going to make, you cannot get any funds, and this was our position. This was one of the reasons that the shallow draught harbour would move into the project so that our shipping as shallow draught shipping would move into the reclamation of the new harbour which will be 500 and something feet in place of the carenage. This also would give security to the exposed area. Barbados is an open sepulchre. If you take the war days where countries would have to give protection to their shipping in places like the carenage we would never be able to give any to it.

1.35 p.m.

You will always have an open thoroughfare, and it will be dangerous for shipping. It is a good idea to have your inside shipping move out, and then we could use the inner basin and the other basin as a marina temporarily as well as for the shrimping industry or any normal fishing industry. It is there already, and you should try to keep it as clean as possible. You should also pay due regard to such things as smuggling and so on which go on with yachts and in lonely places. These things are becoming problems all over the world today. You have drug problems, and you have to watch the yachts moving around. All of this is a part of tourism; it brings nice and bad things with it.

With reference to the point raised by the hon. member for Christ Church West about transshipment of cargo, I think some of the cargo has moved out of Barbados because of the oil business and the Geest Line. The Geest Line now call at Barbados. These Geest boats come from a European Port and they go to Grenada, St. Vincent, Dominica and St. Lucia for bananas. They are banana boats, actually, and they are very fast. They would be able to bring freight to these countries at better freight rates than the normal Harrison Line before. They used to use

Barbados as a terminal point, and transshipment cargo would go to Antigua, St. Kitts, Grenada, St. Vincent and other Islands. Nowadays, most of this cargo would come by the Geest Line that go to these Islands themselves. They go there for bananas. Normally, it would not pay a ship with a small amount of cargo to go to a Port with such a small amount, but if a ship had to go to a Port to load bananas, it might as well carry along the small amount of cargo it can get at the sametime. At one stage the Geest Line used to come here as empty ships, but shipping has become so tight that they themselves are in the business for a two-way trade. It will cost you more to run an empty ship than to run a full one. You have to use the same amount of fuel, pay the same wages, and look after the same overhead expenses. If you can collect even one-third of what somebody else might have had in a full cargo it will be a question of part-payment. As long as you can pay your stevedoring, Port charges, and get something for yourself you will still be on top. All of these problems you have to look at as well as the things that are in competition with us.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 3. To move the Second Reading of a Bill to regulate the holding of certain property by aliens and companies under alien control.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not propose to proceed with that at this stage.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 4. To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Companies Act.

Hon. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Order is closely tied with the previous one, and I do not propose to proceed with it at this stage.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 5 in the name of the Minister of Communications and Works, and it is to move the passing of the Resolution that the House of Assembly approve of the extension of the date of repayment by the Transport Board of the first instalment of the said loan made to the said Board under the authority of Resolution No. 26/1975 of the 6th May, 1975.

Hon. C. E. TALMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Hon. Minister is not in his place. I was trying

to get on to him, but I have not been able to do so. As far as I know, this concludes Government Business for today's Sitting, subject to what the Opposition may wish to do. We could give them the balance of time that is left over.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Members of the Opposition can only deal with Private Members' Business, if the relevant Standing Orders are suspended.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. C. E. TALMA: The Standing Orders were not suspended. This concludes Government Business for today's Sitting. I sought leave to suspend the Standing Orders; I sought to get two

matters which I have introduced dealt with today, but hon. members are not ready to deal with them and they regard them as very important measures.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Friday, the 26th March, 1976, at twelve o'clock noon.

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

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

