

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION OF 1976 - 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 18th January, 1977.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.15 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, (Speaker); Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Labour, Welfare, Youth Affairs and Sport); Hon. H. deB. FORDE, S.C., M.A., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs); Dr. R. B. CADDLE; Mr. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M.; Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M.; Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Health and National Insurance); Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Communications and Works); Mr. J. G. ODLE, (Chairman of Committees); Mr. M. C. C. WARD; Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN, (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Caribbean Affairs, External Trade, Industry and Tourism and Leader of the House); Mr. V. L. JOHNSON, B.A., M.A.; Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Community Development); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT and Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.Sc. (Econ.).

Prayers were taken by the Chaplain, Fr. F. A. Cayless.

Mr. Taitt entered the House and took his seat.

MINUTES CONFIRMED

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, 11th January, 1977 are before the House.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: I beg to move that the Minutes be confirmed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no objection, the Minutes have been confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that I have received copies of the statements for the month of November, 1976 as prepared by the Accountant General.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS entered the House and took his seat.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move the suspension of Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 24, 42, 43 and 44. The object is to facilitate the Government to permit it to deal with a Bill which has already been circulated to members on the other side. It is a Bill to amend the Public Loan Act Cap. 102.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that.

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

PAPERS LAID

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Registration of Business Names Order, 1977.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to give notice of a Resolution to amend the note to Item 5, Head 111, Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$105,240 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Annexed Estimates 1976-77,

Port Department, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1976-77, No. 29 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$812,000 out of 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. 30 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Public Loan Act. This is the Bill for which passage in all its stages we are asking the House today.

Mr. SPEAKER: At the appropriate time.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. ADAMS: Yes, Sir, not now. I also beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Registration of Business Names Act.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to repeal and re-enact the provisions of the Married Women (Separation and Maintenance) (Amendment) Act, 1975.

Also a Bill to repeal and re-enact the provisions of the Marriage (Amendment) Act, 1975.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael North Central - his Resolution relating to small businesses.

Dr. R. B. CADDLE: Thank you, Sir.

Whereas small businessmen experience great difficulties in starting, maintaining and promoting their businesses;

And Whereas small businesses make a worthwhile contribution to the economy of this country and to employment;

Be It Resolved that this House urge Government to set up a Commission to inquire into the circumstances and conditions attendant on the operation of small businesses and to make recommendations for the protection and enhancement of small businesses.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Lucy - his question with respect to the St. Lucy's Secondary School.

Mr. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware that the St. Lucy's Secondary School was established to accommodate approximately 1200 pupils?

And is the Minister aware that although the building programme is not complete the school population has already reached this level?

And is the Minister aware that Phase 4 of the development plan for the school consisting of 26 classrooms, specialist rooms and a pavilion has not yet begun?

Will the Minister state what plans Government has for expediting the building programme so as to alleviate the difficulties which are currently being experienced at this school?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same hon. member - his question relating to Chinese acupuncture.

Mr. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister aware of the ancient Chinese method of healing known as acupuncture?

And is the Minister aware that this method has been successfully practised in many countries around the world?

Will the Minister state the Government's policy on acupuncture?
12.25 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The same hon. member. His question with respect to the Spring Hall Rural Development Project.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, to inquire of the Minister of Agriculture:

Is the Minister aware that plans for the Spring Hall Rural Development Project in St. Lucy had been at an advanced stage when there was a change in Government on 2nd September, 1976? Can the Minister state his Government's policy on this project?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael North Central. His question with respect to some local beverages which are being produced under unhygienic conditions.

Dr. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, to inquire of the Minister of Health and National Insurance:

(a) Is the Minister aware that:

- (1) some local beverages are being produced for public consumption under unhygienic conditions,
- (2) containers of those beverages often contain foreign bodies which are injurious to the health of consumers, and
- (3) members of the public have ingested beverages containing foreign bodies and have consequently become ill?

(b) Will the Minister take appropriate steps to eliminate the hazard to the health of the people of Barbados?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I ask Your Honour to rule whether that question is within the terms of the Standing Order. I think it is vague and certainly not specific enough to enable anybody to elicit an answer, because we understand there are a variety of beverages being produced from mauby back to rum. Standing Order 14(2) relates to this matter.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question refers to local beverages, and it can do so generally, or in a specific manner. The question is in order, and I so rule.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker,....

Mr. SPEAKER: With due respect to the Hon. Prime Minister, you cannot challenge the ruling of the Chair.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: No, Sir, I am not in any way challenging it. Now that Your Honour has ruled on it, I would ask Your Honour to exercise the powers contained in Standing Order 14(2)(b), and ask the member to authenticate and substantiate the statements therein on which he is asking for our awareness. We have no objection to the question. We would like to answer it, but we would not know how to answer that question. The only answer we could give is that we are not aware, unless he authenticates and substantiates it. I believe we will accept a letter to the Leader of the House directing his attention to what he wants investigated. I believe we can say that will be accepted, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand the hon. member for St. Michael North Central is more than willing to substantiate it.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Public Loan Act be now read a first time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Registration of Business Names Act Chapter 317 be now read a first time.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to repeal and re-enact the provisions of the Married Women (Separation and Maintenance) (Amendment) Act, 1975, be now read a first time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second that.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to repeal and re-enact the provisions of the Marriage (Amendment) Act, 1975, be now read a first time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second that.

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

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Reply to Question No. 2 is now ready.

Hon. B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Reply to Question No. 3 is now ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item 2 on the Order Paper be the First Order of the Day under Government Business.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: 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.

RESOLUTION RE REQUEST THAT A
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF
BOTH HOUSES BE SUMMONED

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution seeks to set in motion the machinery to take disciplinary action against the Clerk of Parliament in respect of certain matters arising out of his conduct in his capacity as Clerk. The object of this Resolution is to initiate a procedure which we conceive will give the Clerk an opportunity to present his side of the case, so to speak.

12.35 p.m.

We have the report of the Debates Committee which makes certain recommendations, and since the filing of the Report of the Debates Committee, additional matters have been drawn to my attention which in my opinion will further exacerbate the position as set out in that Report. It is proposed that subject to the approval of the House and subject to the concurrence of the Presiding Officers of this Chamber and the other Chamber, that we have a closed session in which all of the facts surrounding the allegations are gone into and recommendations made. I do not wish, because if I were to do so I would be pre-judging and having an unfair advantage so to speak, to mention any details of this matter other than to say that the additional matter which I would ask to be circulated for the attention of hon. members, would be a letter dated 2nd November, 1976, from a Mr. E. DeC. Jordan, the Chief Establishments Officer acting on behalf of the Establishments Division, and that letter was *apropos* the subject matter of the views of the Ministry of Finance, *vis-a-vis* the proposed increase in salaries for Staff of Parliament, which said letter I am again alleging was not brought to the attention of the Debates Committee, and I would add that allegation as additional particulars to the allegations which have already been given to the Debates Committee.

I feel that we must proceed with this motion and that it is the duty of all of us to ensure that this Honourable Chamber is served in a manner in which we feel it deserves to be served, and as I said, I do not wish to pre-judge any matter. This is simply a Resolution to initiate this procedure. The procedure that I have adopted is a procedure which has been conceived, as I said before, for the

purpose of ensuring nothing but strict fairness. It is not necessary in my opinion because we could act on the Report of the Debates Committee, but I feel that the view of the importance of the office held by the Clerk of Parliament that we owe it to the office, if not to the holder; to ensure that we proceed in a manner of strict fairness.

Accordingly, I move this Resolution.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I was wondering if the hon. member for St. Michael North Central was seconding it, otherwise I would be glad to second it.

In rising to second this Resolution, Sir, I would like to commend, congratulate and thank the Debates Committee comprising members of both sides of the House who have unanimously concurred in the proceedings so far which have fallen to be taken against the Clerk of the House. This is surely not the occasion in which the rights and wrongs of the Clerk's case will be gone into. I do not anticipate that hon. members will wish at this stage to rise to defend the Clerk when indeed the Resolution is in a form that will enable the Clerk to put his own defence based upon which a debate in both Houses of Parliament can then ensue for the necessary passage of the joint addresses if so be, or the necessary exoneration of the Clerk should that be the mind of the two Houses. However, Sir, the Clerk has come under criticism over a long period of time, and I urge all hon. members to support this Resolution. I am appealing for bi-partisan support of this Resolution upon this occasion. You cannot go on and on having an open sore without taking steps to make it better or to cut it out as may be directed by the doctor.

This Tuesday last year, the third Tuesday in 1976, the hon. member for St. John who was then Prime Minister addressed the House on the subject of the Clerk with what, if I may say so with great respect, was a very well turned phrase; he said the office of Clerk has been vacant too long. It is time that we fill it; and it has gone on since then; nobody disagreed with the judgment of the hon. member for St. John upon that occasion. On that occasion he indicated that the Clerk, borrowing an expression from the hon. member for St. Thomas, was using the steam roller through his wrong doings in an attempt to steam roller the House. Since then members on both sides have been expressing their dissatisfaction. The time has come to settle this matter and I think the Leader of the House has evolved an admirable procedure which I hope both Houses of Parliament will support. Addresses by both Houses form some part of the Constitutional history of Great Britain; they form

a very significant part of the Constitutional history of the United States where the procedure of impeachment is still in full force and where the House of Representatives may present an indictment by way of impeachment for the Senate to try. We have no immediate guidelines in our Constitution or in the Rules and Standing Orders of either House of Parliament, and we have to evolve our own. The House of Lords, as you will undoubtedly know, can remove its Clerk of Parliament by an address. That power is given to the whole of Parliament in Barbados, and I think that this idea of a joint session which the Clerk can attend and put his case is extending fairness to an officer of the House and his office of which those who have devised it, I think, are well worthy of high praise and congratulations. I hope that the Opposition in the present House is going to rise and support this Resolution. I would have been glad to have given way to the hon. member for St. Michael North Central if he had wished to second the Resolution just as its representation in the Debates Committee supported the original action taken against the Clerk. It would be tragic for the constitutional development of Barbados if the Opposition in the interest of faction and unnecessary partisanship voted against this Resolution. They would incidentally be voting to deny the Clerk the right to be heard in his own defence; They would be speaking with two tongues, with one tongue in the Debates Committee and with another tongue on the floor of Parliament. If the Opposition wishes to reveal itself as so factious, if it wishes to reveal itself as a preacher with a forked tongue, it is welcome to do so. I very sincerely hope that in the interest of the good Government of Barbados and in the interest of upholding the procedure and the dignity of Parliament that the Opposition will join with us in giving the Clerk this opportunity to be heard by all the members of Parliament before we proceed to the necessary addresses, upon which indeed I can see that every individual member will have his own views, because I do not really view this as a Party matter at that level, if they fail to be presented in each House in due course.

12.45 p.m.

Once again, Sir, let us congratulate the Debates Committee; once again I urge, let us support the initiative of the Leader of the House in this matter by voting unanimously for this Resolution.

Dr. R. B. CADDLE: Mr. Speaker, it is quite likely that a case can be made out for disciplining the Clerk of this House, and I am not concerned with that, what I am concerned with is that I would like to be convinced, to be assured that the procedure on which we are about to embark is a

correct one, and I have doubt about the correctness of the procedure. We have a written Constitution, and because we have a written Constitution we have to be careful at all times to ensure that whatever we do is not a reflection on the constitution and can at all times be deemed to be in keeping with the requirements of the Constitution of this country. That puts us in an entirely different position from those countries which have no written Constitutions and can do anything at any time, where you would find it rather difficult to deem it unconstitutional in any court of law.

The Clerk of this House is employed under a specific Act of Barbados and therefore we have to be quite definite that the manner in which we go about to get rid of the Clerk is the correct one, for although he may be wrong, if we get rid of him in the wrong manner we will find that we are saddled with a lot of embarrassment, and indeed it would be a great shame that the body which is responsible for making the laws of this country would be the body to set about in pulling down or not respecting the very laws which it set up. I am not aware of any provision under the Constitution, the Standing Orders or any Act which permits a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament. Even going through the relevant Act, the Parliament (Debates and Establishment) Act, which deals specifically with the appointment and dismissal of the Clerk, it is doubtful whether the procedure being now suggested is the correct one. I am under the impression that the Clerk is employed by the Debates Committee, he is not employed by either one of the Houses of this Parliament and therefore it is the responsibility of the Debates Committee to look into the matter, to call the Clerk to board, to charge him, to bring evidence to substantiate their charges, to give the Clerk an opportunity to bring evidence to repudiate the charges levelled against him, and then having heard both sides, to come to a conclusion, present that conclusion to both Houses of Parliament and then let each House of Parliament decide what they will do in respect of that matter.

We do not see any such procedure being enunciated in this Resolution. It is very doubtful also that in a sitting of 45 people the Clerk is going to get the type of justice which we are being invited to believe he will get when these 45 people sit down; that is more likely to obtain when the Debates Committee sits and goes into the matter with the Clerk and his representative or representatives.

Sir, the Constitution of this country also enshrines the right to employment and all the other matters pertaining to employment, rightful

dismissal, being charged, being given an opportunity to hear the people who are charging you and to repudiate all the charges they have made against you. I would believe, Sir, that we would like to uphold at all times the behaviour expected of us under the Constitution, and while I say I have no doubt whatsoever that there can be a case made out for the dismissal of the Clerk, as the hon. member for St. Thomas has stated that in a previous Parliament members of both sides have criticised him for his duty or lack of duty, I would again enforce the point, let us be quite correct and certain that the procedure which we are about to embark on to get rid of the Clerk is the correct one.

I would only like to draw to the attention of the Hon. Leader of the House a comparable incident which took place in a neighbouring island of the Caribbean, but in that particular case it was not a Clerk of Parliament, but another public officer, and the matter reached as far as the Supreme Court of that particular island and it was turned down, not because a case could not be made out for the dismissal but the manner in which the man was dismissed. The judges of the Supreme Court of that particular country did not condone it, and this is what can happen, not the question of his behaviour but the question of the procedure which we are about to embark upon, and I have very severe doubts about the correctness of the procedure.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I have — and I hold no brief for the Clerk of Parliament — the record on which this Resolution has been brought to the House. It speaks of an unanimous Resolution, and if I may quote from it, it says, "The Committee unanimously resolved to recommend to both Houses of Parliament that the Clerk of Parliament be dismissed from the service of Parliament since he has lost the confidence of the Committee who are no longer able to place trust in him in the performance of his work."

I have no doubt that in a court of law or in any other court a case can be made by one side or the other. What I cannot agree to, what I will never agree to, is the summary nature, the summary approach in the removal of a man who holds what must be considered an important post in this country. I am a member of the Debates Committee. For reasons which I need not go into here I was not at this particular meeting when this decision was made. That is not anyone's fault, but I wish to say this, I am told that suddenly after some discussion one of the members of the Debates Committee.....

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The hon. member cannot give

evidence as to what took place before the Debates Committee.

Mr. TAITT: Whenever you are getting close to making a crucial point that will happen.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just address your remarks to the Chair. I was just waiting to see if you were going to say that you were told something at the street corner. Please proceed.

Mr. TAITT: As I was saying, Sir, I am told that a number of people standing on the street corners of this country are concerned that the rumour is out that the Clerk was summarily dismissed when someone turned around and said, "what time is it? Let us dismiss him now," and I am told further that people are extremely concerned that persons said in a proceeding such as this in a rather cavalier manner, "if you are looking for a seconder to get rid of him then I will second it." Mr. Speaker, when the question of the removal of a person from office is being considered it would seem to me that it is the responsibility of the body that is getting rid of this person to give that person due process. Due process, if one looks at the special report of the Debates Committee, does not show any indication whatever that the(Asides)....Mr. Speaker, you will protect me from that. It does not show any indication whatever that the Clerk of Parliament so far has had any opportunity to state his case.

12.55 p.m.

This Resolution now comes before us asking Parliament to go into a joint session and that at this joint session the Clerk will have a chance to state his case. The Debates Committee does not show any indication whatever that the Clerk of Parliament has not had an opportunity so far to state his case.

Mr. Speaker, in the first place the calling of a joint session of Parliament is contrary to all the conventions of Parliament in Barbados that I have been able to find. I am not certain on what grounds we are going to have this joint session of Parliament. I am not certain who will be the Presiding Officer at this joint session of Parliament. I see nowhere in the Standing Orders of this House that it is proper for us to summon other than members of this House, and I see nowhere in the Standing Orders of the Other Place that they are in a position to summon members from this place to their place. Perhaps someone will tell us how they plan to deal with the obvious difficulty which may result when you have two Presiding Officers sitting in a joint session.

I do not know, Mr. Speaker, if you would be prepared to defer to the Presiding Officer in the Other House. Mr. Speaker, assuming that all this is possible, assuming that it does not interfere with the conventions of Parliament the fact remains that we are seeking to remove a man from a post in what to my mind is a wrong way. It seems to me that the man is employed by the Debates Committee; and it seems to me that this man should have an opportunity to present to his employers his case in such a way that the employer can make a judgment based on the facts given by both sides as to whether that man should or should not be dismissed.

The Act under which this man is employed requires that after the Debates Committee has examined the situation and they have come to a conclusion based on the facts before them, they should seek ratification of this House and the Other Place. How can a man who has not been given a chance to put his case be summarily dismissed merely by bringing 45 members together?

Mr. SPEAKER: Am I to assume that the hon. member will vote against this Resolution?

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir. Oh yes Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Then you seek to deny the Clerk the opportunity to put his case?

Mr. TAITT: No Sir. That does not follow; but if it seems amusement to some of the hyenas, it is perfectly all right.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Sir. The hon. member for St. Michael South West has used a word which, obviously in the context in which he used it, is a reflection on hon. members on this side, and I submit that the words should be withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: He will withdraw the word "hyena".

Mr. TAITT: I will withdraw the word, although I did not think that the hon. member was a hyena. Hyenas know who they are. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that a man who is going to be summarily dismissed has a right to have his case put for him to the employers. I am saying that the 45 persons who constitute this House and the Other Place are not his employers. His employers are the Debates Committee; and until that man has had an opportunity to put his case before his employers, it would seem that either this Resolution here is premature, or that the manner

in which the Resolution reached here is faulty, to say the least.

No one who has followed the activities of the Government in the last four months can risk not to be concerned on the question of dismissals. I remember, Sir, that very early in this session the Clerk of Parliament received a letter, a copy of which was sent to me as a member of the Debates Committee in which the Prime Minister was stating.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member said that early in the session the Clerk received a letter from the Debates Committee. He is not entitled to come here and abuse the rules of this House by seeking to inform the public of the contents of the proceedings of the Debates Committee. He is not entitled to do it, and he ought to know better.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael South West has not yet attempted to say what were the contents of this letter.

Mr. TAITT: I received a copy of the letter that had been addressed to the Clerk of Parliament by the Prime Minister of this country in which he chastises the Clerk for not doing something which he, the Prime Minister wanted done. It turned out subsequently that it was not the responsibility of the Clerk. The point I am making, Sir, and I shall not try here to prove yet that there may be an attempt to get the Clerk at all cost. I am not prepared to deal with that, because you know....

Mr. SPEAKER: If you attempt to do this you will be imputing improper motives to hon. members on that side.

Mr. TAITT: That is why I will not say these things of them, Sir; but this is a letter which he received instructing him to do something which he subsequently was able to show them was a mistake as not being part of his official function.

I say that to say, Mr. Speaker, that it is entirely possible that the Clerk acted in a manner which was consistent with his own belief of what should be done. It may be entirely possible that the Clerk of Parliament has been guilty of nothing more than incompetence; but if you were to dismiss summarily all of those who have been guilty of functioning within the context of Parliament or indeed the Civil Service, we will have a dismissal a day, if all that the Clerk has done could bring him to the point where he is summarily dismissed like a casual worker, summarily suspended for dismissal like if he was

someone who came in at 1 o'clock in the day and could be fired at 3 o'clock.

1.05 p.m.

I said I have no brief for the Clerk. I have no doubt a case can be made out going back into the history of the Clerk's existence, if one seeks to do so, and present to various and sundry people who would make decisions that the Clerk should go home, but I maintain, Sir, that, on the evidence presented in this document which has been circulated as a Special Report of the Debates Committee, there is absolutely no evidence in this document which would require anyone to meet in any session to consider the dismissal of the Clerk.

What this document does is to set out what the Committee resolved. What the document does not do is to take account of one of the charges which the Leader of the House, in introducing this Resolution, sought to put as part of the charge against the man. This Report does not say anything about the Clerk's position in all of this. This does not say whether the Clerk was ill, or said he was ill and could not perform his duties. It does not say whether the Clerk said he was guilty, or whether he said he was not guilty; yet, we are coming here with a Resolution for all 45 of the members of both Houses of Parliament to meet together to put the Clerk on trial.

There may be some reason why the Clerk should be dismissed, but I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the evidence which has been put forward here in the name of the Debates Committee is not sufficient for me to be able to say that I will support this Resolution. I cannot see how I could support a Resolution calling for a joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament for, as I have said, it is a contravention of the conventions of Parliament, since it has never happened before and, secondly, I do not believe that the justice which a man in this position should have, could be had in the circumstances of a joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament. For those reasons Sir, we shall offer an amendment to this Resolution, but shall not be able to accept it in its present form.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand an amendment is to be moved, so that hon. members will understand the Resolution before they speak.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I rise here today to lend my voice of opposition to what is, obviously, something which is not only of fundamental importance as regards the job, or the employment, of a person who holds, up to this

point, an important job in this country, but at the same time I want to speak to the Resolution which is before this Hon. Chamber. This Resolution asks this House to take note of the contents of the report of the Debates Committee. Now, I want to examine, therefore, the report of the Debates Committee and at the same time examine the whole question procedural and otherwise of a joint session of Parliament, because it seems to me that we are in a very funny era. We in a very funny and very strange situation. Now, if you were to examine the report of the Debates Committee, the Debates Committee, in one of the paragraphs in the middle of the report, suggested that the Committee regard as a grave dereliction of duty by the Clerk the communication of that letter to an external body without the prior consent of the Committee.

As I understand it, Mr. Speaker, this is the charge on which the Debates Committee is recommending that the Clerk be dismissed. The Debates Committee has recommended this to both Houses of Parliament — dismissal, disciplinary action, or whatever action is contemplated by the Government. Now, we have to examine this matter very carefully, because I cannot understand how the Deputy Prime Minister, who is a lawyer (*Asides.*) There are no lawyers in here, and I recognise that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Deputy Prime Minister is an hon. member.

Mr. GREAVES: An hon. member also like yourself, Mr. Speaker. I cannot understand how he could come in here last week, place a report from the Debates Committee before this Chamber, submit a Resolution asking this Chamber to consider that report and, today, come and introduce additional evidence. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is fundamental, because what it demonstrates very clearly is that either the Deputy Prime Minister does not know what he is doing, or the Debates Committee has not thoroughly investigated this matter as it should have done under the Act which gives the Debates Committee the power and authority to deal with matters of this nature. What we are witnessing here today and, indeed what we are being asked to concur in is something which has not been fully gone into and proper investigations have not been carried out.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to understand how you, or any person in his right senses, or anybody with any kind of decency, or any kind of understanding and appreciation for what is right

and what is just could come to a decision and make a recommendation, and then a person, who is a member of that body, could come and produce additional information. That is unfair.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sure the hon. member for St. Lucy is well aware that he has gone far beyond the boundary, and I will ask him to withdraw those offending remarks. We shall have them expunged from the records.

Mr. GREAVES: I beg to withdraw them, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. He has not withdrawn it.

Mr. GREAVES: Are you deaf or what?

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. Your Honour called upon the hon. member to withdraw it, but he has not withdrawn it.

Mr. GREAVES: I said I beg to withdraw it. Anyhow, the Speaker is not taking you on.

Mr. SPEAKER: He did say that he had withdrawn it.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: I apologise; I know that his feminine voice does not reach this side.

Mr. GREAVES: Now, if one were to compare my voice with the voice of the Deputy Prime Minister, whose voice is more feminine? As a matter of fact, you look as if you are pregnant. Let us go ahead. (*Asides.*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have a bit of order.

Mr. GREAVES: If you can get nasty, I can get nasty, too. What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that this is a very serious matter, and we have a charge which has been levelled against the Clerk. The charge is contained in the Special Report of the Debates Committee. I am saying that when you examine the communication from the Debates Committee — remember the Debates Committee is a Committee which has the authority under the Act, Chapter 10 of the laws of Barbados, Part III. Section 4(4) says the manner in which the Clerk of Parliament and other officers could be appointed.

1.15 p.m.

It states very clearly that these appointments shall be made by the Debates Committee. It also states in subsection 4 of Section 4 the manner in

which the Clerk and certain officers can be removed from their posts in Parliament. (A VOICE: Read it.) I will read it.

"The Clerk, a Deputy Clerk or the Librarian shall be removed from office by the Debates Committee for inability or for misbehaviour, if both the Senate and House of Assembly resolve that he ought to be so removed."

I can read and I can understand.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for St. Lucy please address his remarks to the Chair?

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is a question of procedure, and what I am saying is that nobody can interpret the last part of this section as being a joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament. That construction could not be put by anybody on this particular matter. What I am saying is that the Debates Committee has the power and the authority to deal with the matter, and having dealt with the matter thoroughly, then to make a recommendation. But what is the Resolution? We are being called upon to approve a Resolution which will call together a joint meeting of the Senate and the House then to give the Clerk an opportunity to defend himself or to state his case. I am submitting, Mr. Speaker, that this question of the defence of the Clerk should be dealt with at the level of the Debates Committee, and having heard all the evidence and after having come to a decision based on the evidence which comes out there and the kind of representation which the Clerk gives on this particular case, the Debates Committee will then make a recommendation to the House of Assembly and to the Senate and that both Houses be asked to concur on that particular matter.

When you are talking now of getting the two Houses of Parliament together then to try the Clerk, as it were, I am saying that this is wrong procedurally and we are witnessing in this country the introduction of a type of Government and an illegal system where justice is not given.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the question of a person's job is a very important thing. I recall that some time in December last year the Hon. Attorney General talked about unfair dismissal and indeed suggested that his party and he personally were concerned about what he called the spate of unfair dismissals at the Bridgetown Port. He was concerned then because he had interest in a particular case which he had, but I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that you

have a situation where the legal adviser of the Government is concerned about this question of the way in which people are removed from their jobs. Presumably he is concerned about security of tenure. When you take all he has said and examine what is being attempted in this exercise, one would see very clearly that the two things do not square off. The question of a person's job no matter how high a position that person holds or no matter how low a position that person holds, is a very important thing. Indeed it is a fundamental right; it is a right which has got to be defended. It is a right which the person must ensure, and where we as law makers in this country must set an example and must ensure that people's jobs are not just taken away in a cavalierish or frivolous manner.

I would further like to make the point that my concept of a job is synonymous with property. We must come to this stage in this country where we have to regard a person's job in the same way that we regard property, and there must be some very serious protection for this, because when you examine the whole legal framework under which we are operating, all sorts of protection is given to property, but for a person who has only his job to rely on, little or no protection is given and we have this situation as almost a *fait accompli*.

As you will very well realise, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition cannot support this departure and the manner in which the Government is seeking to bring about the dismissal and the downfall of the Clerk of Parliament. We must examine ourselves and we must examine very clearly what we are doing, because I am convinced that this issue is going to be a crucial one in this country both from the point of view of the constitution, and indeed from the point of view of the whole question of dismissal, and the question of security of tenure, the whole question of human rights, because these are the issues which are involved in this particular case and we have got to ensure that (1) the procedure is right and (2) that we leave no stone unturned to ensure that what we are doing is correct.

I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the procedure is sadly incorrect when one thinks in terms of what is contained in Chapter 10 and furthermore when one takes into account the Resolution which we are being asked to consider here today. Now I really shudder to think what will become of this country. We have already witnessed and are witnessing the naked and wicked abuse of power in this country, and somebody has got to stop it.

1.25 p.m.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that you yourself are not convinced that the right thing is being done...(*Asides*)... If he were over here he would have been prancing up on a matter like this, you know that too. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is what Oppositions are for). So why do you not want me to do that? You behave one way in Opposition and when you get in the Government you behave another way; I agree with you.

We therefore must take a very careful note. As I said, the Deputy Prime Minister attempted to advance additional information, and I do not see how we could countenance this additional information because we have before us a report of the Debates Committee and that information is not contained in that report. Has the Debates Committee met and considered this and decided that this should be included? I am saying that far from considering this, this House should censure the Leader of the House and Deputy Prime Minister for overstepping his bounds by attempting to include in a report of the Debates Committee a matter which has not been discussed by the Debates Committee, because that Committee's report is here before us and that is not contained in it, and I do not see how we could entertain that. If we do that, I am saying that this would be a miscarriage of justice as is obviously evidenced in this particular matter, because that side has no intention of giving anybody a fair chance to represent himself.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the members of the Opposition and none of them has sought until my prompting to read the provisions of the law first. There is a reference to the Act and the relevant section on the Order Paper and it is important to read that section first and then analyse it. It says, "The Clerk, a Deputy Clerk or the Librarian shall be removed from office by the Debates Committee for inability to discharge the functions of his office (whether arising from infirmity of body or mind or any other cause)," like not producing a letter, "or for misbehaviour if both the Senate and the House of Assembly resolve that he ought to be so removed." If we re-arrange the section to make it have sense, Sir, it means as I understand it (a) that the Debates Committee is the employer with the power of hiring and firing; (b) that there must be a Resolution or Resolutions of the Senate and the House of Assembly recommending to the Debates Committee that the person ought to be removed for one or other of the reasons set out in subsection (4). In other words, after that conditional part of section 4(4) it could have read "provided that", the proviso in section 4(4) must come first, provided that the Houses

resolve, then the Debates Committee can remove. That is all it means, Sir.

What has happened so far? I am not a member of the Debates Committee so I was only aware of the report. The Debates Committee met, I do not know. I would assume, I have not heard it alleged in here that the Clerk was not present at the meeting of the Debates Committee and so was not in a position to be apprised of the deliberations of the Committee, so I assume that he must have been there, and contrary to what the member for St. Michael South West would have said, the matter must have been ventilated in his presence. The Debates Committee then made a report which was laid in this House. All that has happened is that this is a novel procedure, or a procedure which has had very little application or adoption in Barbados in the past, a test case. I have not been in here long enough to know if both Houses have ever met, but in my submission the procedure is fair and reasonable, because the only thing that is missing from this section is the use of the word "joint". It does not say a joint meeting, it says that both Houses must resolve, so that it is possible for this House to resolve individually and that Other Place to resolve individually, so you will have two sittings or do it twice.

The members on the other side do not even want to credit themselves with any innovative powers or any initiative to have one meeting which would discuss and determine the whole matter there and then and put the man out of his misery rather than have two drawn out meetings, because normally you have to go back to the Debates Committee with the Resolution. What are you going to say then? That one said one thing and another said something else, when you have members of both Houses comprising the Debates Committee, when you have members of the Debates Committee in the Other Place who voted unanimously that they should report to the House and that procedures should be set in train? Ask Senator Connell.

The member for St. Michael South West indicated early that the Clerk was summarily dismissed. As far as we know he has not been dismissed at all, nor summarily, because he was not sent a letter terminating his appointment without notice, he was present at a meeting of the Debates Committee, I do not know how he gets the word "summarily".

Mr. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Speaker, what I said was that he was summarily suspended with a view to dismissal. They looked

at the clock, asked what was the time and then said, "let us dismiss him now."

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael South West did say that he was summarily dismissed. I am hearing now the hon. member for St. Philip North.

Mr. SIMMONS: He has suggested that no opportunity has been given to the Clerk to put his case and he is going to vote against the Resolution which specifically says that he should be invited to come to show cause why, to put his case, so he is seeking to deny him the opportunity of putting his case.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I made the point....

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you not trying to elucidate a point?

Mr. TAITT: If that is what you say, Sir, yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am saying is this. An hon. member must know what he rises about before he rises.

Mr. TAITT: This hon. member knows what he rises about, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please tell it to the Chair.

Mr. TAITT: I rise on a point of elucidation.

Mr. SPEAKER: And not on a point of order on which you rose.

Mr. TAITT: I rose on a point of order but I know you are going to say it is not a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Listen to me, please. The hon. member for St. Michael South West is forgiven, I forgive him on this occasion. It is a grave affront to this Chair, please take your seat.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, you will know that it has been a grave affront.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member please take his seat. The hon. member for St. Philip North. (*Asides*).
1.35 p.m.

Please we will have no cross talk in this Hon. House.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, when the hon. member for St. Michael South West was speaking he indicated that the Clerk was summarily dismissed possibly for incompetence. If he looks at the section again he will see the words "or any other cause" — which includes the incompetence that he is talking about "or grave misconduct"; he is trying to say, and the member for St. Lucy is saying that the Debates Committee was acting in a high handed manner in its treatment of the Clerk. The member for St. Lucy even stated in native language that it is a naked and wicked abuse of power in this country, while all that we are arguing about is an interpretation of words, whether the words "in both the Senate and the House of Assembly" mean joint and at one and the same time as individuals.

In my submission it means that the two should meet together, resolve and report back to the Debates Committee. Mr. Speaker, I have no wish at this stage to go into the other ramifications of the matter. I cannot understand why the Resolution should ventilate so much heat and in some respects collateral issues, when we are only determining the procedure here today so that the Clerk can be given the fullest possible opportunity to put his case. Whether we do it in a joint session or individual session, he will still have to come before 45 people. (*Aside*). Do not put words in my mouth. You are too ignorant to do that. Why don't you talk about Franklyn's wife when she was working at the Labour College? On that I will sit.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member for St. Philip North addressing the Chair?

Mr. SIMMONS: Not you, Sir. (*Aside*) Do you want to carry away somebody's money now?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael South.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the matter that we are considering in this Hon. Chamber is a most important one; and I would certainly hope that during the course of this debate we will give very full consideration to the implications of what we are doing and what we are about to do, and that we concentrate our efforts on the arguments involved, and that we avoid a tendency towards personal references and concentrate on the facts involved. I think that too often, Mr. Speaker, when we are deliberating on important matters we tend to by-pass issues of substance and start making personal attacks. You are the guardian to see that this does not get out of hand, and so far, Mr. Speaker, you have tried to

restrain the debate; and I hope that you will be able to do so during the rest of this debate.

Let us make no mistake about it. As the member for St. Philip North indicated, this is a novel matter that we are dealing with. It is a novel procedure that we are considering. The Clerk of Parliament is the Chief Officer of Parliament. He is Clerk of the House of Assembly and of the Senate — Parliament — and Parliament is the most important body in this country. It is the supreme law making body in this country, and we have got to be certain that on all occasions we who are supposed to be makers of the law are upholders of the law.

We have to be certain that when we take our decisions, these decisions are based on rules and regulations and extant legislation. I am confident that if members of this Hon. Chamber examine the matter that is before us now there is no one who would not have doubts about the procedure that we are embarking upon. I certainly have doubts that the procedure is the correct procedure.

Let me explain why I have these doubts. The Clerk of Parliament, as I indicated, is the Chief Officer of Parliament — the House of Assembly and the Senate. He is appointed under our laws until he reaches the age of 60 years or until a certain procedure is followed which can remove him from office — infirmity of body or of mind or for other causes — that procedure is followed.

I believe that in the House of Commons the Clerk of Parliament is appointed for life; and this type of entrenchment of this most important post is taken in order to ensure that the dignity, the traditions and the integrity of this most important Chamber are upheld on all occasions; and we must be certain when embarking on a procedure to remove such a person that the steps which we take are the correct steps.

Now this particular Chamber has nominated persons or appointed persons on to a joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament. There are members of this Chamber and there are members of the other Chamber who constitute the joint Select Committee known as the Debates Committee. I am a member of that Committee. I regret that I was not present when this matter was discussed in the Debates Committee; but other pressing matters prevented me as I indicated to the officer who was checking on the morning about attendance. I did indicate that other business would prevent me from attending that meeting.

I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that the normal procedures indicate that when the Debates Committee, which is a joint Committee, deliberates and comes to a conclusion, that its reports are submitted to each House of Parliament. This is how it happens in the House of Commons in the United Kingdom, and this is the procedure which to the best of my knowledge is followed or should be followed here.

When there is a joint Committee — and May has written extensively on this matter — the Chairman of the Committee reports to the particular body of which he is a member, and the committee itself deposes a member of the committee to report to the Other Place. This is a procedure which is laid down in May and it is the procedure that should be followed in a case where there is a joint committee.

There are no precedents which I can find to indicate what would be the procedures or the type of rules or Standing Orders or indeed the authority for summoning a joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament. I say this not because I am afraid of anything novel, and not because it might not be a reasonable development to have joint sittings of the House of Assembly and the Senate in Barbados.

1.45 p.m.

What I am saying is that there are no precedents and that the ground work has not been set for instituting any joint meeting of the House of Assembly and the Senate. Nothing like that has been done. What are the Rules and the Standing Orders that are to be followed in such a meeting? What would be the authority for those particular Standing Orders? Who would preside at the meeting? I know there is a precedent on ceremonial occasions and at the opening of Parliament for members of this Hon. Chamber to be summoned to the Senate. We have to await a summons in order to enter those precincts and those portals up there. They cannot come down here, nor can we go up there. Those are the procedures, and those are the traditions. They may be outdated, or they may be encrusted with age.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that on specific occasions — I will give an example. If a visiting Head of State, or Head of Government, were coming to this country and it was considered that an address should be given to hon. members there could be, and I am not certain whether there have been precedents for this, arrangements for a joint sitting, but it would be merely to hear and

not to deliberate upon. What we would be doing in this particular joint meeting of the House of Assembly and the Senate would be to deliberate upon a particular matter. I am submitting, Mr. Speaker, that when once we examine the present state of the Standing Orders of this House of Assembly, when once we examine the laws under which the Debates Committee functions, when once we examine the laws under which Parliament itself functions, I submit that we can find no authority for a joint meeting of the House of Assembly and the Senate. If we want to embark on such a procedure.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Other Place.

Mr. SANDIFORD: The Other Place. I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your correction. Even the very terms we use, "The Other Place." If we want to embark on that particular procedure, we will have to come to some accommodation and work out the procedures, the Rules and the Standing Orders which should apply in the event that such a session becomes necessary. We have done no such thing. Instead of that, in my submission, we have misread, or are about to misread and misinterpret, the particular section of the debates. (*Asides.*) I cannot give your interpretation. I am giving what, to me, is a commonsense interpretation based upon the precedents and upon the words. Be it far from me, Mr. Speaker, and I am certain you would not do it, I do not wish to tangle with those SCs and QCs and the hon. members over there. Be that far from me, but as an ordinary, humble citizen of this country, as an ordinary, humble member of this Assembly, when I read Section 4(4) it says:

"The Clerk, a Deputy Clerk or the Librarian"

I am referring to the Parliament Debates and Establishment Act —

"Shall be removed from office by the Debates Committee for inability to discharge the functions of his office (whether arising from infirmity of body or mind or any other cause) or for misbehaviour if both the Senate and House of Assembly resolve that he ought to be so removed.

My interpretation of that and my understanding of that is that it does not speak of a joint meeting, nor does it imply a joint meeting of both Houses meeting together. The precedents, the traditions have all been that there will be a separate report of the Committee to the House of Assembly and a separate report of the Committee

to Parliament. If you will permit me, I would like to quote May's on this particular matter, Mr. Speaker. I do not have a copy of May's Parliamentary Procedure to hand, but this is the way in which it is set out — I am sorry; I have found it. We are talking about the reporting from the joint Committees, and it indicates that the report of a joint Committee is presented to both Houses. It is ordered to be presented to the Chairman to the House to which he belongs and by a member selected for the purpose by the Committee to the Other House. The procedure relating to all of the Select Committees indicates that where there is a joint Committee, the report from that Committee and recommendations from that Committee are sent to the House separately.

I am submitting, Mr. Speaker, that (a) we have no precedents for a joint sitting of both the House of Assembly and the Senate to deliberate on any matter, and (b) that the traditions of Parliament itself indicate, as far as we are concerned here, and the place from which we take our traditions, that there is no such machinery or, at least, we have not yet introduced it here. As I said, it may be desirable, but we will have to lay the ground work for that and that we have not done.

Now, the other matter to which I wish to address myself relates to this whole question of what type of hearing an officer of this Parliament may expect in a forum in which there are 45 members sitting down to consider a matter. I think that will be a very cumbersome procedure, and I have my doubts that the ends of justice will not be best served if that particular procedure were followed. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, it is only on occasions such as this — and I think it is a tribute to your management of this Chamber that we can have this silence and attention and lack of cross-talk at this particular juncture, but you yourself know, Mr. Speaker, that this Hon. Chamber can, at times, be very fractious. You are here to control hon. members within the bounds of the Standing Orders. That is well known. I do not speak of the Other Place, because I am not....

Mr. SPEAKER: We usually say, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I think you are in a very biblical guise today. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that it will be a very cumbersome procedure to have an officer of this House before 45 members in order for a case to be heard. It is not known in the courts of this land, as I understand.

1.55 p.m.

In the courts of this land, as I understand it, and the member for Christ Church West can correct me on this, there are twelve persons of average intelligence or ignorance as one commentator has said, to judge and to come to a conclusion, but we want to institute a new thing in this country by bringing forty-five persons together to hear this particular case.

Mr. Speaker, let me make these points in conclusion. I would assume that in a case like this, and maybe the Debates Committee has gone through this procedure, I do not know, the Debates Committee is a joint Select Committee should have a case against an officer of this Chamber for which it has jurisdiction. If they want to bring a case against a particular officer or to try that officer for dereliction of duty, I would assume that the Debates Committee, which as the member for St. Philip North said has the power to appoint to certain offices and no doubt to fire and suspend....

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: On a point of order, with respect, the hon. member is misleading himself. The Debates Committee has the power to hire, but it cannot fire except upon a Resolution of this House and the Other House.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am not misleading myself. I said that the Debates Committee has the right to hire and no doubt — I was following the member for St. Philip North, — to fire, because as I read it... (*Asides*) Mr. Speaker, may I ask the distinguished member or Deputy Prime Minister who actually takes the decision to dismiss?

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: On a point of order, for the elucidation of the hon. member, the Debates Committee is only a machine to execute an order consequent upon a Resolution of this House and of the other House.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, as I said, I do not wish to tangle because I do not have that particular training, and I know my limitations in that regard; but I read that it says that it is the Debates Committee which actually takes the decision to remove or takes the action to remove. Anyhow I will not pursue that particular point.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 2.45 p.m.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

On resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: If there is no other hon. member who wants to speak, Sir,....

QUESTION TIME

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Question Time be now taken until 3.10 p.m.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to second that.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to get some clarification. As I understand it, there was a Standing Order dealing with Question Time which has been suspended for the remainder of today's sitting. Am I to understand that we are going to come here and because the Government seems to find itself in a position it did not anticipate, they are going to ask that Question Time be taken? We must have some sort of Rules and Regulations here.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I do not know what the hon. member is getting excited about. You suspend the Standing Order and if time avails itself, you try not to interfere with the rights of the other side, and I move that Question Time be now taken until completed or until 3.10 p.m., whichever is the earlier so that Questions can be answered. We want to answer the very hon. member's questions.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

Question No. 2 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy.

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

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister: Is the Minister aware that due to the construction of the Telephone Exchange at the Old Parry School pasture, the youngsters of the area are no longer able to use these grounds for recreational purposes? Is the Minister aware that the grounds at the St. Lucy's Secondary School are large enough to accommodate these youngsters along with the school activities? Will the Minister

therefore state whether the Government will favourably consider making part of the school grounds available to the young people of the area so as not to rob them of the opportunity to participate in organised sports?

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 2 is as follows:—

“Community groups and clubs, and the young people in the area, will be permitted to use the grounds of the St. Lucy Secondary School subject to the requirements of the school being given priority.”

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, as a supplementary, can the Minister give any information as to whether or not at the present time the school grounds can be used for organised sport?

Hon. L. R. TULL: I do not know if I caught the tailend of the question. At the moment the grounds of the school are not in the condition we would expect them to be finally. There is a pavilion to be built on the grounds there which is causing some blocking off of certain areas, but as soon as the construction of the pavilion is completed and the area fenced, the school will allow the residents of the area to use the grounds subject to the rights of the students at the school.

Mr. GREAVES: The question which I asked was not answered. I want to know whether the present conditions are such that a group which is seeking to use the school grounds for cricket, football, or any organised sport can use them provided they are not used by the school.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am not in a position at this stage to say what condition the grounds are in.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, what we see is that the Minister has come to answer the question and did not make himself *au fait* with the matter.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, that is really not a question, but I know they are in the same condition as the Leader of the Opposition left them.
2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have already ruled.

QUESTION RE BENTHAMS OUT-PATIENTS CLINIC

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 3 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 3 reads as follows:

To enquire of the Appropriate Minister: Can the Minister state the reasons for the delay in the opening and functioning of the Out-Patients Clinic at Benthams in St. Lucy? And can the Minister state when it is expected to become operational?

Hon. B. A. MILLER: The reply to Question No. 3.

"The opening of Benthams Out-Patients Clinic was delayed owing to construction problems. The Ministry of Communications and Works has now corrected these problems.

The Clinic became operational from 17th December, 1976."

Mr. GREAVES: As I understand it from the answer which was just given, the Minister has stated that the opening has been delayed due to construction problems and that the Ministry of Communications and Works is now in the process of at least putting these construction problems correct. Am I to understand, Mr. Speaker.....

Hon. B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation.

Mr. GREAVES: Sit down, I am not giving way. Am I to understand then that the Clinic has been opened even although the construction work has not been completed?

Hon. B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, would you want me to read the reply a second time?

"The opening of Benthams Out-Patients Clinic was delayed owing to construction problems. The Ministry of Communications and Works has now corrected these problems.

The Clinic became operational from 17th December, 1976."

Mr. GREAVES: I must confess that I did not hear the answer correctly. A supplementary. Can the Minister state whether or not there is a doctor attached to the Out-Patients Clinic, and indeed what efforts are being made to ensure that there is a doctor who is attached full time?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a supplementary. Next question.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: If the Clinic is operational as the Hon. Minister said, is there a doctor there at all times and is there adequate provision for medical attention?

Hon. B. A. MILLER: The position is that at Benthams Out-Patients Clinic, like at all the other Out-Patients Clinics, like it used to be at Barrows in St. Lucy, there is a doctor there at certain points during the week. He is the District Medical Officer.

Mr. GREAVES: I think I am entitled to another supplementary. Can the Minister state whether or not there are toilet facilities at the Clinic?

Mr. SPEAKER: If it is operational it is operational.

Hon. B. A. MILLER: He wants to know whether there are toilet facilities or whether the toilet facilities are operational?

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be resumed.

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is now the instant Order of the Day. When the suspension was taken the hon. member for St. Michael South was addressing the Chair; he may continue if he so desires.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I believe I have made some very telling points and cogent arguments advanced why we should not adopt the procedure as proposed in the Resolution before us, and I am certain that hon. members on that side, even though the numbers are out there, will take due cognisance of the arguments advanced and adopt a different mechanism for dealing with this matter.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a contribution to this debate. Unlike the member for St. Michael South I am not afraid to tangle with any S.Cs and Q.Cs on that side, let us get the record straight. It is my right as a layman, if it is a question of an interpretation of the law then leave it to the lawyers. It is a pity that a debate of this nature which involves the bread and livelihood of an individual should generate so much heat.

I think I made it known already that I do not intend to condone incompetence or slackness or dishonesty, not only in public life but in any officer who is in a position of authority in this country. I have had my comments already on a former Clerk of this House who I thought and who to my knowledge had acted in a certain way which was definitely not in the interest of the public life and the dignity of Parliament, and I have had my say on that. I am certainly not rising here to defend the Clerk or anybody, if there is evidence that the Clerk for the reasons set out in the law is incompetent, he is dishonest, he has misbehaved, then he should be given a fair trial. That is all I am asking. He should be given an opportunity to defend himself, either in person or by counsel — I am ruled out because I am taking part in the debate, so I am not asking for a job, I just want to make it clear. As soon as I talk about counsel now you will hear that I want a job, I am out of it because I am a member of the House, I am one of the 45 that you would like to sit with him — so all I am asking is that the correct procedure be followed and that he be given an opportunity and the principles of natural justice should obtain.

For that reason I say that this Resolution is not a proper Resolution, and I will explain that in due course. If you look at section 58 of the Constitution you will see again not only in this section but several references to both Houses of Parliament. I will read it for you:

“(2) Subject to the provisions of sections 55 and 56, a Bill shall be presented to the Governor-General for assent if, and shall not be so presented unless, it has been passed by both Houses either without amendment or with such amendments only as are agreed to by both Houses.”

3.05 p.m.

We do not meet jointly to pass legislation; so there is no need for a meeting of both Houses. When you want to amend the Constitution both Houses do not meet together. If you want to follow a procedure without wrenching the Constitution, the House can deal with it on Tuesday and the Senate can deal with it on Wednesday. A day or two does not make that difference.

In truth and in fact, as the member for St. Michael West said, there is no magic in a joint meeting; and in any case the House does not have the procedure or the Standing Orders for a joint meeting of the two Houses. The Constitution says that each House must regulate its own procedure. The Constitution nowhere explains or demands that there should be a joint meeting of both Houses; and the Standing Orders of both the House and the Senate have made no provision as to who is to preside, or what is to be the disciplinary procedure. If you are going to have a joint meeting, there must be some disciplinary procedure.

If a member goes to a joint meeting, misbehaves himself, curses the Speaker or abuses a Minister, under what Standing Orders can he be disciplined or make him conduct himself in the way that he should except for a sense of decency? As the member for St. Michael South said, the answer to your problem is not a joint meeting because both Houses can pass a verdict on the issue within a day of each other. If we met today and we said dismiss him, the Senate could vote tomorrow.

There is no special need for a joint meeting. In any case in my view, the perils of this issue, as reported to this House and added to by the Deputy Prime Minister cannot be adequately dealt with by a joint House of 45. I will be moving a Resolution to this effect that if the Debates Committee which is comprised of members of both Houses formulates charges or accusations against him, that he should be represented by himself or by counsel or in what other form he decides. The Debates Committee says we found him guilty on these charges and we recommend his dismissal and they recommend to both Houses that they confirm or give directives.

It is very simple. I do not see why we have to wrench the Constitution or go into a method which has not been contemplated by the Constitution of Barbados. There is no provision in the Constitution of Barbados either in the establishment of the Senate or the House of Assembly for a joint meeting as happens in

the American Constitution when there is a deadlock on certain issues. The Standing Orders of both Houses make it equally possible to deal with a simple matter.

What is the dismissal of a Clerk? Is that an issue of such vital importance? It concerns the Clerk of Parliament, but is it an issue of such vital importance as to merit a meeting of both Houses? I could understand going to war or declaring a state of emergency; but does the dismissal of a Clerk, an Officer of Parliament require that we elected by the people must have a joint assembly to dismiss him? The Debates Committee, which is representative of all of us has only to meet one afternoon and say to the Clerk these are the charges and you are entitled to bring a lawyer or solicitor or anybody; and if they find him guilty and report back to the House that they have found him guilty of these charges, will the House decide and give the Debates Committee directions.

All that has happened is that somebody on the Government side saw the words "Both Houses of Parliament", and they think that it means that you must join together. It does not mean that. It may be, to be more charitable, that they thought that they could short circuit the issue by having both Houses meet together. I am saying that it is not fair to the Clerk. I am not defending him, but he cannot get a fair trial. To me it looks like a parliamentary Star Chamber trial. He would get a better trial and a greater opportunity for sifting the accusations and allegations against him in a small Debates Committee than there will be in a double Chamber with 45 members meeting together; and the result, guilty or not guilty, we will be able to decide and vote on in our own separate Chambers on the recommendations of the Debates Committee. We do not need to have a big, high powered meeting of both Houses.

At such a meeting, who would be the Presiding Officer? Mr. Speaker or Mr. President? If one member got up and talked 100 times, what are you going to do except to say that he is loud mouthed and talking foolishness? We must have rules to see that a joint assembly can be conducted in a proper fashion. You cannot just rely on the common decency of members. There must be Standing Orders, and the Constitution contemplates that because the Constitution says very clearly that each House may take such steps for its own proper government and also of its own affairs.

There is nothing about a joint meeting. I am not against a precedent for a sufficient

reason; but I will not be attending any joint meeting. I want to make it clear not because I am defending any body, but I cannot see any necessity for a simple matter of dismissing an Officer who is alleged has been incompetent that members of Parliament must be summoned to some big joint meeting as if Barbados is at war or some state of emergency required the collective wisdom of the entire Parliament.

You could achieve the same results within a day of each other, or in the same afternoon, because you could call the House at 12 o'clock if you want it done in one day, and call the Senate at 4 o'clock. I do not see why we should go into a joint assembly on a matter which all it means is that you are trying to get rid of an Officer because you are saying that he is not doing his job.

I would also like to deal with the Debates Committee because there is a lot of misunderstanding in this House as to what the Debates Committee is. If you look at Rule 58 under the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly under Joint Select Committee of Both Houses, Debates Committee, you will see that the Rule says that "at the commencement of each Session, a Joint Committee, to be designated the Debates Committee, shall be appointed by the Senate and the House of Assembly:—

- (a) to superintend the printing executed by order of either House,
- (b) to select and arrange for printing Reports and Papers presented in pursuance of motions made by Members of the House of Assembly and the Senate,
- (c) to regulate matters connected with the comfort and convenience of Members of the House of Assembly and the Senate, and
- (d) to exercise such other functions as are allocated to the Committee by the Parliament (Debates and Establishment) Act, 1970 (1970–29)".

In my view, the Debates Committee is a Select Committee of this House. It is nothing more or less. It is just that it is a joint Select Committee where the Senate select members from their side to join with our members to form a joint Select Committee. If you pursue the Standing Orders of this House you will find that

this is under the Head Select Committees. I do not see any rules for a Standing Committee of this House. If you read Section 62 of the Standing Orders you will see that it says that "a Select Committee shall have leave to make a Special Report relating to its powers, functions and proceedings on any matters which it may think fit to bring to the notice of the House."

The second paragraph says: "A report or Special Report together with the Minutes of Proceedings of a Select Committee shall be presented to the House by the Chairman or other Member deputed by the Committee, and shall be ordered to lie upon the Table and be printed without question put, and a Member may, after due notice under these Standing Orders, move that the report be adopted."

3.15 p.m.

Now, if you, again, look at the Parliamentary Debates and Privileges Act where the Committee has power to summons members before it, I cannot understand how the House itself can be said not to have the power to know what the Committee is reporting. Under the Parliamentary (Privileges and Immunities) Act, you are telling a Committee that has the power to summons witnesses, and even to imprison witnesses, and who can summons them at the order of the House, that the House is not entitled to know what transpires in that Committee! To me that makes no sense. If you will look at the section under Chapter 9, it shows that the Debates Committee and any Select Committee must report to the House, otherwise how would the House know to give the Committee power to summon or to imprison any witness? I am sure that this Select Committee of the Debates Committee is a powerful Committee of the House; its functions are important, and, rightly so, it is the employer of the staff of the House.

Section 8 of Chapter 9 of the Parliamentary (Privileges, Immunities and Powers) Act says:

"Either House or any committee authorised by an order of the House....." Now the House cannot order — I would not be a party to ordering or giving any Debates Committee any order to summon anybody, unless I am going to get a report of that Committee, and the minutes of that committee. The Act says:

"Either House or any committee authorised by an order of the House by which it was appointed or any joint committee authorised by an order of each House to send for persons, papers and records, may order any person —

- (a) to attend before it and to give evidence;
- (b) to attend before it and produce any paper, book, record or other document in the possession or under the control of such person."

Now, it strikes me that the Debates Committee, with these powers given to it by Act of Parliament, is the correct body to summon the Clerk, to summon witnesses whom he may want to call, and then, when they have given him an opportunity to put his case, to adjudicate on the rightness or wrongness of his particular case. When they are satisfied, as a joint committee, that he is guilty, then they can come and tell us. If the report is right I, personally, will be one of the first to vote for it. I cannot see, Mr. Speaker, the necessity for suddenly creating in this particular Parliament a novelty on an issue which, I think, you will agree is not as important as we are making it out to be. It is important because a man's livelihood is at stake and, perhaps, to fire an officer of Parliament is not a matter which we do everyday like people do when firing their domestic servants. But at the same time with matters and affairs of State of great importance, with matters and affairs of State requiring much more intellectual output, to dismiss a Clerk is a matter on which we must now create a new situation by having a joint meeting of Parliament! Must we do that to dismiss an officer, even although he is an officer of both Parliaments?

Mr. Speaker, I certainly could not agree to creating new ground on an issue which, in my view, does not merit the creation or even the establishment of a principle of a joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament. There are very many more important issues which would merit such a meeting, provided that we sit down together and work out jointly with the Other Place the procedures which should govern who should preside; who would be in charge; what Standing Orders will govern it; the occasions, and who can summon a joint meeting in certain circumstances. We can make it a part of our Standing Orders, if we set up a joint Committee, and this may be a very good area in which, Mr. Speaker, we may be able to set up a joint committee now that the idea is mooted between us and them to discover and to establish the machinery for the conducting of a joint meeting of Parliament deliberatively wise for the future as we may see it necessary. We will then know whether the Speaker of the House will preside for this year or for all times; whether the President of the Senate will be the Deputy Chairman of this joint

meeting, etc. etc.; we must meet so many times; the Government will have the same rights at this meeting as they have in either House; and we can work out the Standing Orders which can be added as a separate section. As we have for other meetings, we can add a section in the Standing Orders, "Procedure for joint meeting of both Houses of Parliament." I cannot make any more useful contribution except to say that I am quite serious. If we are all serious, then there is no place for hilarity when a man's future is at stake. Therefore, it is a question of trying to find the correct procedure.

I am not defending any Clerk. If they can justify his dismissal, I will support it, but I do not think, Mr. Speaker, when we look at this Resolution that we can really support it. In our sincere view we would be setting up a very bad precedent, and we would be in a position to achieve the same results with a fair degree of justice and fairplay in that the Committee is smaller; the Committee can, therefore, meet several times; the Committee can adjourn from day to day. Suppose he has a battery of witnesses; suppose he has a loquacious lawyer, what will be the position? They can meet today from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; they can adjourn until the next day and meet and give him every opportunity to defend himself, whereas with Parliament if everybody asks one question, the man would not know which way to turn and his ear would be battered. I am saying that it would be fairer for him to be in a small committee where every aspect of the allegations could be made against him.

Let me give you an example. I have heard it argued here that he was in the Committee before. As I understand in the joint Committee, namely the Debates Committee, the Clerk is sitting down there as the recorder of the minutes. The Clerk is not there having any equal voice, except he is asked a question and, therefore, it is not on the agenda. If the Clerk sat down there, even although accusations were made against him, even although accusations which resulted in suspension, in law, as a citizen, he has every right not to answer those allegations at that particular time in that particular forum, so it cannot be held against him now that he heard all of them saying that he did not hand up the letter, he did not do this and that, and he did not reply. He was under no legal, moral, obligation at that meeting in those circumstances to reply. If he is right in law, and if he is exercising his right as a citizen not to answer those charges then — of course, if he does not want to answer them later on that is his business, but you cannot hold it

against him. I think the lawyers on that side — this is where we are dealing with law, and the Deputy Prime Minister will know this. I think the member for Christ Church West, the Attorney General, will tell you, and I think he is following in the good steps of distinguished Attorney Generals who were there before him. I am glad to see he is following in the steps of certain distinguished Attorneys who held the post before him.

Be that as it may, I think he will advise his colleagues that I am right when I say that at the meeting of the Debates Committee the Clerk was under no obligation, whether you called him a crook, a thief, a vagabond, a robber, or anything to answer them at that time, and, therefore, it cannot be held against him. I would have answered them right away, but I am different from him. At the same time, since he has a legal right not to answer them then, it cannot be held that he heard the charges and, like Galileo, he cared for none of these things. Therefore I say, Mr. Speaker, that the matter should go back to the Debates Committee; that the Debates Committee should write the Clerk and say that the Committee is meeting with a view to your dismissal on the grounds 1, 2, 3 and 4, you are summoned to a meeting to attend; you may appear by lawyer, counsel; bring such witnesses as you like — I would say that he is entitled to a lawyer, too, under the constitution, and you will give him every opportunity to put his case. There will be a Committee of five or six from here and some from the Senate.

3.25 p.m.

You have a Committee of five or six from here and four from the Senate, a small Committee with plenty of time; it can adjourn from day to day and hear witnesses, they can summon witnesses and then the Clerk will be given an opportunity to give evidence before it. This says "either House or any Committee". Are we going to summon witnesses before it? Suppose he said he wanted a battery of witnesses from St. Lucy? Are the 45 of us going to take up our time with summoning witnesses before us when it can be done in a little room? He has a right under Section 8. Suppose the Clerk says to us, as he would be entitled to do, "I have Pie Corner to bring down here", or "I have Delamere Land; I want Jones, Harry, Brown and Smith!" Do you mean we are going to sit down in here from day to day listening to people give evidence when that can be done in a quiet little room with a Committee comprised from all sides of about six from here and four from the Senate? Are we going to spend our time day in day out? A man

is entitled to have witnesses cross-examined; he is entitled to call witnesses. Are we in the House of Assembly in a joint meeting going to sit down day after day listening to this? Give him a fair trial in the Debates Committee and then the Debates Committee can refer it back after having heard the evidence with the Minutes, and I am sure that the Opposition having read the recommendations of the Committee on which we are represented would give a fair and just result of the deliberations.

I am not supporting any joint meeting with any House and Senate, and I would like to move the following Resolution as an amendment to the one put forward by the Leader of the House.

RESOLVED that the House takes note of the report of the Debates Committee and recommend to the Debates Committee that the Committee should summon the Clerk and invite him to show cause why he should not be removed from office on specific charges in accordance with the provisions of the Parliament (Debates and Establishment) Act, Cap. 10, Section 4(3), and to invite the Debates Committee after observing the principles of natural justice to submit its recommendations to each House of Parliament for ratification."

There could not be anything fairer than that. You have the numbers, but we will not be voting for your Resolution. We are going to do it in the right way. If you read the Act which the hon. member for St. Philip North cited, it is quite clear. The Deputy Prime Minister must know that in the Interpretation Act if you have a power to hire, you have a power to dismiss. Look at Section 20 of the Interpretation Act. He should know it. He was at the Bar long enough to know what Section 20 of Chapter 1 says. When he tried to run off the member for St. Michael South about the Debates Committee, he cannot do that to me, because Section 20 clearly says, Mr. Speaker, "Words in an enactment passed or made after the 16th June, 1966, which authorise the appointment of a person to any office and declare that this subsection shall apply to that appointment shall be deemed also to confer on the authority in whom the power is vested — power, at the discretion of the authority, to remove or suspend him; " and then it goes further and says — " where the power of appointment is exercisable only upon the recommendation or subject to the approval, consent or concurrence of some other authority or person, the power of removal shall be exercised only upon the recommendation or subject to the approval, consent or concurrence of that authority or person."

So when he is scaring off the hon. member for St. Michael South with some legal position, he cannot do that to me.

I beg to move that Resolution.

We are not at differences. We are not defending anything in this; we are just asking to use a procedure which is in existence and which does not call for any wrenching of the constitution or even creating a situation which can lead to embarrassment, because the present existing machinery is capable of bringing about whatever result is fair and just. We are not arguing that you are prosecuting somebody and we are defending him. We are just asking you to adopt an existing position which can meet the ends of justice without any novel and peculiar summoning of members. Would I come in here just to dismiss the Clerk in a joint sitting of Parliament? Don't I have any thing else to do? Would I come in here and spend days for the dismissal of the Clerk?

Mr. Speaker, that is all I can say. I am not against it if he is wrong, but do it right, and I think my Resolution meets the end of justice. If the Attorney General would give you good advice as he always does, I think he will agree that our Resolution can achieve the same result in a much fairer and just manner than yours. You have the numbers on your side and you are committed to it. Well the House will be divided because we are not going to allow a procedure to be created or a novelty to be established when the procedures of Parliament can already deal with a matter which in my view is now being resurrected or elevated by the Government into a big constitutional issue. The Committee deals strictly with the parliamentary regulating and seeing that its servants behave, and the existing procedures in Parliament and under the Constitution are more than enough to bring about that desired result. There was no meeting of Parliament when Cumberbatch was dismissed or stepped down. There was no joint meeting or anything. The procedures are here, let us adhere to them. But as I say, you are breaking new ground, you are putting backbenchers as Chairmen of Boards and you now want joint meetings of Parliament. I do not know what next you will want.

I think the Leader of the House sees the point I am driving at. I do not want him to be committed; I think he can relent. I think the Attorney General sees the point and he can relent. You have the numbers.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I had intended not to intervene in this debate on what

Both of us are agreed that the report of the Debates Committee merits further investigation. Both of us are agreed that the office of Clerk is sufficiently important, and indeed that the fact that we are debating the disciplining of our servant is of such importance that we must ensure that the rules of natural justice are obeyed.

So, like us, he agrees with us that before a final decision is taken the Clerk should be given an opportunity to state his side of the case. As a matter of fact, the hon. member has adopted our words that the Clerk should be summoned to show just cause why he should not be dismissed in accordance with the particular provisions of the Act.

The distinction between the hon. member and us is that the hon. member wants the Debates Committee to investigate the charges. We say that that would be improper because we say that the same people who laid the charges should not be the people who should carry out the investigation and that is the distinction.

I gave a lot of thought to the point raised by the hon. member, and I came to the conclusion that it would be wrong to allow that small number of members who constitute the Debates Committee to be both the accusers and the judges. I disagree with that as not being a method of natural justice and not being one of the elements of natural justice. It is precisely because of our disagreement that we hit upon this procedure; and I say that it is wrong to say that there is no precedent for this procedure because the Standing Order on Page 73, Standing Order 58(3) reads thus: "The House may appoint Members of the House to sit with Members of the Senate as a Joint Select Committee.

(2) The quorum of a Joint Select Committee shall be such as the Committee may decide. The Committee shall elect a Chairman from among its Members."

This Resolution in essence seeks to have all the members of these Houses constitute a Joint Select Committee and they can elect their own Chairman, and they can decide their own rules to be followed in dealing with the matter. So, Mr. Speaker, the position is very clear. If the hon. member had read his rules he would have recognised that those rules envisage an extraordinary situation, and this is an extraordinary situation. The only point I want to make is that this Committee when it sits cannot dismiss the Clerk. After that Committee meets — and I am very glad to hear the Hon. Leader of

the Opposition saying that he is not coming, because he would only come and misbehave himself as he misbehaves himself in this Chamber in an attempt to disrupt the proceedings and I would like to tell him that the Chairman of that Committee will be able to deal with him because he is in the same position as if he goes before the Debates Committee and misbehaves because they can make a recommendation that he be dealt with and we would come in here and accept that recommendation and deal with him.

So, gentlemen, as the former Chief Justice Stoby used to say, the arm of the law is long enough and broad enough to deal with the unruly. I want the hon. member to understand that the Rules of the House are sufficiently flexible to deal with the obstreperous or unruly. Our position is clear. We have attempted to do justice to the Clerk, and I am not going to go into the merits of the Clerk's position despite the provocation and the unfair allegations made by the hon. member for St. Lucy, because if the hon. member for St. Lucy was a true and honest parliamentarian he would have said that he was the one who received the letter from the Clerk.

Mr. GREAVES: Now, Mr. Speaker, ...

Mr. SPEAKER: On what do you rise?

Mr. GREAVES: The Deputy Prime Minister has made a charge against me. (*Asides*) On a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for St. Lucy please take his Chair.

Mr. GREAVES: On a point of order. The Deputy Prime Minister has said that I am a dishonourable member and I want the Deputy Prime Minister to withdraw the inference; and furthermore....

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a minute. You were saying that the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister might have inferred, but he did not say. The hon. member's objection is noted.

Mr. GREAVES: And I am asking that the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister withdraw the inference. I am asking you to ask the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister to withdraw the inference.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the inference?

Mr. GREAVES: If he says that I am not an hon. member, he is inferring that I am not an hon. member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you saying the Deputy Prime Minister said that you are a dishonourable member?

Mr. GREAVES: It is inferred, Mr. Speaker, and I am taking objection to that and saying that that constitutes an attack on my integrity and that it should be withdrawn.

3.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members, I did not myself hear the remarks to which the hon. member for St. Lucy took exception. I did not hear them for myself. Consequently, I instructed the Clerk to get a copy from the Reporter as contained in his notes. I have now before me this transcript:

"If he was a true and honest parliamentarian, he would have said that he was the one who received the letter from the Clerk."

Are these the words to which the hon. member for St. Lucy takes exception?

Mr. GREAVES: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: If these are the words to which the hon. member takes exception, I rule that they should be withdrawn.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I withdraw them, Mr. Speaker. Nevertheless, I believe that, it is in consonance with the high traditions of this Chamber, if the subject matter of the debate is a matter in which any hon. member has a special interest, that the hon. member should disclose that special interest. I charge the hon. member for St. Lucy with being the one who replied on behalf of the Barbados Workers' Union to the letter of the 22nd November, and the date of the reply is the 13th December, 1976, signed by E. Evelyn Greaves. I would have thought

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. The letter to which I replied on behalf of the Barbados Workers' Union was a letter from you, the Speaker of this House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member for St. Lucy elucidating something you have said in this debate? No.

Mr. GREAVES: I am refuting the allegation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for St. Lucy, please, take his seat! We are not playing

it in here by ear; we are playing it strictly by music.

Mr. GREAVES: It looks so. I agree. It looks very much like that. We are playing a lot by ear.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for St. Lucy take his seat!

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member must understand is that if he is going to treat with the House in his capacity as a General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, which he has every right to do, and I am not blaming him for that. The hon. member has every right to represent any member of the Union, but I say that when he comes here, in his capacity as a Parliamentarian, he ought to disclose to this Chamber that, when he is speaking, he is speaking from an objective position and in a position in which he is acting in a dual capacity. That is the charge I lay against the hon. member, and that is precisely one of the charges that the Debates Committee made against the Clerk, and that is the matter which a Committee of both Houses will have to investigate.

As far as the hon. member — Ex-BMC — for South West is concerned, how can the hon. member honestly get up in here and say that we are depriving the Clerk of due process by bringing this Resolution when, if he had read the Resolution moved by the Leader of the Opposition, as I pointed out previously, the only difference is that instead of a Committee of both Houses having the inquiry, the Debates Committee would have the inquiry. The due process arises by giving the gentleman an opportunity to state his case. The hon. member, as I have always said when he was in the Other Place, is confused by a lot of Americanism and a lot of language. He knows the language, but he does not understand the fundamental concepts behind the language. That is the position. The position is very clear.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. On a point of elucidation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what are you rising?

Mr. TAITT: I am rising on a point of elucidation of something which I said. May I proceed?

Mr. SPEAKER: Go ahead.

Mr. TAITT: You may recall, Mr. Speaker, that I had in my hand the Special Report of the

Debates Committee, and I indicated that nowhere in that Report was there any indication that the Clerk of Parliament had had due process. The stupidity or otherwise of the statement which any member in here makes is a moot point, and it is a matter of opinion. But I wish that the Deputy Prime Minister, when he is quoting statements made by me, would take the trouble to be accurate.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the more they speak, the more they are going to confuse themselves. The hon. member, who has just sat down, is saying that the Committee did not give him due process. The Leader of the Opposition says that you want to put it back to the same person who did not give him due process before. As I pointed out previously, the Debates Committee in this case has never suggested that it is acting in the capacity or with the power to dismiss anybody. The members of the Debates Committee are the accusers. They say, like any other prosecutors that somebody has given them information which, *prima facie*, is such that suggests a charge should be laid. They have received the information, and they have laid the charge. That is all the report is. It is a charge, and it is a charge precisely because of the peculiar position of the laws of Barbados. The laws of Barbados give the Debates Committee the power to appoint, but it does not give it power to fire. Before a person can be fired, another process has to be gone through. Therefore, with respect to the Clerk and certain other officers, as the Attorney General has pointed out, the Debates Committee can only be the accusers. He is like the Director of Public Prosecution, he lays the charge before the court. We say that it is wrong to let the same person who lays the charge do the investigation. That is why we say the whole House should do it. The final reason why we said it should be the Committee of both Houses was very simple.

4.05 p.m.

I feel that the Clerk's office is of sufficient importance that we should have a full-scale enquiry into his conduct. But it does not give me any pleasure to bring a Resolution to remove the Clerk, because I believe the Clerk's office should be regarded with such esteem that people who hold it should conduct themselves in such manner that they should not have to be disciplined for however long they hold it, but I am not going to shrink from my concept of duty because of the nature of the office and because of the person from bringing this Resolution. That is why I bring it and I say it is eminently fair and reasonable that the procedure is such that if it is novel it is one that would create a precedent for

others to follow. We are not afraid in this party of breaking new ground, and we are breaking new ground in this Resolution according to the other side and therefore I have great pleasure in moving that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I intend to speak for a few moments on the amendment to this Resolution. Mr. Speaker, in this Island a man's position is considered as his bread and butter or his basket and hoe. In this case it is regrettable that in this House of Assembly there are so many Attorneys-at-Law and they are trying to devour themselves. That proves beyond the shadow of doubt what you are heading for in this Island. I feel Sir, that it is a waste of time for us to come here to discuss a Resolution of this nature and I shall give my reasons. My reason is that any party which carries a majority and which has the reins of Government, can dismiss any Clerk when the party feels like doing it. We must consider the numerical strength of the Governing party and that is 17. Why involve the Opposition in this kind of policy or plan, or intrigue if it is to be called that, when you the members of the Government have the weapon to say you do not want the Clerk any longer, he must go. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, when we come here today to do the people's business and to look after the interests of the people who have sent us here to deal with a frivolous matter, a matter which can be dealt with by the Debates Committee of which the Government has seven-eighths of the members on that Committee, why involve the other one-eighth in the exercise when it can be seen beyond the shadow of doubt that the Clerk must go; I am not wasting my time therefore even to listen to the pros and cons of the matter because I know that the Clerk has already been fired.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I thought the hon. member for St. Lucy might have wanted to speak, but I am accustomed to finding myself in a position that the Opposition listens carefully to what I say otherwise they might not have any matter on which they can themselves debate; so I have very little to fear from the hon. member for St. Lucy speaking after me.

Sir, I really have to take up the remarks of the last hon. member, the member for St. Philip South, and I want to say at the outset that his remarks do not represent the policy of the Government and I do not agree with them. It is not true that if we do not like a Clerk that the Clerk must go. It is not true that it is a matter of partisanship, prejudice, dislike or anything. The Clerk whose conduct is called into question has

given equal offence to members on both sides of the House...

Mr. WEEKES: On a point of order, I never said that the members of the Government do not like the Clerk. I think the Hon. Prime Minister has misquoted me.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, I cannot deal with the hon. member for St. Philip South; he is really too much for me. I have always found the Clerk the most personable young man. I have travelled abroad with him on a number of occasions and he has been of great help to members on this side and to members on the other side, but his personal qualities of friendliness should not however close our mind to the fact that a man may be charming, kind, nice to children, pleasant in company, a good churchman, a keen boy scout, but totally incompetent to be Clerk of the House. I have heard some speeches today which for lack of logic have exceeded my greatest expectations even when you consider I have already had to listen to two or three speeches from the hon. member for St. Michael South West in here. The hon. member for Christ Church South Central, the Leader of the House has dealt fairly accurately with the speech about due process, but you see, there are dangers. You can never underline too much of that kind of nonsense. Words like due process applicable to American constitutional practice are repeated in here; they are picked up by the Press and they are picked up by people that the Clerk has not had due process. I do not think the hon. member for St. Michael South West knows what due process means. He has heard the words but does not understand them.

Mr. TAITT: I object to his saying...

Mr. SPEAKER: On what do you rise?

Mr. TAITT: I rise on a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us hear the point of order.

Mr. TAITT: No member should impute improper motives to any other member.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do have my own opinion. I have heard the Hon. Prime Minister. There is nothing wrong.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I would not like the hon. member to think that I am putting down his ignorance of due process to wickedness on his part; I am not putting it down to improper motives. I mean he does not know what

due process means because he does not understand it. It is his misfortune, not his wickedness. (*Asides.*) Hon. members must really allow me to hear myself. When I hear the hon. member, the elegance of his language, the way the words flow out without interruption, without a pause for breath or indeed for thought, I have to regret that the hon. member's great oratorical gifts were not accompanied by some legal training.

4.15 p.m.

I really think that if the hon. member for St. Michael South West was a lawyer I would have to substitute the lawyers like Mr. Elliott Mottley and Sir Theodore Brancker who I have had to ask to defend me upon occasions when I found myself before the Court. I would have to substitute the hon. member, but eloquence alone is no substitute for argument. The Clerk of the House has had every element of due process that he could so far have been afforded. He was present at the meeting and he was questioned as to his conduct, this appears in the report. We are now seeking to give him a due process which the rules of the House do not provide for. I am with the hon. member for St. Michael South in that the rules of the House do not say that if you wish to dismiss the Clerk that the two Houses shall sit together and hear the Clerk beforehand. The rules do not say that, but they do not forbid it either, and the issue between the hon. member for St. Michael South and myself is that he takes the conservative standpoint that where the rules do not provide for a situation that there must be no innovation. There is no such situation at Westminster, that is really the burden of his argument, because he is talking about rules that have come from the Houses of Parliament in London, and therefore we must not make our own rules as we go along, but the Leader of the House has shown there is a Standing Order which provides for joint Select Committees. He has shown that, he has shown convincingly that there is nothing against this procedure.

We believe in advancing the frontiers of procedure just as we believe in advancing the frontiers of development in this country. Anybody listening to the Opposition would have to say that the Opposition is suggesting that we are doing Chezley Boyce something wrong. What are we doing Chezley Boyce? At the moment he has the right to be heard before the Debates Committee. The rules do not say that either, the rules do not say anything about due process, but it is accepted on all sides that he should not be dismissed without a hearing. I have not heard any member of the Opposition

say, unless the hon. member for St. Philip South is saying this, that you should not give the Clerk a hearing at all. There is nothing in the rules about it, the rules are silent on this, there is no procedure to give the Clerk a hearing, so do not give him a hearing. What they are saying is that he must not have a hearing before his judges. The 45 of us are his judges, 24 in here and the 21 in the Senate, we are his judges, and I am not a member of the Debates Committee, I do not believe the Leader of the Opposition is a member of the Debates Committee, I want to hear what the Clerk has to say in answer to the charges. I do not know what goes on at the Debates Committee, I do not see the Minutes, the Debates Committee runs the physical operations of Parliament and employs the staff. I want to know before I take a step like giving my vote to the dismissal of a Clerk that I have given the Clerk every single opportunity to be heard in full with his lawyer with a case put for him, and I can then make up my mind. That is the whole point.

We are giving the hon. member for St. Michael North Central, the hon. members for St. James, St. Joseph, St. Andrew, these are the hon. members who we are giving a chance to measure what they know of the Clerk against the Debates Committee's charges against the Clerk. I know Chezley Boyce is a pleasant man to travel to distant countries with, and a man who is co-operative but I must say of him I have seen aspects of incompetence in him, I might not have had the opportunity to see his incompetence before. There may be hon. members who have never had every opportunity to see, let them hear the Clerk face to face with the charges and defend himself. We in the Government are offering the Clerk the means of defending himself before every one of his judges, the Opposition are asking us to condemn the Clerk on the hearsay of the Debates Committee. They want us to listen to what the Debates Committee has to say without hearing the Clerk, and vote on it. We could do it, but we on this side do not want to do it, we want an element of due process, we want an element of natural justice; that is what we want. We want all the members of the Senate and the House of Assembly to hear and judge for themselves before they take what is in the context of Parliament a very major step.

Erskine May affords no precedent for the dismissal of a Clerk but the Clerk of the House of Lords is appointed under the Clerks of Parliament Act, 1824 and even the Clerk of Parliament who is the Clerk of the House of

Lords has never been dismissed, so we have to have our own procedure, we have to work out how we are going to handle this situation, and we believe that we have leaned over backwards to help this man. I have never heard it said that because a court consists of 45 people it is any less a court. Warren Hastings was impeached before the House of Commons of 625, President Nixon was impeached before a House of Representatives of 425. As the hon. member for St. Michael South Central may now know, after many years of not paying all that attention to these minor details, in the nineteenth century when the judges had a little more time and a difficult point of law arose there was no criminal appeal, if you want a precedent, in the nineteenth century you could not appeal the verdict of the jury in England, no judge could reserve a case for the consideration of the Crown, the case was reserved and it went to 17 and 18 judges including the judge who tried the man sitting on the verdicts and all of them sat down and brought their collective wisdom to the point at question. You have cases in the entire Court of King's Bench sitting down to deal with difficult points of law, so I do not see there perhaps can be any bar in all this.

If only the hon. members opposite would clarify their own thoughts, because I believe what they want to do is express some sympathy for the Clerk, I believe so, and faced with a difficult situation that the Government is giving the Clerk every opportunity to defend himself, giving the man an opportunity to defend himself over and above any opportunity that these rules would at first reading afford him, the Opposition is in a quandary and therefore it has to say we are not following right procedure. They cannot say we are following the wrong procedure and that this procedure is illegal; they cannot say that, all the talk about this might go to court and all that I really do not mind if it goes to court or not, all I want to know is that I have played my part in an honest and sincere way to a man who has served Parliament for a number of years. The Opposition is doing the Clerk no service in trying to remit his case to the same Debates Committee that has asked us to indict him.

The Debates Committee is in the position of the House of Representatives, presenting a Bill of Indictment, and the 45 members are the Senate, speaking of it in American terms. That is what it really comes to, and it is meaningless to send it back to the Debates Committee. There are a whole set of points about new evidence. What does the

non. member for St. Lucy want the Leader of the House to do? If we get new evidence must we suppress it? The House wants all the evidence, we are doing in the best traditions of criminal trials, we are giving notice of the new evidence, we are telling everybody it is discovered since the Debates Committee's report that such and such is the case. This is a commonplace thing in criminal trials, you send to the accused and you send to the Prosecution the notice of additional evidence.

4.25 p.m.

That is if you want to conceptualise it in legal terms. You know, it is a great fault of mankind that sometimes when you do wrong you get away with it and when you do right the rods are laid upon your back. We have not had a chance to try the case yet. The Democratic Labour Party have been past masters at that for a time. Now that we are trying to do the right thing for the Clerk the rods of correction are being laid on our backs. Is that so embedded in the breasts of the Other Side that they would like to see unfairness carried to such a conclusion that we will not be allowed to give the Clerk of the House of Assembly a trial before everybody upon whose vote his fate depends?

I have never heard a more protracted and unnecessary waste of the time of the House of Assembly than to keep the House going from 12 o'clock until after 4 o'clock debating on whether the Clerk should have the right to as extended a legal process as he can manage, and we have a debate going on and on about that.

The only speech with which I could find sympathy was that of the hon. member for St. Michael South. He put the case straight. It has never been done and therefore it could not be done here. That is the case that E. K. Walcott, Clifford Thorne and Wilkinson, all those with whom the hon. member's family was so closely associated in the old conservative days would put — black people have never voted in Barbados. It has never been done, and therefore it should not be done in the future. That was the argument that we used to hear in here from the then member for St. James of whom the hon. member's family was among the most prominent supporters.

So, I am not surprised to hear him say that. If he does not like my being a little personal, I am not surprised to hear him say that this has never been done in here, and therefore you should not do it now.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. I have never said that because it was not done before it should not be done; and the member for St. Thomas is misquoting and misinterpreting what I said. I said on more than one occasion that if there was no precedent that did not mean that it could not be done. I said that we have to work out a procedure. If he wishes to make a point, he can make any point about myself or my family or their political views and become very personal.

I am not concerned with that because I am not going down into the gutter with that type of argument. In my opening address I said that there was too much personal argument. I think that in Latin it is *argumentum ad hominem* or some such phrase. We want to get down to the arguments involved and leave out the personalities; and the Minister of Finance, the member for St. Thomas, should be setting a better example in this House than to go into personal arguments against hon. members of this House.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I have been accused by somebody whose name is Erskine Sandiford; but I am sure that it would not be the hon. member for St. Michael South writing in the Newspapers about smearing, about red herrings and talking about Government by smear. Obviously it is not the hon. member for St. Michael South who has been writing these articles. Obviously he did not write on Sunday that I carry on Government by smear and that I invent allegations to divert peoples minds from the true facts at stake. It is not the hon. member for St. Michael South. It is a wicked and dangerous man called Erskine Sandiford who writes a lot of lies in the newspapers; but it is obviously not the hon. member for St. Michael South who said in the last session that he wanted to dismiss the Clerk and so on. It is obvious that that could not be the hon. gentleman who has risen in here and spoken on not making personal references. If he says that he does not want personal references made face to face, then I understand him.

Let the hon. member bear that in mind if he comes and talks about personal references again if he does not mind taking a lesson for once, that there are people who have the integrity of Parliament and politics in this island at heart just as much as he. I am very glad to hear that he said that because there is no precedent for it that does not mean that it cannot be done. Therefore he understands now why I said that his speech made the most sense.

He has reduced the difference between himself and the Government to the stage where he feels that the procedure has not been entirely worked out. What does he want? Would he like us to adjourn this issue for a week so that he can satisfy himself that there is nothing more that you can do to work it out? What more can be done? What does he think will be the result of a further working out? That you will have the Governor-General to preside over the joint meeting, or that a Commission of Inquiry should be set up into the conduct of the Clerk? It has been worked out.

We have not hastened with this thing. We have given it time and we have given the Clerk time to prepare his case and so on. I do not really have to deal with the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. He has dealt with it himself. He has made his points in capital letters and he has made ours in fine print. I congratulate him on one of the most able speeches that I have heard from him in here. It is the type of speech that you make to the jury when you really are telling them, "well, I have to put forward the case, but we know that the man carried away the chickens and he should go to Glendairy for three years." All of us know that the Clerk is being given every opportunity to have his case put in the best possible way.

It is unfortunate that in these matters we divide on party lines. The election of the Speaker was divided and now that we are dealing with the Clerk it is going to be divided. It is unfortunate that these things have to happen. Take the election of the Speaker; what could have been more personal than that? Now on the question of suspending the Clerk personal issues have occupied the attention of hon. members.

All of them will probably make another speech now. We have just got to sit down and grin and bear it. I will not even say, as the former Prime Minister said, that this is one of the penalties of democracy. I welcome it in these circumstances because in this instance I am satisfied that it shows completely the entire emptiness of the Opposition, the emptiness of their logic and the emptiness of their capacity for argument at this stage of the country's history.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, there is an amendment before this House and I am going to exercise the right to speak on this amendment. Indeed, in doing so I will take the opportunity to refer to some statements which have been made in the course of this debate this afternoon. I sat and listened to the Prime

Minister just now and there are a couple of things which have emerged from what he said.

I think that it displays and shows in no uncertain terms the attitude of the Prime Minister and obviously that of hon. members on the other side towards this particular matter. I was appalled, Mr. Speaker, to sit here and hear the Prime Minister state, and I quote, "it is well known that the Clerk was totally incompetent to be Clerk of the House of Assembly." When we hear these words coming from the Prime Minister, the Leader of that party which has a majority here and a majority in the Senate, what else can we expect?

4.35 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to take this opportunity to say a few words on this matter. I do not want to put myself in this debate at all, but the very Clerk had an opportunity to sit at the Table and to hear a former Prime Minister say that the office of Clerk had been vacant for three years. Continue.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, as you are aware, this is a very unusual departure.

Mr. SPEAKER: On whose part?

Mr. GREAVES: To hear the comments which have been made. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, when one takes into consideration the remarks made by the Prime Minister, one can see in that a summary of the majority of members on his side. I wonder whether or not the Prime Minister had an opportunity to read the report from the Debates Committee, because, if he had had an opportunity to read the report from the Debates Committee, he would not have made the statement which he made when he said that the report, and I am quoting him, stated that "the Clerk was present and was given an opportunity to defend himself". I immediately looked through the report, Mr. Speaker, and there is nowhere in this report that the Clerk was ever given an opportunity to defend himself.

Furthermore, from this report I do not even know — it was signed by you, and you were the Chairman. I cannot tell from this report, but I am not, in any way, telling you, Mr. Speaker, how you should present a report or what should be contained in the report, but there is nowhere in here where the presence of the Clerk at that meeting has been recorded. What we are witnessing here today is a very funny thing. It is something very strange, and something very strange is going on. When one examines these matters one must ask oneself, what is really

happening in Parliament? What has happened to the Debates Committee? What is happening in this country? It is obvious to us that somebody, or a group of persons, are out for blood. If it is blood they want, they will take the person's blood. The Deputy Prime Minister.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the hon. member for St. Lucy, please, desist from making these wild statements?

Mr. GREAVES: Talking about blood is a wild statement, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: Withdraw the remark, please.

Mr. GREAVES: What remark?

Mr. SPEAKER: About people being out for blood.

Mr. GREAVES: What people am I referring to?

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not question the Chair? Will you withdraw the remark at once? Will the hon. member for St. Lucy withdraw the remark?

Mr. GREAVES: I beg to withdraw the remark about people being out for blood, because I do not want you to chase me out of in here.

Mr. SPEAKER: Continue.

Mr. GREAVES: This is a new regime with new rules and new orders. Now the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, stated that (*Asides.*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Do not tell him withdraw. You direct him. (*Asides.*) You will confer only in undertones.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, can I continue, because it would seem as though there is a conversation going on? Can I continue now, Mr. Speaker? The Deputy Prime Minister referred to some special interest which I have in this case. I want to make my position very clear. I am not the Clerk of Parliament, therefore, a special interest for me, personally, is not involved. My brother, my father, my mother, or any of my family is not the Clerk of Parliament; therefore, there is no special interest. I have absolutely nothing to gain, or no benefit to derive from this, therefore, there can be no special interest.

The Deputy Prime Minister talked about a letter which I signed on behalf of the Barbados

Workers' Union. I want to state, and you know, Mr. Speaker, that that letter was in reply to a letter which you, in your capacity as Chairman of the Debates Committee and Speaker of Parliament, wrote to the Barbados Workers' Union. I replied on behalf of the Barbados Workers' Union. I have had no communication from the Clerk, and I categorically deny any accusation, whether it was an attempt to besmirch my character or otherwise, that I have received any communication, written, spoken, or any kind of communication, from the Clerk of Parliament in my capacity as one of the Assistant General Secretaries at the Barbados Workers' Union.

I want to say that if the Deputy Prime Minister is out fishing, and that is what he likes to do, he is fishing in empty waters because he will not catch any fish. I can stand up or go anywhere at all and say that I had absolutely no communication, spoken, written, or otherwise. Whether you have the telephones tapped or otherwise, I do not carry on any conversation with Chezley Boyce or anybody. Do not worry to come here and say that the Clerk is communicating with me or anything like that. That is nonsense, and I want to deny it.

Now, this is the kind of accusation and the kind of problem that you get when you are dealing with hon. members like those on the other side. If I were not here today to defend myself and to put the record straight, that would have gone down on the record and nobody would have been able to defend it in the way that I have explained it. I am sure that no hon. member, apart from yourself and the Deputy Prime Minister would, probably, be aware that the communication was between yourself and the Barbados Workers' Union. I thought that, at least, some correction would have been made in that regard. But this is the kind of game that we are in, and if anything can be done to denigrate or to pull down any hon. member, we understand this is the name of the game.

Now, the Opposition has stated the position very clearly on this matter, and I am sure that the Government has discovered that it is batting on a very sticky wicket. To show you how it has discovered that it is batting on a sticky wicket, when the Deputy Prime Minister got up he was in such obvious difficulty in trying to extricate himself from the stranglehold in which he found himself, that looking at him I thought that he had just discovered one of the biggest scientific secrets which would prolong life forever when he proclaimed, as a matter of fact, that the entire

expenditure in every conceivable department was running rampant in view of the forthcoming elections.

In July, shortly before Parliament was prorogued, a new Bill was given notice of to effect the amendment which I seek today. This was never discussed, Parliament was prorogued and then dissolved, no new provisions were made for funds, spending went on apace at the Housing Authority, the Ministry of Communications and Works, various places where sums of money were paid out to one or another of the then Government's friends in a last desperate throw of the dice to recover the confidence of the people of Barbados. This was not to be, the Government changed on September, 2, 1976, and on October 6 it was put to me that it was necessary to increase these loan limits as had been intended by the previous Government.

5.05 p.m.

I agreed then in principle. We have been able to hold off the increase for some time, but I now have to tell Parliament that we have reached the end of the boller and we are at the limit voted three years ago of \$100 million. We are doing our best to hold down expenditure as many departments which exhausted their votes in less than half of the year can testify. The Ministry of Communications and Works has used up all of its money in repairing roads in St. Michael North Central. The Parks and Beaches Commission used up all of its money employing some 368 persons in and around the City. The Housing Authority used up \$700,000 in the matter of a few weeks, and spent money on building houses to such an extent that I received a telephone call on Saturday before last, to be precise, from the President of the Caribbean Development Bank saying that a loan had been approved from CDB to give to people to enable them to buy houses from the Government of Barbados but that the loan was not drawn down. The reason why the loan was not drawn down was that the Housing Authority did not have the money to complete the houses; and the President of CDB has indicated that unless action is taken soon, the loan will lapse and he will not be able to advance it; and that will mean that a few hundred Barbadians will not have the mortgage available to buy houses which should have been built under the previous regime. These are the problems which we have, Sir.

Now, the accounting of the Ministry of Finance varies slightly from the accounting of the Central Bank. I will not go into details, but I think it wise to mention to the House because the figures which we give will be a little different

from the figures that were read in the newspaper. For now I am continuing the practice of the previous Government. I am choosing a slightly smaller figure for the public debt than the figure which the Central Bank puts into circulation.

Sir, it is a matter of accounting. As a matter of fact I believe that the Central Bank did make the public debt at the present time near to \$370 million, while the figures from the Ministry of Finance show it as \$346,324,437 as at December, 31st, 1976. Of this, \$64.4 million is foreign debt, and \$191.9 million is local debt.

We have, as I have said, reached the limit of our debentures, and the urgency of this Bill lies in the fact that the Central Bank last week announced the closing date of another issue of debentures for the service of the Government; and unless we pass this Bill it will be impossible for the Central Bank to issue debentures, because we would have gone over the loan limit. That is why I am asking hon. members to deal with this matter in all of its stages today.

We have little doubt that the present loan will be fully subscribed. The last issue of treasury bills, despite the fact that we have recently raised the treasury bill requirement which commercial banks in Bridgetown were required to subscribe to — we did this in order to mop up a lot of liquid cash remaining in the banks waiting for somebody to borrow it. Despite this fact, the last issue of treasury bills on December 18 was over-subscribed, and we are in fact having little difficulty in raising these funds locally.

Various people will have various explanations or reasons for this fact of life. We on this side of the House support the belief that public confidence in the Government has now returned following the events of September 2nd; and therefore we are able to keep our heads a little more above water than we were able to do in the past; and certainly I do not envisage any immediate return to the condition of 1973 when it was then necessary for the Government to resort to borrowing in the Euro dollar markets at very high rates of interest bringing in money from outside, because there was not sufficient confidence in the Government of Barbados as it was then constituted and its management of the economy to allow funds to be raised as easily as these particular funds will be raised.

I have now, a little unfortunately, to report to the House that later in the year there are certain debt repayments which will necessitate borrowing from abroad because in 1973 when the Government went on panic stations a moratorium

on the payment of foreign debts was received; but we will have to start paying those back this year of 1977. This is an instalment on \$4 million and I anticipate that we will have to go abroad to obtain these funds; but generally speaking this Government intends to maintain as far as it can the stringent rule that when we have to borrow money it will be borrowed in Barbados from sources available in Barbados, and will not hang around our necks the milestone as has been the case in one or two of our neighbours in the Caribbean.

Thanks mainly to the moratorium and the payments obtained by the previous Government, only 1.5 per cent of the estimated value of our exports of goods and services went to meet our day to day services in 1976. The fact that we now have to meet the demand for repayment of the foreign loan which was made in 1973 means that the percentage may rise to between 2 and 3 percent.

I hope that 1977 will be a year of economic expansion and that our exports of goods and services, tourism and other invisible exports will expand so as to allow the economy to absorb the payments which will fall due. While I mention this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to touch on a misunderstanding which is soon going to be cleared up by a release from the Central Bank of Barbados. It relates to our foreign exchange position. It must be understood that in any country foreign reserves fluctuate; and the foreign reserves of Barbados are bound not to increase, or perhaps actually to decline in year after a record sugar price.

5.15 p.m.

It is a matter of common sense that, if you have exceptional foreign receipts for the sale of sugar, when the sugar price drops in the next year you will not have such receipts. I would ask all responsible persons in our community not to walk about and spread nonsensical stories based upon inferences from facts which are imperfectly understood. I would like to congratulate, if the hon. member would accept my congratulations, the hon. member for St. Michael South for not lending the authority or prestige of his pen, if he is, indeed the gentleman we read about in the newspapers, to such malevolent and dangerous rumours. Barbados, contrary to what appeared in *Tapia* newspaper, has not had to run and ask for loans from anybody. Barbados has not had to ask for grants from the International Monetary Fund or anybody abroad.

Barbados has contributed something like \$30 million to the International Monetary Fund

including \$7 million in gold which was bought for cash, and we have drawn a small sum out of this. I have forgotten the exact amount. I think it is \$3.2 million in special drawing rights, which will be about \$8 million. We have drawn a small sum of this, not because our reserves have vanished. We still have substantial foreign reserves, but we are just keeping them up to mark. It is a right which you have. When your export prices have dropped, you have a right to recoup some of the foreign exchange which you have put into the International Monetary Funds: general gold tranche and special funds. We have drawn out a small percentage of our special drawing rights in the International Monetary Fund. We may have drawn out about the amount of cash that will represent our gold purchases, leaving a very substantial balance in the IMF.

I am glad to say that I can acquit all politicians on both sides of the House from some of the mischievousness which is going abroad. I think it is the Foreign Finance Community ever prone to rumour. It is the Foreign Financial Community which is reading things between lines that are simply not there, and I will go no further than this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I have a fair selection of figures here with which I can assist hon. members, if they wish. These figures are issued under confidential cover, but if any hon. member wishes to discover from me the distribution of the outstanding Public Debt of Barbados, I will, indeed, be quite glad to pass the document to him. As I say it is under confidential cover, but I think hon. members of the House of Assembly may surely be trusted to know, for example, that there is \$411,000 outstanding under the Public Loan Redemption Act, 1942, and so on. I do not know how deep the interest of hon. members goes in the details of the Public Debt. Broadly speaking, I say this, I hope, not for ex-Ministers or ex-Members of Cabinet, but for the general public.

Broadly speaking, the Ministry of Finance calculates the Public Debt as being a short-term debt consisting of treasury bills, which stood at December 31 at \$91.6 million; debentures which stood at \$100 million; supplier credit which is nearly \$18 million. These are things which are supplied. (*Asides.*) It is \$17.938505. These are the Coastguard vessels which were given to us more or less on hire purchase. We have to include what we owe on the Coastguard vessels as foreign debt. We are still paying for them. Then there is the equipment; supplied for the airport development and matters of that sort. These are things which overseas suppliers have supplied us on terms. The Ministry of Finance includes those in its foreign debt figures. There are special loans

under which the greater part of the foreign loan was borrowed. Special loans amount to \$36.3 million. This is the present situation.

Now, the increase is necessary because, as all hon. members are well aware, the finances of Barbados have not allowed for surplus budgeting even on current account for some years with the exception of the very good sugar year. The deficit which was projected for the current year, even before the Government of the Democratic Labour Party went out of power, left an unfinanced balance, it seems to me, of \$80 million — a balance to be covered by loans of \$80 million. We are getting close enough to the end of the financial year, but hon. members who were members of the former Cabinet will be as aware of the projections, both for this year and next year, as I am. It is accepted in both Parties that there was a necessity for increased borrowing of this order. I am only glad, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we, at least, can say keep it down to the \$50 million, because I have no doubt that \$50 million is an election figure. If it had not been for the election the previous Government would have wanted to have increased the limit to \$100 million, but they were afraid to do that so close to the election and, therefore, they kept it to \$50 million. We are keeping it down to \$50 million, because we are very much hoping that we will re-float the economy and so manage it that this figure will suffice for some years. I would not like to say how long. Again, members of the former Cabinet will recall that it was only expected to last until the 1978–79 period when, as things were then going, it was anticipated that they would have to be yet another increase in the Public Loan Act. I am sincerely hoping that we will not have to take any such increase at that time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really do not know in what direction the curiosity of hon. members will lead this debate. I would like to give the hon. member for St. Michael West a long and easy wicket for his first innings in the realm of Shadow Minister of Finance in the Opposition. I am glad to say that on this occasion, at least, he will be operating his own shadow and not in the shadow of one who was responsible, perhaps, for his being a shadow of his former self at Ministerial level upon this occasion.

As I say, any information that I can give hon. members, I will be glad to give on this occasion. I should just like to state this finally and for the benefit of the public. Barbados is not as yet in the position of Jamaica where its foreign reserves have run down to nothing. It is

not, of course, in the position of Trinidad where there is an ample Government surplus and outlets for funds are being sought. We have a long and difficult job in front of us. It is impossible to close the gap in finances even at current levels, in my opinion, by taxation alone in the forthcoming year, and some borrowing will, therefore, be necessary.

5.25 p.m.

Hon. members and the public should not delude themselves that there will not be further instalments of the exercise in the raising of Government revenue. There will indeed be such instalments, but the hon. member for St. Michael South will not on this or any other occasion prior to the presentation of the economic survey and fiscal and budgetary proposals for the year 1977-78 persuade me into issuing any national, economic, fiscal or monetary plan, programme or policy. To everything there is a season. There is a time for everything, and the time for what the hon. member for St. Michael South calls for in his newspaper articles so assiduously when he has nothing else to write and even when there is something else on which he can write, will be when the budget speech is presented in this Chamber. He must bide his time until then. He was never able to bully the former Minister of Finance into publishing an economic plan of any kind; he must not expect to be able to bully me into so doing.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am very glad to see that the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance is like a spy who has come in from the cold. I am very glad to see that on matters of grave financial responsibility for the entire country that he is able to put forward measured and apparently serious positions so that those persons who are hearing him will recognise that that of which he spoke is of vital importance to the people of Barbados.

I recall in other times when the member for St. Thomas had to speak on matters relating to the finance that the tones were higher and the venom was sharper and the tongue was as salubrious in his sarcasm as ever it was earlier today. I am very glad to see too that it is now his turn to exhort us on this side and indeed he did pay us a compliment that we ought not to go around this country running down the currency of this country as he probably did not have that

kind of wisdom in the days when we tried to suggest to him that shouting that there was no money in the treasury and that a devaluation was around the corner etc. could only operate to the detriment of Barbados. I am glad that he sees that it is the foreign financial community as he puts it reading things which are not there, and that gives me the assurance and gives this side the assurance, and I am sorry the Prime Minister did not himself go ahead and give that firm assurance that contrary to what is being said in these financial circles and to some extent among the commercial sector, that Barbados would have a devaluation sometime in February or March.

I am hoping that the Prime Minister will be able to put paid to that silly rumour and categorically indicate that it is not now his present intention or his immediate future intention to see or have any such devaluation in this country. It is accepted in both parties that there will be an increase in borrowing and I must say that the Minister of Finance is not being inconsistent in the House when he makes that statement. He was only inconsistent when he was outside the House seeking to sit in the position where he now sits, when they went across the country suggesting in some places like St. Lucy for example, that the national debt of Barbados was so grave and so great that the Government would soon be taking up the people's pigs, hogs and sheep and selling them in order to help pay the debt. I am told that. If not the Prime Minister, the members of his party did it then. I have always acknowledged that they did not understand what the public debt was and they felt Barbados was in debt in the same manner that somebody who was trusting from a rum shop albeit one on St. Mary's Row and who finds himself in a position not to pay had run into debt.

I am also very glad to see that the Minister of Finance has finally acknowledged that it is general knowledge that the Barbados economy has gone through many difficulties since 1973. Although he did not say it, I think finally he has accepted and the Government has accepted because they now have to accept that 1973 was the year when there was the economic crisis and the fuel crisis, and that in fact contrary to what had been said by the then Shadow Minister of Finance in his budgetary response and continuing from then right up to 1976 that the situation in Barbados was as it was because of some serious mismanagement on the part of the Government in power. Even as he was introducing the Bill he still had to say things were not managed any

better after our borrowing went from \$50 million to \$100 million, but I would ask the Prime Minister if things were not managed any better, how is it that we, when we were on that side, through our management of the economy were able to carry the inflation from 36% one year to 13% one year, and I had the great joy of hearing the present Prime Minister and Minister of Finance announcing to some business people at the Hilton Hotel that the inflation rate for Barbados for 1976 was 2%. I hope that when the time comes for them to talk about the mismanagement of the economy they will at least take the trouble, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to acknowledge that Barbados is the only country in the world that has ever managed to get an inflation rate of 2%. If this had been done in the United States or the European countries or even in the Soviet Union although they do not acknowledge inflation but they know the reality is there, there would have been splashes all over the place, there would have been great rejoicing and all the great economists would be sitting with great tomes around them talking about what a great feat it was. I hope that the Prime Minister in his more lucid moments will find it possible — I do not wish to say sober no matter what asides are made — to give credit to the Government which left, as he said he was leaving for me this evening, a good wicket on which to bat.

I did not like his reference to monies having been paid out to various of the Government's friends, and doing their best to hold down the expenditure, and the Ministry of Communications and Works having used up their allotment, and Parks and Beaches having used up their allotment with the typical suggestion that there was some malfeasance involved.

5.35 p.m.

I think that when one looks at the annual spending, when one recognises what has been going on, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance will eventually get all of his colleagues, even my friend from St. Philip North, to understand that it took a certain degree of courage to have implemented some of the financial and management policies which were implemented by the Government in order for us to reach that goal of 2% inflation. I think my friend, the hon. member for Christ Church East, will agree again that he came into a situation where he found, because of prudent management of the Industrial Development Corporation, he found himself in a position where investment is ready to take off, and I share the view that in some areas in our economy 1977 can turn out to be a good year. I have left him 1,700 people working in a factory, I hope the factory was

established, and I hope that people will get jobs rather than people being laid off from jobs. I look forward to that, because it is distasteful for me week after week to hear our people in Barbados being laid off.

I would have liked the Minister to indicate to us how he is planning to use the \$50 million for productive purposes. It is his prerogative, of course, as Minister of Finance not to tell us on this side what he proposes to do, but we would have liked to have had a little more detail on the projects with which this additional \$50 million will bring the productivity of Barbados upwards. As I have said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the spectre of devaluation is not something that we can take lightly, if people believe it is happening or that it will happen then they will begin to behave accordingly, and so far as I am concerned I would urge the Government to resist to the last man and woman any temptation to follow any advice from any so-called experts who come from outside of this country, who are only accustomed to a certain form of economy. Most of the experts connected to the international agencies are American experts, they cut their eye teeth on American systems and Wall Street banking which have absolutely nothing to do with developing countries, and I do not think that it would be in the interest of this country for us to have any kind of devaluation at this point in our history.

So far as the CDB loan not having been drawn down, I think that the Prime Minister will during the next few years discover that a lot of these loans are not going to be drawn down as swiftly as either he or the President of the CDB would like. Sometimes the reasons why these loans are not drawn down are reasons which the planners cannot foresee. Sometimes it is the result of pure sloth and sometimes it is the result of bureaucratic misunderstanding. I know again, in the case of the IDC, for example, we had loans of, I believe, \$3 million which stayed around and could not be drawn down because we did not have the personnel to handle the pre-qualification inputs which had to come with these new type of loans which you get from the new international and regional agencies. As we go along we are bound to get this kind of expertise and I believe they are now in a position where they have drawn down monies and they have started building again.

I can think of no reason why the Prime Minister feels that he has to get credit for the fact that every loan floated in Barbados has been fully subscribed, because I think that has been the pattern of loans, except on the odd occasion.

During 1973 when we had to move over the URA dollar market I think that he is aware that all kinds of machinations were going on by the commercial banks and it was a question of how soon we got the money rather than what interest rate was paid. You tried your best to see if you could get the best possible interest rate in the external market, but within the framework everybody had to work in 1973 and 1974, especially when we had financial chaos around the world, and indeed some of the expenditure which the then Minister of Finance and the Governor of the Central Bank accounted for had to do with going around the world to see if we could bring the financial situation in the world within the ambit of clear understanding by ordinary persons.

That there was confidence in the Government by the nationals in Barbados has never been in any doubt. I would not like the Prime Minister and the members of the Barbados Labour Party to delude themselves with the view that there was a lack of confidence in the DLP Government in financial matters. As a matter of fact, the contrary seemed to have been the case. One of the reasons why there was no investment going in Barbados is precisely because Barbadian capital which is available could find its way into the European capitals. I am sure the Minister of Finance knows of one or two instances — I certainly do — where Barbadians here were able to borrow money in the local market, shift it out to the London market, make a couple of dollars in terms of thousands of dollars because of high interest rates which existed in London at the time. In 1974 we had to stop that, and you might argue that if the Government had been sharp and on its toes it would have been able to discover this earlier, but as you will discover when the interest rates start to move in any area it is the foreign financial community that comes in and assists the Barbadian in shipping his money out of the country. Now that we have a Central Bank that is functional it is my hope that the Central Bank will take steps, and continue to take steps, to plug all the apertures through which funds from Barbados tended to flow.

The Minister says that when he has to borrow money he hopes to borrow it from here. It is proper that you should borrow money in your own market if you can. He is going to have to do a lot of praying, because when the businessmen in this country reach the point where they are satisfied that they can earn more from their monies by shifting it out only a measure of control will stop them from doing so.

But there is one area in this business of our economy which is still causing me concern. I

think that the economy has not yet started to move, we are still in a state of unemployment which must be a source of concern to both sides of the House. We are not yet seeing many serious efforts of solving the unemployment problem. I do not know if when the Minister brings his budget in April — I understand he is bringing it in February but the Economic Survey is not completed, so he has had to ask his people to press a little harder and that we will see the budget some time in April — but he has to bring it some time and I note the preparations by Lord Nigel, the Baron of St. Judes, with the various stories about the hardships that are to come, and the population might as well get ready because the situation is not going to be easy. I am told that persons who drive heavy cars like Toyotas and Jaguars are likely to wish that they had never seen them, but I am sure the Minister of Finance will come in due course. The point is that the economy is still sluggish. Although there are reports of starts here and there, there is still the problem of getting meaningful employment for the younger people in our society, and I hope to hear the Minister putting forward very soon his economic plans for revitalising the economy.

5.45 p.m.

It makes no sense for anyone to say that we had it for 15 years and why did we let it go into that condition, because as the Minister himself confirms, from 1973 the situation was one of cut and go, trying to make sure that your reserves were able to sustain the cost of the existence of the country. As a matter of fact one of the things that I was very interested to hear was his statement that everyone knows that foreign reserves will fluctuate; and I think that he owes it to the community to indicate that the cash flow position of the domestic market will fluctuate.

I had hoped that after elections we would not be hearing this constant reference to no money in the Treasury. Everyone knows that at certain times of the year your receipts do not come in as fast as at other times; and the miracle to which the Minister referred was no more miracle than the fact that certain receipts come into the Treasury at certain times in the year. Receipts like those from income tax, if you can get certain high priced lawyers paying theirs in advance — things like that.

I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have dealt with the call for an increase in the public debt. We are not going to oppose it, because as the Minister said, this was on the drawing board when we had the responsibility for it. I hope that they will be able to maintain it at \$150 million, but I think that he should educate his colleagues

that the more borrowing you have to do, so long as the borrowing is for productive purposes, the more progressive and the more developed the country is becoming

There was a time when all of them went through the country, as I have already said, trying to paint the Democratic Labour Party as some kind of financial rapists because they borrowed without showing the reasons why the borrowing was done. I was at the time able to quote the same Prime Minister who said that the national debt must go up, and that the people who live in this country must assist in paying for these things which we have left behind. The two parties are merged more closely on the subject that borrowing is necessary, and for these reasons we are going to support the Resolution.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am myself impressed with at least two aspects of this debate so far. I am particularly glad that the Prime Minister has made a definite statement that there will be no devaluation in this country, or at least, not in the immediate future; because it is to my certain knowledge that certain business houses in Bridgetown were concerned about the likelihood of devaluation and had proceeded to attempt to pay off for recent stocks to the extent that they had burst their overdraft facilities at certain of the banks.

We must always remember that the financial community is an irrational one, it is a sensitive one, and these rumours, wherever they emanate from, can tend to do grave damage in the financial community. To my understanding the Minister of Finance is saying that there will be no devaluation. I welcome the statement and I say that perhaps it should have been made two or three weeks ago because the rumour has caused some considerable disquiet in the financial community in Barbados and perhaps beyond.

I am particularly glad too that so far we have been talking about the public debt, with a certain lack of emotion because I think we all agree that in the recent months leading up to the General Election this matter has been discussed as though the Barbadian economy could not bear a public debt of \$100 million. In truth and fact our reserves are such, and our economic position is such, that we can bear a public debt of \$300 million.

I say that because I wish to make the further point that there is nothing critical about the limit to \$100 million and \$150 million. We borrow because we want to develop. Borrowing a means to an end, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we

are concerned with the end which will be really development and employment.

It does not give me any particular composure at all that every day 20 or 30 people approach me asking me for work, and when the Minister of Finance says that in another two years he may very well have to come here for more money, I cannot understand why he did not come now and ask for \$100 million. I believe that he should have given himself the latitude to sit down and plan in a bold way for the next five years and float the economy to the point where in another 18 months or so a lot of people can be put to work. I trust that \$50 million does not reflect any timidity in financial management as far as this administration is concerned.

I have said privately, and I want to say publicly that what we want to do is to float this economy in a big way, and put all of our young people and some of the old ones who are out of work to work. There is nothing to worry about the limit of \$50 million. Our reserves are so good, and our position is so viable, notwithstanding the difficulties that we have been through in recent years, that we can have a public debt of \$300 million; and in my view the Minister should have come to Parliament today and said that we want to plan in a bold way for the years ahead. We want to float the economy immediately. I want to be given the latitude to plan and to plan without limitations. I am coming to the House to ask for an extension of another \$100 million.

I say again that what is important is not the borrowing itself, but what you borrow for, and to my understanding it is borrowing for development and borrowing for employment; and I would like to know that this is just the beginning, and that, if necessary, the Minister of Finance will come and say that in view of the bold plans we have, we need another \$50 million; and I have no doubt that once it is understood that it is for development and employment that all the House will join with him and say borrow because we are satisfied that the goal for which we are borrowing is a good goal, namely employment and development.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Just briefly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure to see you in the Chair. I have not seen you here for quite some time; and I am very glad that you are there to preside over the proceedings of this honourable Chamber. I am certain that you will find that the debate on this particular item will not be contentious, and I am sure that you will not be called upon to exercise

your utmost to keep members on both sides — and I would say particularly members on that side — within the bounds of the Standing Orders.

I must say, as has been said by my colleague, the hon. member for St. Michael South West, that there is no contention on this particular point, and we are quite pleased that the Minister of Finance introduced this Resolution in the way in which he did; but there are just a few comments and observations that I wish to make.

I do not think that the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance could really think that I am trying to bully him into taking any action, as far as telling the people of this country the state of the economy is concerned as he sees it, and the type of measures which, on his own admission, even today, is not the most healthy. As he says we still have a long way to go out of our present situation; and at the last sitting I think he indicated — or the last sitting but one — that there is a little money in the Treasury, but that does not mean that the members on his side should come pressing and asking to open out the bags so that uncontrolled spending could take place.

5.55 p.m.

At the last sitting, or at the last sitting but one, I think he indicated that there is a little money in the Treasury, but that does not mean that the members on his side should come pressing and asking to open out this bag so that uncontrolled spending can take place. There is no bullying from this side. As I analyse the economy of this country, and as other persons analyse it, there is need for the Minister of Finance to be more outgoing and more forthcoming on these matters. I will not put it in the same way that his back bencher, the member for Christ Church, puts it. If he is a bit conservative in his financial policies, that is not for me to say. He accused my ancestors of being conservative, so if from his own back bench he is told that he is conservative in his financial policies, well, that is the cut and thrust of debate. I do not pay much attention to that.

It is good to note that, at least, inside of this Chamber the Minister of Finance takes the view — I am not saying that he does not take it outside because I do not have the evidence to hand, but inside of this Chamber he has always taken the view, and I have researched those statements very carefully and I cannot fault him on them. He has always said that it would be necessary to increase the Public Debt and, to the best of my knowledge, he has not spoken against

that increase although he has not restrained some of his colleagues outside the House of Assembly when they come to speak on these particular matters. What is being done now, as he indicated, is to implement a decision which was taken by the DLP Government to increase the amount that could be borrowed, under this particular legislation, from \$100 million to \$150 million.

It becomes apparent to the people of this country that all of the talk about the Public Debt being too high, about bad financial management, wrong decisions, lack of sound financial advice, was so much talk in order to impress the people of this country that there was some grave financial mismanagement and calamity facing this country because of a high Public Debt. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think this is now well known that the transition from Opposition to Government has brought a greater realisation on the part of the members now sitting out there that the types of actions which were forced upon the DLP as Government were decisions taken in the interest of the people of this country, and decisions taken in the interest of insuring as far as possible that development would continue to take place in this country or, at least, that we would not fall back as far as employment, working opportunities, and so on were concerned. We are gratified to note the position that is being taken.

I think the Minister of Finance can take the types of comments coming from his back bench, and I am certain that that would not cause any flutter among the doves, because that is the type of comment you expect from a virile and thinking back bench. If the policies are considered timid, if it is raised to the limit of \$150 million, and that is merely what the former Government recommended and proposed that it would do, it is said that limitation is the greatest form of flattery. If that is timid, the member for Christ Church East may very well have a point, and I am certain it is something which the front bench would take very grave note of. That is the type of firing-power, I think they said, that is on the back benches. It was a very thoughtful contribution from the member for Christ Church East.

I have not said that you said, Mr. Prime Minister, that there would be no devaluation. I do not recall those words distinctly. I thought your words were fairly guarded, and you played it pretty close. I think you gave some hint and some type of indication that you would, certainly, not wish any type of devaluation in this country. I am very serious on these matters,

but I am certain you did not come out as strongly.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All speeches must be addressed to the Chair.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We know you are very much present with us, and I am very glad you have brought me back to this particular issue. I am glad that problems over there have been settled and that everything will be conducted in good grace. I think that I have dealt with this matter and made a contribution. We are not bullying you, Mr. Minister of Finance, on these matters because we know that the responsibility is a very grave one. All that we were asking for when we were out there was the same type of responsibility that you are asking from us. That is what we were asking from you as an Opposition. Unfortunately, we did not get it on all occasions. We are hopeful that, as a result of the lessons and the experience that you are now gaining on the front bench, come 1981 or whatever earlier date you choose to call the elections, when you are at that time back over here, you will exercise, having learnt by experience, that type of maturity in these particular matters which the national interest demands. (*Asides.*)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am on my sixth year in the House of Assembly. I believe the hon. member for St. Michael South has been in Parliament, using Parliament in its true term, for longer than I have, but he has not been in the House of Assembly for any longer than I have. But it is the first occasion in those five odd years that I have heard him attempt to make a speech on financial matters.
6.05 p.m.

When he was on the front bench he sat with a certain correctness of demeanour, a certain neatness of habit when it came to financial matters and a certain submission to the mastery of his former Prime Minister. I think he should be thankful to the Barbados Labour Party for having emancipated him from this condition. I am looking forward to his showing his manhood now under us and we would give him a longer period in Opposition to exercise this right so that eventually one of these days, perhaps twenty years from now, he will become a true Shadow Minister of Finance. Until such time, let me deal with some of the arguments, because I believe the

Minister himself will reply and I want to be brief on a few of the matters that have been raised very seriously.

As I understand the position, they are going to vote for this measure and I expect they would have voted for the measure. After all it was the Opposition who had control of the finances during the financial year 1976-77 and the sort of financial policies which they had initiated called for financing deficit to the extent of some \$94 million by borrowing both locally and overseas. Now it is not correct to say that since we have come into Government we have learned the responsibility about financing. We said then to the then Minister of Finance that had he followed correct policies well prior to 1973 he would have been able to weather the international economic crisis much better, and when we spoke about mismanagement of the economy we spoke not only in terms of wastage, we spoke also in terms of failure to take correct decisions in time.

I want to deal with one because the hon. member for St. Michael South West referred to one such point, the question of the flight of capital from Barbados to overseas markets and as a result depleting the savings here and of course slowing up the economy. I remember very well the present Prime Minister and myself trying to point out to the Government on several occasions, as early as 1971 and 1972 that capital was moving from Barbados to the overseas markets and it was time to make a decision to break with the East Caribbean dollar and it was time to pull down the shutters by using the provisions of the Exchange Control Act. It took the then Minister of Housing and Lands a very long time to understand that point, and indeed when the Government did take the decision the damage had already been done. So it is not right for the Opposition as we were then to be labelled an irresponsible Opposition.

I remember the present Prime Minister pointing out to the then Minister of Finance, the hon. member for St. John, that he was paying more on Treasury Bills and borrowing in Barbados than was being paid by any other country in the Commonwealth Caribbean including Jamaica and Guyana at that time, and it took him over a year and a half before he did anything about it, and then he had to admit that we were right, but he said we could not take the credit for that because he was working towards it a long time. So when hon. members are beginning to talk about the sort of things we said in Opposition, it is correct that they ought to re-read the speeches which we made then.

Talking about the expenditure of public funds, we always said that in principle the Government of the day should borrow to finance projects which were going to create income and be income earning for the future, because after all it was right that people in the future should bear some of the burden of the present since they were getting some of the benefits in the future as well. This is nothing new. Where we disagreed with the then Minister of Finance was that very often his borrowing was for projects which were doubtful, projects in respect of which he had done no proper feasibility study, and projects in respect of which there was no income coming for the future. I like to cite his mismanagement and this must be admitted by the Democratic Labour Party. If they fail to acknowledge this mismanagement they will continue to bury their heads in the sand like ostriches. I almost said like oysters like an hon. member in the Parliament in Trinidad once said.

What can one put down these things to? I have made a list of them. Bath Plantation, North Point, the Coast Guard, International Seafoods, all of which are projects which have failed, and there is also the Golden Mile Resorts Limited. All of them are projects that one really cannot look at seriously, and that is why when you come into Government as we have, finding gross mismanagement, you cannot as the hon. member for Christ Church East thinks start to reflate the economy immediately because the degree of mismanagement in Barbados has been a more serious degree of mismanagement than you have found in the United States. In addition to this you must also admit that you have not got the human resources or the basic analytical research either within or without the Government that you have in the United States so that when Jimmy Carter can within a period of six weeks announce his economic proposals, a Minister of Finance coming as we have come after you, have not got the same favourable conditions on which to work. I think we must make these points absolutely clear and the Government in thinking of reflation, as I am sure the Minister of Finance will say we are thinking of reflation, must be careful how you reflate when the base is so weak.

It is all right going into flights of fancy as the hon. member in his Wilsonian tone so often does; it is all right going into flights of fancy either from the shadow position or from the back bench without recognising that if you are going to commit yourself to borrowing \$100 million

immediately you have to be satisfied (a) that you have the resources to use it, (b) that you are not going to a crash programme that only has short term benefits without any long term effect on true employment in the economy, and (c) that you will not distort your economic picture over the long term period. I want hon. members on the back bench as well as the Opposition to clearly understand that they are dealing for the first time in the last fifteen years with a group of people including a Minister of Finance who clearly is prudent in management, wise in economic decision making and bold in decision as well. I want to make that clear, but we are not stupid in the manner in which we are going to approach our decisions, and therefore the nature of spending must be completely different. Our projects must be better planned.

Let me take an example. I hear so much that the last Government used not Lord Barrow of St. Judes, but they used Peter Rabbit formerly of St. Lawrence to publicise.....

Mr. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is Lord Nigel the Baron of St. Judes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: They used Peter Rabbit, late of St. Lawrence to use the television to make people believe that in Barbados we were on the position of establishing at Heywoods the Golden Mile Resort Project, a hotel that was going to invest immediately \$25 million in the economy.

6.15 p.m.

Now we have to be candid with this country. We came in to find no basic feasibility study as to whether that project was feasible or not, would be income bearing and would be able to service the debt charges, we came in to find that the last Cabinet had taken the decision without having done the basic study. What irresponsible group of men we would be if we just went ahead immediately on that project without first costing out the project, getting the studies done, looking at the market implications of it, and seeing whether if we sink \$25 million in Barbadians in future would be able to service that debt, pay for it and yet have something to be proud of? This is one of the instances.

The cement plant that they have made a song and dance about, no feasibility study has been done up to now, except for some very wild statement that it would cost \$100 million. The papers are there, I am not bringing out any Cabinet secret, I am sure that with the consent

of the Minister of Finance they will be made available to the shadow Minister of Finance. How can you go ahead on this job when I know you have raised loans to do A, B and C when the matters have not been well gone into?

Let us get back to the Polytechnic project, you are not going to quarrel about this. Everybody, every public official, every economic adviser advised the past Government not to build the Polytechnic by the hospital. It posed a danger from flooding, the cost was too much, you were sinking money in cement, and what did the Minister of Finance say? It has a high visibility quotient. He is thinking in terms of the fact that to sell this as a building for the voters to see and not what the cost to the country can be. I have intervened in this debate to make the position clear, for sometimes you have even to tell your own people and your own supporters that there are constraints beyond your powers at the time, and you have first to lay the proper basics before we can get to take off.

I do not understand what the fear of devaluation has been because no member of the Government, and certainly the Minister of Finance has never said he is going to devalue, I think this is merely the sort of talk you get in the limited foreign community in Barbados who want to speculate again and make money like under the last Government when they were revaluing Mr. Moses, the merchant in Swan Street, made over \$98,000 from transactions in money because he was obviously privy to the decision beforehand; that is right, he made it by moving money between here and Trinidad at the expense of Barbadians. I can tell the hon. member he need have no fear that this will happen with this Government. There are certain things one has to look at, whether one is going to devalue, keep your currency at the same parity or whether you are going to do a revaluation of the currency.

One of the things any Government must consider is whether or not we are selling our products in the sort of market that we can increase the flow of money coming in for sugar. The other thing we must be concerned about is what happens in Trinidad and Jamaica. At present the Trinidad dollar is at a lower parity rate than ours. If Jamaica comes considerably down we will have to take into account the effect that this is going to have on our industrial products here and our selling other exports in the Eastern Caribbean and whether or not it is going to be some retrenchment in

this area. We have to take that into account. We are not planning any devaluation. Let me tell you, as the Minister will tell you, it has never been discussed at Cabinet. (*Asides*) Could you want a clearer statement than that? All the foreign economic advisers that we have listened to have never, as far as I know, recommended any devaluation. (*Asides*) You want to hear it from the Minister? Unlike your former Minister, this Minister of Finance, contrary to what you said when you were in Government about him, not only in this Parliament but outside, is not reckless, neither is there anything to be afraid of from him, nor is he a dictator. He discusses matters with his Cabinet and we come in here with Cabinet decisions, and there is a marked difference between him and the former Prime Minister in this respect, so I want to make the position clear on this. You have not got one man and seven mice, you have a Cabinet that any one of us could take over and help each other or stand up on our feet, we have not got a Cabinet that even my friend from St. Michael North Central will have to back down when he knows he is right, we have not got that sort of Cabinet either, nor have we got the sort of Cabinet like when the Leader of the Opposition is driving his car with his wife and children to hear that he has been moved and he is no longer in charge of roads, and that is the first time he heard it.

I have made these points to show you the distinction, we will not come in here and push any rumour about devaluation. As a matter of fact, I am glad to hear the hon. member has invited us to say quite clearly that people have no fear and there is no point speculating in money for this purpose, when decisions are taken they will be taken properly.

I think that I have spoken enough to clarify a few of the problems and I can assure the hon. members that we are as concerned as they are to make sure that when we reflate this economy that there will be jobs created which will be permanent in the economy, and where we know that we will be answering the problems of the percentage of unemployed, particularly among the youth and the young women in this community. We have made, and are beginning to make, some impact on it. It has not been as fast as any one of us who cares about our country would want, and we would hope of course that the Unions, not only the Barbados Workers' Union, will be conscious of the need to move forward in this

respect to bring more people into the employment sector so that they have more numbers and more coppers themselves to run the Unions efficiently, as they are capable of doing, and we are looking forward to their co-operation in this respect. We say this seriously, we are looking forward to their co-operation in this respect, because a lot depends on whether the workers particularly in this country are prepared to work hand in hand with the Government.

I expect that some of my friends, the industrialists, the professionals, the businessmen, will restrict their dividends, their profits, their fees and their earnings to take account of the need for this economy to be a more just economy than it has been.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make about three points on this debate here.
6.25 p.m.

I think that we have been able to witness some serious thought by those who have already participated in what can be considered to be a matter of the utmost public importance, which is the question of seeking to increase the public debt by the amount by which we are being asked to increase it by this Resolution today. I say that it is important because whenever the question of debt arises people sometimes have the habit of raising a series of questions.

I think that it is important that these questions should be posed, because after all I think that some assurances have got to be given; because it is the responsibility, not only of the present generation, but the future generation to see that these debts are finally paid off.

What of course would be of particular importance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is what the Prime Minister thinks of the ways and means in which the Government intends to spend this money. The hon. member for Christ Church East exhorted the Prime Minister to make sure that the money is invested in areas where employment opportunities would be created. Now this is very important. I am sure that the Government will recognise the serious problem that faces this country in the area of creating jobs for people.

The hon. member for Christ Church East has indicated this when he spoke of the large number of people coming to him every day about jobs. I do not believe that his concern is to get more money for the Industrial

Development Corporation to spend, but to have more jobs created in this community so as to alleviate our serious economic problems and ensure that jobs are created which would have the effect of bolstering up the economic progress of this country. That is what I think is needed, and the member for Christ Church East recognised the conservative approach adopted by his party on this particular matter.

Nevertheless, we have to sit down and embark on more serious long term planning; and I want to reiterate the position which has been taken by the Prime Minister himself and the former representative of St. Michael West in this Chamber on the question of the establishment of a National Economic Council to sit and take a serious look at the obvious ways and means of coming to grips with the serious problems with which this country is confronted and in which the key sectors of the community can sit down and make a meaningful contribution towards the solving of these problems. I think that he recognises that the Barbados Workers Union has adopted a position of responsibility to ensure that the workers get a fair return for their work, and to ensure that more money is put into the pockets of these workers, and that has in turn the effect of bolstering up the economy of the country as was witnessed in the last months of 1976 when over 5,000 workers received increases in excess of \$3 million which put more money into the economy of the country; because it is at this time that you get more spending. You get the multiplier effect.

However, we need to sit down and embark on more long term planning for this country. I recognise the points that the member has made, and the strictures that he has made against his party that the Minister of Finance has adopted should be taken in good spirit, and that some recognition should be given to this vital and important question.

I would hope, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when we are thinking in terms of dealing with economic measures that all of the considerations which would normally be brought to bear on the situation would be brought into play. The hon. member for Christ Church talked about inflation and the capacity of this country to absorb this inflation. I am sure that he will recognise that over the years this is an area in which expertise has been given consideration; so that it will be recognised that there is already a certain level of expertise dealing with this problem. We may question whether there is enough available, but we have to continue to

build on what is already there, and I am satisfied that there is need for great concern on this whole question of unemployment and on the whole question of creating more employment.

Therefore, the hon. member for Christ Church East should not be booed, but his contribution should be given some serious thought. He may be young in his parliamentary experience and enthusiastic, but I do not think that he should be castigated in the mild tones that he has been by the member for Christ Church West, the Hon. Attorney General. It is obvious that there are certain difficulties shown up in the party when they have a conservative front bench and a radical back bench.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must explain that I was not castigating the hon. member for Christ Church East. I welcomed his contribution. I suppose that it is refreshing when some statement can be interpreted or slanted to suit the Opposition.

Mr. GREAVES: I remember the former Prime Minister telling another parliamentarian, as reported in the Press, that he would teach her the facts of life; but on a more serious note, this a matter which we on this side would obviously support because we are as concerned as the Government about the state of the economy and about finding ways and means to ensure that the state of the economy improves.

6.35 p.m.

In the final analysis, we are all Barbadians and we have to adopt a measure of responsibility. If the economic situation is good we are going to benefit, and if it is not good we will feel the pinch. This is a matter which, as you would recognise, would receive the blessing of the Opposition. I would sincerely hope that the Prime Minister, in his reply, would give some indication about the kind of areas in which investment would be made. I would certainly hope that these would be in the productive areas. As my colleague, the member for St. Michael South, has pointed out, I am sure that the Prime Minister would refute the statement that he indicated there would be devaluation, as was misconstrued by the member for Christ Church East. Sometimes we do not always hear clearly what is being said by another hon. member. But certainly, since that matter has been ventilated, I am sure that the Prime Minister would want to assure this Chamber and the public of his position on this question of devaluation. After all, it is a vital and important matter.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If no other member wishes to speak, Sir, I would like to reply to the debate. Mr. Deputy Speaker, unlike the Leader of the Opposition, I cannot promise a very short time in my reply, because in a debate which, if I may say so with respect, has reached a high standard, there are naturally many points to be replied to. I should like to commend hon. members who have spoken on the Opposition as well as on this side upon this particular occasion. I was very proud to hear the hon. member for Christ Church East speaking, because it is the first time within my experience that a Government back bencher has risen in this House to put forward economic ideas in amplification, even if not in opposition, to those of the former Minister of Finance, and it is much appreciated. I wish to assure all hon. members that their contributions in debate will be listened to with equal respect, no matter from which quarter of the House they emanate.

Now, on the question of devaluation, I spoke around the subject without mentioning the word, because there is a very prudent rule followed by all Ministers of Finance and that is, as far as possible, do not comment on devaluations. Be judged by your actions rather than your words. The word has been mentioned; it has been canvassed on both sides of the House and, therefore, I will make some reply to it, not at any great length, however, because it is not an issue at the present time, or in the conceived or perceived future, to be taken at all seriously, or to be taken at all. Foreign financial communities in most countries are nervous about their money, and they go through periodic times and occasions when they become alarmed about devaluation.

Before our currency was effectively re-valued by the last Government, there was, I would say, nine months of speculation. Out of those nine months, eight months and two weeks speculated on a devaluation, and then the word got out and Mr. Moses and many other businessmen were able to make, by postponing the payment of their drafts and so on, substantial capital gains at that time out of the re-valuation. But until a couple of weeks before it happened, everybody said there was going to be a devaluation, and the present talk is equally nonsensical.

I had, today, the privilege of reading an advanced copy of the International Monetary Fund's Report on the finances of Barbados under the new Government. No doubt when our comments have been returned to the IMF., and

the IMF's report is made public, I can lay it in here. Just as the Governor of the Central Bank is going to quote from it today, or tomorrow, very soon anyhow, in a Press Release which will come from the Central Bank indicating the scope of the advance which we have taken from the IMF, and to which I referred in my speech, so I will quote briefly from it. I will quote from some of the things it has mentioned. I will say something about the International Monetary Fund. The International Monetary Fund is a group of international civil servants administering or investigating compensatory financing arrangements, devaluation, exchange rates, everything relating to the movement of money and international trade to which most countries of the Western World, and a very large number of countries outside the Western World belong. Most countries belong to it. It has to face all the problems you can think of that exist in the world. It has worked out machinery for dealing with countries who balance of payments and whose financial position is such that devaluation is an indicated remedy for some of the problems.

So far from the International Monetary Fund thinking in any way that devaluation is a problem for Barbados that they are actually asking me to take away exchange control restrictions on foreign travel by Barbadians. At the present time, if Barbadians want to go away, they can only get \$1,500 — a maximum of \$1,500 for foreign travel. So far as counselling devaluation to us, they are telling us that we should set it free and let Barbadians get as much as they like to travel abroad. I do not agree with them, and I can give the public the assurance that, certainly at the moment, I am not removing any aspect of exchange control restrictions. Certainly not that one. I use this as an example to indicate how far away from the thinking either the Government of Barbados, or the International Monetary Fund, is any idea that a devaluation is necessary or indicated.

The Governor of the Central Bank will say, in the guarded language that is used by him on certain occasions, that the International Monetary Fund sometimes imposes on Governments, as a condition of exercising their special drawing rights, certain alterations in their currency level, or something like that. They impose conditions. It will then go on to say that no such conditions have been imposed in Barbados. This is clear, and will be abundantly clear when the Report is, eventually, published. I would not have to think about the word, except that somebody, who is managing a bank

in Broad Street somewhere, thinks he knows something about finance, sees that we have exercised special drawing rights at the IMF., gets up at a party and starts to talk about the foreign reserves, and in a small society like this people start to talk about devaluation.

There have been occasions in the past when serious warnings have been issued about devaluation, and the only warning that has ever been issued that I can find in the files for recent years relates to wage increases. The only warning that has ever been issued by the IMF on devaluation is a warning which says that we cannot allow the general level of wages in Barbados to rise too high above those of our trading partners. When you hear the Governor of the Central Bank saying that we must exercise wage restraint, although he above all does not want to use that terrible word "devaluation", this is what he is talking about. 6.45 p.m.

The IMF people came down here, I discussed it with them, I pointed out to them when they told me the Barbados Sugar workers were the highest paid in the world that it does not matter what level wages reach in the sugar industry, it cannot have an ultimate effect on our sales, because our sales, not profits made at home, depend on factors entirely external to Barbados, and wages are accommodated entirely out of profits. That is what I explained and I do not believe certainly that the shrinkage in sugar exports has to do with high wages. I must say I do not believe that. I am waiting and I will look at the next few years when there does appear to be a narrow margin of compressibility on profits, but I believe that shrinkage on sugar production in Barbados has to do with the unpopularity of sugar among workers with the previous Government at a certain stage. We do not have to be ptolemaic now. It is known that in 1964 and 1965 that the previous Minister of Finance thought that Barbados could do without sugar, that we could move into the Bermuda position or the Bahamas position without any difficulty. That was a serious economic misjudgment and we are paying for it now. I do not think that the high wages have an effect there. Equally I do not think that high wages affect our tourism. What has happened is that it has affected employment in the tourist business, and that is what I also told to the IMF. When the Barbados Workers' Union negotiated very substantially higher wages for hotel workers it undoubtedly had the effect of reducing employment. Many people were laid off because the hotels only assign a certain

amount of money for wages; but it can have some effect on the exports of manufactured goods and I told the IMF that this formed but a small segment of Barbados' overall economy at the present time. They have reported on that. They said that they are satisfied themselves that Barbados' export costs are not at the moment out of line. Our prices and costs and everything over a three year period have gone up on average 45% more than those of our trading partners. This is the real measure of mismanagement because hon. members must not think that we are engaged in a colloquy today in which no blame can be assigned, but that figure of the additional 45% in costs in Barbados is due to no other than mismanagement. They must not think that, but although it has gone up to this extent, again profits have proved sufficiently compressible to absorb it, and the manufacturers of Barbados after initial difficulties – and the hon. member for St. Michael South West will confirm this because it was during the last days of his regime that he had to contend with this – are not asking for a devaluation.

The first people in this country, in fact, the only people who can benefit from it are the Sugar Producers' Association and the Manufacturers Association. Nobody else can benefit from devaluation. All the money that was made by the members of the Chamber of Commerce by postponing payment of their drafts until after revaluation, the money that was made by Moses and so on, came out of the pockets of the sugar industry because the sugar industry broadly speaking lost \$5 million or \$6 million on the revaluation; the rest of Barbados benefited to that extent from it, and the only people who can benefit as I say are the sugar industry and the Barbados Manufacturers' Association, and I have never heard them mention a word or make any suggestion of it. So the bank managers and the people who knock about and talk about devaluation do not understand the basic economics of Barbados.

The Governor of the Central Bank, I think, is wise to counsel wage restraint, and I will go on to say why, but I will say that when I hear talk of wage restraint, I do not regard it as being of such character as imperils at the moment our international position; it imperils the cost of living decline. We will not succeed in keeping the cost of living in a state of decline if the Barbados Workers' Union succeeds in getting a 50% raise for the workers at Barbados Shipping and Trading, and I tell you as a fact that if B.S. & T has to give in to the

Union to the full extent of its claims, the cost of living will go up because the retail agencies will have to pass on the cost of increased wages to the rest of Barbadians. There is no doubt about that. That is where wage restraint to my mind is important at the present time, but as I say, the Governor of the Central Bank has also to bear the balance of payments in mind, and why I will commend him is this: I read in recent times with some interest what Mr. Frank Walcott, the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union has to say in the paid advertisement in the newspapers. For a long time really I paid little attention to it, but ever so often he expresses himself on subjects where it is important to know how he and thereby organised labour in this country is thinking, and recently he said that there has been conditions of economic boom in November and December of last year, and he went on to say that if the workers did not have more money, how could there have been any boom in Bridgetown; there would have been nobody with money to spend in the shops.

Now this is all very well, but if his economic thinking and the thinking of the Union stops at that, it stops at a very dangerous place. That type of thinking is suitable only to an economy with unlimited elasticity of supply of goods and an economy where goods do not have to be imported from abroad, because if you give the workers of this country unlimited money, it need not have any effect on the price of imported goods, but certainly it will cause the importation of more goods, and therefore you do put pressure on the balance of payments. There is a direct equation which anybody can draw who understands economics between the Christmas boom and the decline in the reserves. The decline in the reserves is the result of people in Broad Street importing goods to sell at Christmas. It is quite a straightforward matter. If you investigate the sales in Broad Street you will find a pretty close correlation in my opinion between the extra fall in the reserves and the percentage increase in sales over the previous December. Now if the Union thinks that the raising of wages is as unmitigated a good as it was in Roosevelt's America in 1931 where there was immense unused capacity in the economy, the Union is mistaken, and these are the reasons why I have to join also in an appeal to the Union to consider that the cost of living has remained virtually stationary. I suppose it is possible to argue that it rose 2.1% up to September and it has fallen .1 of a percent or a little more since. I do not know

what the December figures will show, but it fell in October and it fell in November. I am told the December figures were showing a decline too, but I have not seen them in full. (*Asides*) I do not know who is actually responsible for that. I only know that immediately we made it clear that we had an import licensing policy that did not put such a premium on obtaining a licence at such and such a price that we saw a little competition come back into certain aspects of the retail business which was missing before.

I do not want to be contentious, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but they must not harass me. I will just give an example of how in my opinion we should get away from this pattern of the import licence being too important a thing in a trader's life. An import licence should never be the most important thing in a trader's life; competition should be important and I will give an example of how it happens.

6.55 p.m.

I will give you an example of how it happens. A gentleman whose name has been called in here and who you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, said we should not repeat one of his words of wisdom because of certain unfortunate terms, he telephoned the Minister for Consumer Affairs and asked for a licence to import onions, and he telephoned him early in the morning and harassed him after some period when he was harassing him, and he said to the Minister of Consumer Affairs — and I have obtained the Minister's permission to talk about it — “man, give me a licence for a thousand bags and I will see it all right with you” and the Minister put down the phone in his ear. I want the public to understand this, that where you have people who think that there has to be a consideration for the granting of an import licence, that adds to cost and it is not necessary. That is the whole point.

The whole point about the cement — I do not want to be too diverting — was surely this, putting it at its lowest common denominator of contention. A situation could not continue for ever where Barbados was supplied with cement from Ireland where the freight in cement exceeds the cost of the cement and yet it came here at a low price. It must be obvious to everybody that what was intended was a monopoly situation created and then the price would go up. It is obvious to everybody the price of Irish cement would have gone up. It has not gone up because we have reintroduced competition and it just would not come in at all, because it cannot face competition from nearer sources of cement.

These are the things which we have to keep down the cost of living with and to get the Union to ask its members to pull together in the national interest, recognise that the Government by keeping down the cost of living is making a contribution to the standard of living of the workers, is preserving the standard of living of the workers, so there is no longer cause to seek exceptional wage increases to deal with eroded standards. This is the Government's policy in that area.

Now I have said really as much as I can possibly say about devaluation. It just is not on, we do not want it, the IMF does not want it, the Sugar Producers do not want it, the Manufacturers' Association does not want it, nobody wants it and I hope that all those who are betting on it now will lose their money in the biggest possible way, and I hope that the same mischievous bank manager who started the rumour, indeed I hope that his bank is the one to benefit on the poundage of the drafts going out and the poundage on the money coming back in. This is a case where perhaps he may lose that respect for his judgment, or perhaps his bank will make a little money, maybe that is why he started it all off in the first place, but I do want to fortify all those who call for wage restraint at this time by that thought. I have never myself, as hon. members, especially the hon. member for St. Lucy who has been in the House before, would recall, I have never myself gone overboard for a prices and incomes policy when all that I saw in a prices and incomes policy was the contrary of the workers' just demands. I never say more than that in it, I saw prices accommodated at all times to whatever the importers told the Minister of Trade was the best price they could obtain abroad.

There was never any Trade Attache in a Ministry of External Affairs who sought trade information abroad and so on. I do not see prices controlled because to control prices at the level or near to the level that the merchants tell you they must have it is not real price control. As soon as you allow people who are being paid a markup to seek sources of high-priced supplies and then fix the local price on the basis of their high-priced supplies, that is not price control, and there is never any attempt to control incomes that I know of than to tell the civil servants and all persons in public employment they could not get adequate increases. I never saw any attempt to control the very, very large salaries paid by the multi-national corporations, the foreign commercial banks and other foreign commercial interests. When banks in Broad Street could be

paying their managers not just more than this Prime Minister or the former Prime Minister, but more than the Prime Minister of Great Britain, I never saw any attempt to control that kind of income, the only incomes that were sought to control, it seems to me, were the incomes of those in the public service and the lowest paid workers in our society, so I never went overboard for it at that time.

But there has to be some restraint on wages, on profits, it will have to be voluntarily partly, but I cannot promise all concerned, and obviously I am not addressing the Union now, that if voluntary restraint does not work that some other means of restraint will not be found. I see the hon. member for St. Michael South West asking me if it is a pre-budget speech, I thought that was what he wanted. You cannot do any right for certain people, but I will get on with the debate.

Sir, I must answer those parts of hon. members' speeches which have criticised us, to put it in very gentlemanly terms, for suggesting that there was mismanagement and have said more or less that we are doing the same thing as the old Government. This very Bill, when it came before the Cabinet on April 14, 1976, the monies borrowed under this Act then stood at \$87.1 million. By the election that had reached \$99 million. We found \$99 million, in other words, we are out to the end of the baller, and when the National Insurance Board wanted to take up \$1.1 million instead of \$1 million as a conversion that might have been enough, in fact it was enough, to put us over the limit. We have managed to go from September until now without the vital necessity of the Bill, so there must have been some difference in the level of management between April and September and the level of management between September and now.

The hon. member for St. Michael South West is saying we went to the SDR's. The SDR's are an addition to foreign exchange, the SDR's are not an addition to the funds available to Government. This is as bad as the pigs and hogs in St. Lucy if the hon. member thinks the SDR's are available to finance the so-called programmes of Government. In the fulness of time if we borrow abroad the SDR's will already have been taken up to accommodate the balance of payments difficulties, but we have not got the money from SDR's to carry on any development, and there were developments of which hon. members must be aware, because every Government — I am addressing these remarks to

hon. members on my own side because I do not anticipate that the problems of Government will ever again trouble any hon. member sitting down over there, I am addressing members on my side who will come after me, that they must avoid these BMC, these Housing Authorities, these Parks and Beaches extravaganzas; leave the extravaganzas to Hollywood, let us have true financial management here.

Look at the Parks and Beaches figures, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you talk about mismanagement. It was not available to us the last time we had a debate to set out the facts that appeared in Senator Mapp's recent letter in the Advocate-News because the checks had not been made, but hon. members on that side cannot have any possible basis for criticising either the Parks and Beaches Commission, who on August 10 decided to send home the 258 workers, or the Barbados Labour Party for confirming that decision.

7.05 p.m.

After you read that the levelling of Folkstone at an expenditure of \$40,000 was one-third finished, and that that work was extended for several weeks, and that the other two-thirds were finished for \$150 by a tractor, we cannot say that anything justifies that. What you might better say is that you look for other areas, train a few more people as taxi drivers; but nobody can think that it is proper expenditure to pay people for doing nothing or rather on the figures which could have been done for \$75. We could let the people stay home and draw the money. At least we would not have had to wear out the tyres of the Parks and Beaches Commission's lorries at Folkstone. If a tractor can do that work for \$150 how can you justify that kind of wild expenditure?

I cannot accept that these crash programmes in employment were proper expenditures of Government money. I cannot accept that the emptying of the Housing Authority's Bank Account, so that work had to be stopped at a number of the Housing Authority sites so that people could not take possession of the houses and get the loans which are waiting there to be disbursed.

It is known that the Government needs money for development. Money for development is waiting there, and the money of the Housing Authority has been used in painting — God bless the dear old souls — in painting the houses of old age pensioners in St. Thomas. And, I am happy to see my parishioners with their nice houses; but

you cannot tell me that with the fundamental problems facing the Government that this was a proper expenditure.

The \$12 million was borrowed under this Act between April and September. Remember that figure — \$12 million. You cannot tell me that it is correct expenditure to take up \$500,000 — you all would not know this at Cabinet. As a matter of fact, the Leader of the Opposition told me that he did not know anything about it. It was approved and the hon. member for St. Michael South did not know what was going on. He asked me what was Golden Mile. You all did not know at Cabinet that the Minister of Finance minuted that the solicitors had told him that the mortgagee of Golden Mile was calling for a large sum of money, and that \$500,000 should be paid to Golden Mile Development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see astonishment on the face of the hon. member for St. Michael South West. We are seeing the honest reaction of men genuinely bewildered. How much more bewildered they would be if they knew that I have in my possession a letter written by the former Minister of Finance, the hon. member for St. John, offering for sale certain shares in Golden Mile Development to a person whom we know. We know who Dear Cecil is. We know who Ted is. We know the days that these conversations took place. We know the circumstances of the issue of \$100,000 in shares. Lionel Luckoo, in this as well.

How much more bewildered are you when you think that you sat down in Cabinet — and I do not think that it was revealed to ex-ministers of Cabinet that Sir Lionel Luckoo, not to speak of another person, had a financial interest in the same Heywoods Development of \$25 million. How can we look at that as other than mismanagement? We are now conducting a feasibility study into that. It consists of hundreds of acres. The land was sold the last time at a nominal value of 38 cents a square foot; and the previous Government was prepared to undertake expenditure of \$1 million per acre and buy the land at \$1.70 a square foot.

Hon can we regard that as proper expenditure? How could anybody pay \$500,000 on an agreement for shares when it was not mentioned that the land was mortgaged to a previous owner, and that those who purported to sell it could not give a title without a clearance from the previous owner?

Option should have been bought; and it was represented to the Cabinet that an option was

being bought. It was represented to the Cabinet that the Government should take an option on the Heywood Development. On April 16th, 1976, there was no question about option. It was a direction, and not to be paid out of the vote for the purchase of land either. To be paid out of the vote for other assets. There was a directive that because the owners of Golden Mile were under financial pressure from the mortgagee, we have it in writing, the hand writing from the hon. member for St. John that \$500,000 be paid to him.

Everybody in Barbados who buys land knows that you do not pay more than 10 per cent as deposit or 2 percent for an option. How then did they make a deposit of half million on the entire amount, because the land has never been surveyed? A letter has arrived recently this year by the sellers saying please come down and say which land we want. The surveyor will be here. The land has never been surveyed. A half million dollars of the taxpayers' money has been paid for a portion of Heywood's Beach — an unsurveyed portion. We are now saving a little money here and a little money there to pay for a feasibility study.

This is what we mean when we talk about mismanagement; and therefore hon. members must not think that if with prudence we restrain our language at certain times that we do not feel strongly about these matters. I am not making any advance Budget Speech, but I must indicate very briefly some of the lines — nothing whatever to do with taxation — some of the directions in which we think some of this money will be spent.

The first point is this: we are not borrowing \$50 million now. We are seeking up to a limit of \$20 million and we are not seeking it all one time. If we are very fortunate, perhaps over the whole of the financial year — if we are fortunate we may only have to borrow \$20 million in the next 15 months. In fact it may be longer than that — say 18 months.

The Cabinet has authority at the moment only to extend the debt limit by \$20 million. Some of this money is committed to bailing out some of the greatly mismanaged corporations. The Barbados Marketing Corporation has on paper a debt which appears to be over \$4 million. *(Asides).*

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, please.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Well, I hear the Minister of Agriculture telling me more than that.

It has to be re-financed, and I promised the B.M.C. a sum of money sufficient to pay off a loan. The last time I spoke of the B.M.C. I did not even know that it existed; because we got a submission from them about a sum of \$400,000 which the hon. member for St. Michael South West, who was then Minister, and authorised them to borrow. There was nothing underhand about it. All that was underhand is that the B.M.C. seems to have felt that they had to hide it from us subsequently. I mean from our Cabinet. There was nothing underhand in the way in which the loan was granted. I think that it was a little unwise or it was a disincentive to the B.M.C. to put its house in order. I am not suggesting that there was anything crooked. I have promised that that loan will be paid. Some of these funds will have to be made available in the B.M.C.'s capital draft because the B.M.C. without regard to the fact that the Caribbean Development Bank was planning a massive cold storage and general complex for the B.M.C., without regard to that, ordered its own cold storage, and took some funds that were voted by Parliament to pull it out of its ordinary troubles and paid down \$230,000 towards its new cold storage equipment.

The President of the Caribbean Development Bank has asked me what are we doing with the B.M.C. I can announce from now that we are not buying the land at Edgehill. As from now, Mr. Papa can sit down and worry about what he is going to do with the land. He could put it back in some canes and do something for the country; and I thank him very much indeed in and on behalf of the young boys of St. Thomas for the six acres he gave for a playing field, because we can put that to good use; but we are going to take up the CDB loan to BMC. We are going to make a local contribution. This will be for productive enterprise, put down the cold storage equipment and all the other matters envisaged. We are going to put it all down and it is expected that some of these moneys will go into that project.

7.15 p.m.

The Oistins Development Scheme. You talk about management. We held a meeting in my office this morning. The Deputy Prime Minister, the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries and myself, and we looked at 30 ins. of plans for Oistins. Year after year people have been talking about doing something for Oistins. We are going to do something. We are taking decisions and getting things moving. Every question that you can think of that is needed there will be dealt with. We are thinking about the fisheries development, the future of the Coastguard, road

development, and our projections are going forward to the 1990s to make sure that we do not put in too small a development at the first situation. Those are the things that we are going to spend the money on.

We are regarding construction as an end in itself. This is a concept which has been lost sight of, because employment in Barbados has so often shown in the past to be very closely linked with the construction industry. When we are looking at things like the educational plans that the Minister of Education urges on me, today he says that we have to spend \$25 million on education in the next year-and-a-half. I do not think he is going to be so fortunate. We look at the construction of a school not just as a contribution to educational needs, but we look at it as part of the overall programme for providing employment. I have made my mind up, and the Ministry of Planning is working along these lines. The housing programme, the school building programme, the BMC programme, works at Oistins, Harbour Works, Airport Works, and something else which I will mention in a moment. All of these are to be regarded as our primary productive employment area.

We also have in mind certain new highway projects. Again, these are projects that the other side have talked about for so many years and done nothing. We would like to think that we are a Government of decision. We have in mind certain highway projects and some of them are known. We believe that the East Coast highway is more than a scenic drive. We believe it will have a productive value. The St. Andrew Development Scheme will not, primarily, be financed from this loan, because we regard that as an internationally financed scheme, and we do not know what the counterpart funds, which we will have to provide from our own resources, are, but that is a slightly different matter.

We are looking at other projects. We are looking at the necessity, probably, for a new oil refinery. The old oil refinery only has a few more years of life. I myself do not like some of the advice that we have received, but this is a matter which we are tossing up and down. The Cement Plant, we are looking at that. I myself cannot envisage taking part in a project to spend \$100 million on cement. It will have to be a little more simple project than that, but that is only a casual opinion. The former Prime Minister gave a casual opinion about the Polytechnic that it had to be in Delamere Land. The difference between he and I is that he held his casual opinion for five years, and it was wrong. We had to wait until we got rid of him to reverse the decision which, I

believe, all former members of the Cabinet will welcome. (*Asides.*) We are putting it where best we think it should go. The hon. members who are sitting down and saying "Wilkey" are not arguing with me. They are arguing with the hon. member for St. John. It is he that talked about the high visibility. It was he that said the Government was hiding away its projects like Ellerslie and nobody could see them. I had to minute on a file that, to me, it was planning lunacy to put down a major project on Bridgetown's only flood reception area. There is nowhere else in Bridgetown for water to go when you have a flood.

On August 25, 1919, the water covered Queen's Park up to the level of the Governor's gate and only the balls were visible. In 1970 water washed away the better part of Weymouth. In 1967 there was a flood. In 1949 there was a flood killing people. Do you mean that some idiot is going to go and put down a polytechnic the only place where the flood waters can gather? But he wants the water in the House of Assembly. He wants the water in Broad Street, because there would be nowhere else for the water to go, if you cover Delamere Land with a polytechnic! The water would have to come into the House of Assembly and in Broad Street. This is what we mean when we talk about mismanagement.

This very week a very full and complete statement on the Government's policy in regard to the construction of the new polytechnic will be made. It will be made either on Thursday or Friday on what has so long been anticipated, and what has so long been wanted by the former, former Minister of Education. I do not know if the siting of the polytechnic is one of the reasons why his advice was no longer sought in that particular portfolio, but he will join with us in welcoming the transference of the site. Some of this money will go in counterpart funds clearly towards the provision of a polytechnic. This is what we are borrowing the money for. When hon. members, who were then political aspirants, went up and down the country saying the country cannot afford this kind of debt, that is what was meant. Any country must have a debt, but the debt must be incurred for productive purposes. That is the whole point. It must be spent wisely.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, hon. members, I believe, are hungry, and I think that there can, surely, be very few questions which the Opposition would wish answered which have not been canvassed in my reply. I do not know if any hon. member wishes to pursue any other line of

inquiry, but I think I have covered it all. The hon. member for St. Michael South West, taking an early delight in the leaks which are so regular in our society, is talking about the Economic Survey cannot be ready for February. Well, he has information which I do not have as yet. If he knows it cannot be ready for February, I think I will really have to ask the Director of Finance and Planning tomorrow morning when it will be ready. I am glad to hear it cannot be ready for February, but the difference between us is that we are going to present an Economic Survey before we present a Budget. We are going to do what the previous Minister of Finance and Planning has been unable to do for five years. He was spending too much time minding Bath, Golden Mile, International Seafoods, the University in Miami, Carib West Airways and El Toro Junior.

7.25 p.m.

I really am not minding El Toro Junior or any other junior in this matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is a fact that we will be producing an economic survey and we will be laying it on the Table of this House, and we will be attempting to bring back into proper perspective the principles of debates in the House of Assembly on financial matters, bring back a little realism in financial matters, a little realism in expenditure; we will be trying to guard the taxpayers' money a little better and we will be trying to make a better presentation of all these things that the hon. member for St. Michael South calls for so assiduously. He has been calling for them from the first day he came in. I regret he was starved so much of information under the previous regime. I very sincerely hope that his appetite for information will be well assuaged in here.

If there is any specific point at any time that he wants to raise on economic matters, let him raise it in debates or indeed privately and we will be glad to deal with it, but he must not attempt to take over our function of dictating the pace of the time table of the Government's economic programme.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think we have had as complete a debate as we could have had in all the circumstances, and I beg to move once again that the Bill be read a second time.

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

On motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a third time, and in so moving I would like to thank all hon. members for dealing with it in all its stages today and giving attention and the comment and the analysis with which the House has been most valuably entertained.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second that.

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

On motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN the Bill was passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government Business for today's sitting.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 25th January, at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

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

7.33 p.m.