THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 27th June, 1978.

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

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Labour, and Community Services); Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning); Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); Hon. H. deB. FORDE, S.C., M.A., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs); Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Health and National Insurance); Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Communications and Works); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Mr. M. C. C. WARD; Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B., (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Caribbean Affairs, External Trade, Industry and Tourism), (Leader of the House); Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Culture); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT; Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.Sc. and His Honour E. E. ALLEYNE, LL.M., (Deputy Speaker).

Prayers were read.

Mr. B. M. TAITT, M.A., entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, 13th June, 1978.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, these Minutes have been circulated, and subject to any observations as to inaccuracies, I beg to move that they be confirmed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations, these Minutes stand confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Registration of Electors (Amendment) Regulations, 1978. I am further commanded to lay the Passports and Travel Documents (Fees) Order, 1978. I am commanded to lay the Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 3) Order, 1978. I am commanded to lay the Drawback of Duties (Locally Manufactured Cigarettes) Regulations, 1978.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report and Accounts of the Public Utilities Board as at 31st December, 1976.

12.25 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Shops (Special Provisions) Order, 1978.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to amend the note to Item 15 – Expenses of Commissions, under Head 8(1) Ministry of Finance and Planning; and to grant the sum of $25,000 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1978–79, Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1978–79, No. 2, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to amend the note to Item 2 – under Head 22 of the 1978–79 Estimates.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of

$1,988,835 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1978–79, Part II – Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1978–79, No. 3, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Shops (Special Provisions) Order 1978.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to give notice to amend the Road Traffic Act.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. John, his question re the growing uneasiness over the number of unsolved crimes.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, to enquire of the Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs:–

1. Is the Minister aware that there is growing uneasiness in this country over the number of unsolved crimes of violence , including homicide?

2. Will the Minister state whether the Royal Barbados Police Force has requested the assistance of Scotland Yard in the investigation of such crimes and also in the investigation of the alleged corporate crimes of the business community over which the Minister recently expressed some concern?

3. Will the Minister identify the nature of these corporate offences?

I understand Your Honour has disallowed the fourth part of the Question.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member wishes a reply I can give it with the leave of the House today.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act be read a first time.

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

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

CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution that this House place on record its regret at the passing of James Christopher Mottley a former member of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the amplifying equipment in the House is not operating properly, I beg to move the suspension of this Sitting for half an hour.

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

The question that the House be suspended for half an hour was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

12.35 p.m.

RESUMPTION

On the resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, we regret the death of the late James Christopher Mottley. He was a Member of this House from 1951 to 1956 as a representative of the parish of St. Philip. I also had the opportunity to listen to the late Mr. Mottley in the Southern District Council of which he was a member. I believe that it is true to say that the late Mr. Mottley did all that he could do to represent his constituents in the councils of Government. I well recall the number of suggestions that he made at Local Government level towards improving roads, water and street lights for his constituents.

In addition to his membership of the House of Assembly and the Local Government body, I understand that he was a prominent member, and indeed a lay preacher at the Methodist Church in St. Philip. On behalf of the Government I would like to extend profound sympathy to his relatives and friends. Accordingly, I beg to move the passing of the Resolution of which I gave notice.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, in seconding this Resolution, I would like to say that last week the mortal remains of James Christopher Mottley, were laid to rest at the ripe age of 82 years. Brother Motts, as he was familiarly known, was elected a member of this Honourable House from 1951 to 1956. When he was elected to this House the term was three years; but with the introduction of the ministerial system of Government, it was extended to five years. Consequently Mr. Mottley served for the five years.

In those days, sir, he ran under the auspices of the party which was then known as the Congress Party; and I am not ashamed to say that I too was a member of that party. He served under the system of double member constituencies. In those days, sir, it was a difficult task to

represent the entire parish, which, as you are aware, is the biggest parish in this island; and you can imagine having to travel through this parish to canvass the electorate; but with the co-operation of Mr. Wynter Algernon Crawford who had the co-operation and good will of the people at that particular time, the late James Christopher Mottley made the grade. I am in a position to let you know the difficulties in those days owing to the fact that I too had been elected under the system of double member constituencies.

Now, sir, he was a good party man, but not one so blinded by party loyalty as to be unaware of wisdom and good sense on the other side. He was never afraid to recognise this even though sometimes it aroused the disapproval of his colleagues. Indeed, sir, over and above the party he placed the good and welfare of his constituents; and he often referred to them as his people. He has left an example, sir, that many aspiring politicians would do well to follow.

Mr. Speaker, he was at all times the friend of the people of St. Philip. The people whom he served in St. Philip always turned to him for assistance as well as advice. This continued even after he ceased to be a member of this House. It can be said, sir, that his membership of this House was for the benefit of his constituents in many different ways; but above all, sir, he was a very humble, sympathetic and God fearing man. In appearance he carried a proud bearing, but the only pride that this man exhibited was when he heard of the commendable exploits of his people.

The constituents of the parish of St. Philip felt free to approach him at acceptable and unacceptable times without any qualms as to whether they would be received. Of course, sir, at the seat of all of this was a rich and abiding faith in God which was exemplified in part by his close attachment to his Church – the Methodist Church at Rices in particular.
1.15 p.m.

It has been said by several members of the Methodist Church that the fact that he was a member of the House of Assembly did not prevent him, Sir, from being a sexton carrying on the duties as sexton of the Rices Methodist Church. That proves beyond the shadow of doubt the Christian attitude and his method of approach to christianity.

Mr. Speaker, he leaves to mourn his loss his widow in the United States of America, his daughter who is the Head teacher of one of our primary schools, his only child, his grand daughter who is a doctor at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and a number of other relatives, who in one way or another are carrying the torch so nobly lit by him.

For my part, Sir, I have been associated with this great and proud man for several years and I am happy to have been associated with him at that time. To his sorrowing relatives I extend my deepest sympathy and as one who now has the honour of representing a part of the parish of St. Philip, I do so not only for myself but for the people of St. Philip.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, the late J. C. Mottley entered the House of Assembly in December 1951 on the same date that I first became a member. He was then a member of the Congress Party. My recollection of him is that he had a very inquisitive mind, that is, that he would ask questions not because he did not know the answers, but because he wanted to bring out some aspect from the Government benches which they had chosen to overlook. In that way he made a valuable contribution to debates, but particularly when it came to the question of the rural constituencies in this Island, he brought a first-hand knowledge of the conditions of the agricultural workers and the people who dwelt in the rural districts which few of us, if any, then members of the House possessed.

In 1956 he was not re-elected. I cannot even remember if he ran again, but during the five years that he was a member of this House, I think I am the only member now who was a member in the Session 1951–56, he certainly did make a great contribution, and I do not think that on any of the three or four sides of the House, because we then had three major political parties, the Conservative Party, the Congress Party and the Barbados Labour Party in the House of Assembly at that time, he had a single enemy. As a matter of fact, he carried on the Boy Scout tradition; he was a friend to all and a brother to every other member. He was probably the most senior member of the House and he certainly was able to give us some recollections of the people who had travelled from his constituency to places like Panama who had returned, what hardship they had endured and what contributions they made not only towards the buildings of that great enterprise, the pathway between the two oceans, but by returning and investing their hard earned monies in the parish of St. Philip they were able to build up a substantial peasant community which was then beneficial to market gardening and agriculture in this country as a whole.

I do not think that I can say or add anything more eloquently than the hon. member for St. Philip South has just contributed, and only as Leader of the Opposition on behalf of the Democratic Labour Party I join in asking that sympathy be expressed to his relatives.

Mr. SPEAKER: I too beg to be associated with the remarks expressed on the occasion of the death of Mr. Mottley, and I am sure all hon. members would wish to be associated with the passing of the Resolution by the Hon. Leader of the House.

I now ask hon. members to join with me in standing for one minute as an expression of our sympathy.

Hon. Members stood in their places for one minute.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I also rise under this Head under which we have just dealt with the matter of Mr. Mottley, to offer my condolences and I hope those of the House to the Hon. Leader of the House, the hon. member for Christ Church South Central, who has very recently within the last two days suffered very intense tragedy within his family with the unfortunate deaths in a road accident of his nephew and his niece. It is always tragic when young people on the threshold of life are cut off in their prime, and it is especially tragic when we see the scythe of the grim reaper taking its toll in circumstances such as this.

I know the hon. member is a member of a very closely knit family within whose ranks these tragedies perhaps give rise to very acute feelings, and I am sure that the House will join with me in extending sympathy to the hon. member, to the parents of the children concerned and further in extending condolences to the entire family of the hon. member in this unhappy incident.

1.25 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Opposition, and certainly on behalf of myself, knowing the two youngsters, words cannot fully compensate for the loss of children in their prime, whatever we may think of grown up people, no one can ever have any sense of animosity against children or relatives of any member inside this House, because they have not really fulfilled their potential.

I happen to know the two youngsters, and I know that many of their contemporaries, children of their age group, were extremely distressed at the unfortunate accident. I only hope that we will do our utmost to ensure that we do not have these accidents occurring. At another stage of the proceedings, it will not be appropriate for me to speak on the breakdown of the traffic system in Barbados because it really does not have any part in this thing, but I would like at some time to draw the attention of the House that we may have other accidents unless we get our traffic lights working. I have to travel in great fear every day, it may be a blessing in disguise for some members on the opposite side if I got written off at Eagle Hall corner, but at the same time, Sir, other people in Barbados have their lives in danger: (Aside). I just say that I intend to raise this.....*(Aside)*.....you can say what you like, you don't know any better.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I will not have rude interruptions when I am trying to add my contribution. I am genuinely distressed, and at a later stage I hope I will be given an opportunity to discuss the hazards which exist.

As I said, I knew the two young children, Sir, I know their parents, and I am sorry, genuinely concerned, and I am sorry if Your Honour may feel that I am using a discordant note, but I am very much concerned, Sir, and I hope that we will not have any occasion to have condolences to the children or on behalf of the children of any member of this House or any relatives of any young children of any member of this House in future, Sir.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, in rising to join in the condolences which are to be expressed to the family of the hon. member, I merely wanted to add my quota to it and to say that I am glad that the Prime Minister raised the question, because my two children have been associated in their school life with the two youngsters and they wondered whether there was any way in which they and their friends could give some expression of their feelings, and I hope that the hon. member would convey to the family of the two young children the deep distress which not only my two but a large number of children of that age group are feeling at the loss of these two youngsters.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my brother and others I would like to thank hon. members for the profound expression of sympathy in the recent bereavement. I do concur in the view that these matters are very difficult matters, and to those who are intimately associated with this part of the words of sympathy and expression of condolences by hon. members on both sides of this House it will be a source of comfort.

Mr. SPEAKER: I merely want to be associated with the kind remarks that have been expressed, and I can assure the Hon. Leader of the House that the sympathy of all hon. members and that of the entire community goes out to his brother and all other relatives on an occasion such as this. I am sure hon. members would want to know that the Clerk has been instructed to convey the sentiments of the House to the relatives and to the Leader.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 4 asked by the hon. member for St. Philip North is now ready.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Reply to the Parliamentary Question asked by the hon. member today is ready, and with the

leave of the House if he wishes the answer today I will be in a position to give it.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there is no objection, the Hon. Attorney General is seeking the leave of the House to give replies to questions which have been tabled today by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I think that the member, unless he has been entitled to investigate these questions during the past weeks – and I did not really give them to him, because I only asked them today – I would like him to do me the courtesy of investigating the questions because I do not think they can be answered frivolously or in a cavalier manner like this. I do not require a reply today.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not accuse a Minister of answering questions frivolously.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He has not answered it, Sir, I am not asking the question today, Sir.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I never assumed bad faith on the part of the hon. member, I have not assumed his bad faith of frivolity and I assure that I will answer the question as seriously as he asked it.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Hon. Leader of the Opposition does not want to ask his question today when called to receive a reply, a reply cannot be given.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be taken and that Order No. 1 be the instant Order of the Day.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF A PARCEL OF LAND AT WOTTON, CHRIST CHURCH

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution seeks to approve the compulsory acquisition of a parcel of land situated at Wotton, Christ Church, and containing by admeasurement 2.102 acres of land, and it abuts and abounds the lands of Key Homes *(Barbados)* Limited the lands of the Government of Barbados, and a right of way 30 feet wide leading to Kingsland Road in the parish of Christ Church.

Hon. members will be aware that in 1974 the Cabinet of Barbados as then constituted acquired 34.23 acres of land at Wotton, Christ Church of which 4 acres was donated free of charge, provided Government paid for the property tax, the solicitors' fees and stamp duties and a price of $3,000 an acre.

1.35 p.m.

There was an original scheme drawn up by the then authority, the Housing Ministry, and it was envisaged that 140 single houses would be built on the land fronting the main road, Montrose main road, and 240 units and terrace houses for rental on approximately ten acres, and the remaining ten acres would be utilized by the Ministry of Education for possible extensions to the Christ Church Girls' School or Boys' School. When tests and on-site investigations took place, the drainage in the area fronting the Montrose main road was exceedingly poor and it was decided that seven of the ten acres on the Montrose road could not possibly be used without incurring phenomenal costs for the citing of timber houses. It was therefore decided that the scheme as envisaged would have to be altered, and seven acres of the land on which is situated the major drainage outlet, namely a well – and those who are familiar with the area will recall that obliquely opposite to the building owned by the late Mr. Waterman formerly of the Boys' Foundation School there is a depression and a major well with drainage leading into the well, and that area could be used, with some refilling and without interfering with the natural course of the water, as a playing field. Secondly, it was decided that the area aback of this land, which is the area which was retained by Key Homes, was the best building land as that was what was called the sour grass field. In order to make an economic scheme the Government entered into consultations with the owners of the land for the acquisition of an additional two and a half acres, so that when added to the other area envisaged for the terrace blocks we would be able to get 108 terrace block houses for rental. The other additional units that would be got would be 120. We would also get 100 single unit houses, So that although we are not able to build the number of houses in the same way as originally envisaged, a substantial number of units, mainly 220 terrace house type and 100 single unit houses of the wooden type would be accommodated; and we were hoping in addition to use the front part of the land nearest the road where there is the least drainage problem for the development of rental spots for some sort of subsidiary services in the form of church sites and the retail trade, so that the community as such in that area, not only those houses which are being built by the Housing Authority but also the surrounding community of Montrose and the rest of the land which is now being bought by property developers in Barbados will form a cohesive housing area with playing fields and shopping amenities. A site visit was paid after the Government came into power and we looked at the suggestion and we have invoked the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act. Obviously, Sir, there has not been agreement up to now with the owners of the land in respect of the purchase price per acre. Government has made what it considers to be a reasonable offer for the land, bearing in mind the amount offered for comparable land for sale to the Government by the same owners. And nevertheless, I do not want to be specific on that because there are specific provisions in

the Land Acquisition Act for resolving these disputes, which will be invoked if necessary.

In order that the Housing Corporation can get ahead with the planning of the lay out of the stone terrace house units it was necessary to ask the Governor General to invoke a provision under section 3 of the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228, so that possession could be taken immediately of the particular piece of land without breach of the right of the owners vis-a-vis its price. With that explanation, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. D. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, in speaking on this Resolution I would like to make it abundantly clear why this Government has decided to acquire the two and a half acres of land at Wotton. I want also to bring to the attention of this Honourable House a number of things which have been allowed to develop during the last administration and why the Ministry of Housing and Lands is faced with such problems today.

In 1974 the former Government purchased some thirty acres of land at Wotton. There was an additional four acres which was donated free of cost, making the total acreage owned by the Government 34 acres. When soil tests were carried out during the last administration, it was discovered and pointed out to the Government that they would have to lose a considerable portion of the land which the Government had acquired and I want it to be made abundantly clear to this Honourable House that the former administration knew that part of the land which they had acquired at Wotton could not be used for building purposes; they knew it would be subject to flooding, contrary to what some of the Democratic Labour Party members have been saying. We have got to let the people know the truth about the Wotton area, because soil tests were carried out and the former Government knew and they went ahead to negotiate the purchase of an additional five acres because they knew that a portion of the land would be lost, and they took it upon themselves to open negotiations and purchased an additional five acres of land.
1.45 p.m.

We on coming into power have realised that the land was unsuitable; and when we say unsuitable, we have found out from the reports that in some cases water was a mere five feet below. That is why we said in the first place that Wotton was unsuitable. The soil was also refilled, so that in some cases you had to dig four feet to get a foundation; and therefore a minimal portion of that area was suitable for building property structured houses. What I am saying is that the foundation to which I was referring was four feet, and which meant that few houses could be constructed where there was a foundation of four feet; and the vast amount of land was not suitable for the building of houses of any sort.

That, Sir, is why the former Government had gone ahead to negotiate for the further purchase of five acres of land to build terraced unit houses for sale. The 2½ acres which this Government has decided to acquire from Keylands Ltd. is on the northern side of that area now owned by the Government; and we felt that rather than continue to purchase that five acres of land from Trevor Anthony Estate, it was better to acquire the land on the northern side to build 108 terraced units.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have got to point out that we believe that Housing is a very important aspect in social life; and the 2½ acres that will be acquired will be acquired to build 108 terraced units. We have to realise that there are a number of people in Barbados who are in search of housing accommodation. There are a number of applications – over 6,000 – to the National Housing Corporation for rented units. We understand that there is a dire need for such housing accommodation, and that is why we are prepared to meet this demand; but, Mr. Speaker, it must be told to this Honourable Chamber that during the former Administration some of the reasons why people could not get houses was because of their political convictions; and it was brought to my attention as Parliamentary Secretary that in order to get a house from the National Housing Corporation you had to be recommended by a member of the then Government. I want this honourable House to understand that that is not the practice under my administration. Lists were forwarded, and if you were not a member of, or sympathiser with, the former administration, then you would automatically be left out of the reckoning.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out some of the infelicities which took place under the former Administration. We have a situation in the Wildey area where a woman who is known in Barbados as the "first lady" and who is associated with the Democratic Labour Party.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the "first lady" associated with Wotton?

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Under the present circumstances she would not be qualified. She was allowed to own three houses and allowed to sub-let one of the terraced units in Wildey.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are dealing with Wotton.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I am dealing with the question of acquiring land to put terraced units on. The position is that this same terraced unit which this "first lady" was renting to someone and collecting rent – and when we came into office in 1976 $1,000 was owed to the National Housing Corporation for that house. I want people to understand what was going on; that a house which belonged to the National Housing Corporation was

rented to a supporter of the former Government. She collected the rent, and the National Housing Corporation was owed $1,000. In another case another person associated with the former Administration was allowed to rent two houses from the National Housing Corporation. She kept a car in one and a van in one. When we took over, that woman owed $1,750 in rent. Neither one of the members on the other side can get up and challenge me and say that that is not a fact.

That, Sir, is why we cannot recoup the vast arrears in rent due to the National Housing Corporation; and that is why the people of this country are finding it difficult to get housing accommodation from the National Housing Corporation; because people were allowed to owe thousands of dollars under the last Administration because of their political affiliations; and indeed we have got to go to court to recover some of the money. I have heard people say that the Chairman of the National Housing Corporation is very, very queer. He is queer in the sense that he is talking about going to court to get money. Mr. Speaker, it is nothing that we have got to be worried about. The Chairman of the National Housing Corporation is forced to take such a stand.

It was allowed under the last Government for members of the Democratic Labour Party to go into units at Wildey and St. James and live free of cost. Mr. Speaker, these are the things which have to be told, because as we come before this Chamber to acquire land to site 108 units, it must be pointed out that people have to wait. If the people had been encouraged to pay their rents under the former Administration we would not be faced with the herculean task of trying to recover some of these arrears.

Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious situation; because, as I said before, thousands of people are calling on us daily; and members on the other side are telling the people that we have failed to honour our pledges. We have got to find the money. We made a pledge to build 800 houses a year. We cannot honour that pledge immediately because we have got to do a lot of work that was left undone by the past Administration.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. My colleague said that we made a pledge to build 800 houses a year. That is contrary to my party's manifesto.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order. The time is now 2 p.m. and this sitting stands suspended until 2.45 p.m.

1.55 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. Question No. 4 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Philip North.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 4 reads as follows:—

To ask the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs: Will the Minister state: (1) How many calves and/or cows were imported into this Island under the Canadian Dairy Aid Scheme from its inception to the present date? (2) Will the Minister state to whom these animals were consigned? (3) Who handled the distribution of these animals? (4) Was the distribution by means of cash sales or by credit or both? (5) What was the selling price of the said animals? And how was this arrived at? (6) Was each animal valued, price tag attached, and animal sold on this basis? (7) How many animals were purchased outright? (8) What was the total sum of money realized from sales as above? (9) How many animals were sold on an instalment payment basis? What sum was realised from this source? (10) Were any animals delivered, as being sold, without any cash being paid by the person receiving said animals? (11) Was there a ticket system or Promissory Note method employed by any person to secure delivery of animals from any person responsible for distributing the animals? (12) If the answer to No. 11 above is in the affirmative, how many animals were so delivered? (13) How much money is now due and owing resulting from transactions as at Nos. 11 and 12 above? (14) What are individual sums of money now due to the Scheme by persons for animals received from the Scheme?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the replies to Question No. 4 are as follows:—

(1) 862.

(2) The private sector received 593, Central Livestock Station 30, and the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation 239.

(3) Officers of the Ministry of Agriculture.

(4) Distribution was by both methods.

(5) The total selling price of the animals was $1,195,412.06. The selling price was determined by the price paid per animal in Canada plus all other expenses incurred and

varied between $893.09 and approximately $2,447.00.

(6) Each animal was valued and sold accordingly. None was price tagged.

(7) One.

(8) Eight hundred and ninety three dollars and nine cents.

(9) 592, $251,916.57 i.e. deposits plus instalments paid to date.

(10) Yes Sir.

(11) No, Sir.

(12) Does not arise.

(13) Does not arise.

(14) The individual amounts now due and owing to the Scheme vary from $16.85 to $303,674.00. Detailed information is available and with the approval of his Honour The Speaker and the Honourable Member, I will lay it on the Table of the Honourable House.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister state who owes the $300,000?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the largest sum due and owing to the scheme is owed by Norwood Farms Ltd. in the vicinity of $300,000.

Mr. SISNETT: Could the Minister state what steps are being taken to collect that sum or any other arrears?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, a decision has been taken in the Ministry of Agriculture of requiring payment of the sums outstanding within a very short period. Other than that they are prepared to carry out Cabinet's decision of 29th April, 1971, and that is that the total sum be recovered even if it means going to Court.

Mr. SISNETT: I understood the Minister to say that the sum was owed by Norwood Farms. Could he explain who are the owners of Norwood Farms?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a proper supplementary.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Speaker, I do not know.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you asking another supplementary? You have already had your quota. You have had three.

Mr. SISNETT: I have asked three and I have two more to ask.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member can only ask three questions.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to know if the Minister can say what criteria was adopted for giving out these cattle at the time.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, there were three imports of cows into Barbados. In the 1971--72 imports everything seemed to have gone well, but unfortunately File VE/6/Vol. I and File VE/6/Vol.2 which deal with the matter have disappeared from the Ministry of Agriculture. 2.50 p.m.

In the 1973 imports it would appear from the files as if the Hon. Minister at the time, Mr. DaCosta Edwards, took a personal hand in these and there seems to be utter confusion as far as this lot has been dealt with. As a matter of fact, a letter dated 27/2/74 by the Senior Agricultural Officer personally complained to the Permanent Secretary that the Minister had changed the terms of reference, the down payment and the criteria for importation of cattle, and that certain persons were allowed to import cows on the Minister's personal instructions. Of that, Mr. Speaker, in 1973 one would find that a Messrs. Norwood Farms had 60 bred Holsteins, 32 bred Jerseys, 6 bred Ayrshires, 11 open Holsteins, to a total value of 242 thousand odd dollars. No down payment was made and nothing has been paid. It has been said that the Minister at that time, Mr. DaCosta Edwards, also negotiated on behalf of one Mr. John Daniel who had 24 bred Holsteins, 7 open heifers, to a total value of $73,800 and no deposit was made. Also, there was another intervention as well in respect of Norwood Plantation and a Messrs. Blowers Plantation also, in which there were 30 in-calf heifers and 20 in-calf Jerseys, another total of $91,200.

The Cabinet Decision of the 24th April, 1971 insisted that there should be a down payment of 10% of the cost of the animals, one year's grace period, interest rate of 3%, and it would appear that the then Minister, Mr. DaCosta Edwards, gave personal undertakings to the importers that the deposit would be changed to 5% with ten years' down payment and a two year grace period. This was challenged by the then Permanent Secretary but nothing seemed to have happened since that date.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am speaking not as Prime Minister, I am asking a question as the representative of St. Thomas, a rural constituency where people would be glad to get cows. Is the Minister saying that Mr. DaCosta Edwards was Minister of Agriculture at the time when the Government imported cows and gave Norwood Farms $260,000 worth, Sir?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I am saying. For clarification of this matter, if I may be permitted to read paragraph 2 of the letter of 27/2/74 – and that was a considerable time after the cows had been in the country – the then Senior Agricultural Officer complained: "Most of the last minute orders were not accompanied by deposits, and in a few cases I was told that the then Minister had told them that they need not pay a deposit." That is the situation, the then Minister, as he pointed out later, was Mr. DaCosta Edwards.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: A supplementary, Sir, I hope this is not out of order. Of course, I will always trust your judgment, Sir. Are there any members of the former Cabinet in this present House, now, Sir, hearing this type of business which is going on here? And is it possible that the Prime Minister can have another enquiry into this cow business? I do not know if this is a proper supplementary, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. James is not very mature in asking that question.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, there are some things that are not very mature, and that is corruption.

Mr. WARD: Sir, would the Hon. Minister advise the House as to whether the Barbados Government still owes the Canadian Government or dairies in Canada for these cows, or whether we have settled it and the money now has to be paid to the Barbados Government?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the record shows that it was a 30 year agreement between the Canadian International Agency for Development (CIDA) and the Barbados Government, but the loans to the farmers should have been repaid in a seven year period. The funds from the repayment should have gone into a revolving fund which would circulate among the dairy industry until the time of the payment had been reached, when the Government of Barbados would have repaid the Canadian Government, so the money is still due and owing by the Government of Barbados to CIDA.

Mr. TAITT: A Supplementary. Will the Minister state what is the position of that revolving fund as of this date? Is he in a position so to do?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I cannot give the exact amount in the revolving fund, but what I can say is that the fund is not very healthy.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the cows are.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: No, Mr. Speaker, because the problem will now arise that no agreements had been sent out to those persons who received cows in 1973. They were found locked in the bottom of a cabinet in the Ministry of Agriculture, and the agreement was on the Cabinet decision of 1971 that persons who had cows should enter into a formal agreement whereby a deduction would be made monthly from their milk cheque by the Pine Hill Dairy, and we have carried out a survey recently and it can be shown that there are now less than 30% of the cows which were imported in 1973 alive and kicking today, and the recipients have never been notified as to what amounts they must pay, no agreement has been signed between the recipients and the Pine Hill Dairy for repayment of the sum. It means at this point in time that Government might find itself involved in a very ticklish law suit to recover the money which should have gone into the revolving fund.

Mr. WEEKES: Will the Minister state how many members of this House were involved in purchasing cows for themselves?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I have a total list, I do not see any members of the House involved in the matter. There are no names of any members of the House involved in the matter.

Mr. WEEKES: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I would just like to ask the Minister what is the state of the arrears. I have not got it clear, I have what the purchase price is but I have not got the state of the arrears at the present moment.

3.00 p.m.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: The state of the arrears at the moment is $806,995.30.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: What was the original amount so that we can know whether anybody has paid at all?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: The total amount was $1,195,412.06. Those who received cows during 1971 and 1972 have been paying back on their amounts because there was a deduction scheme and a milk recording scheme and some people owe less than $100 because of these deductions. As a matter of fact, there is a Miss Judith Hart who over paid by 43 cents; another man owed $16.85 up to March 1978; obviously by now this would have been paid off.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would state whether these cows went to large dairy holders or to peasants in this country or to people in the higher financial bracket?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: They went to large holders and to a few small holders; mostly they were in large numbers, but in some cases a person had one or two cows.

Mr. GREAVES: Can the Minister indicate whether Dowding Estates received some of these cows?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: That name does not appear on the list, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. GREAVES: Can the Minister tell us whether cows were purchased on the trip on which he accompanied the former Minister of Agriculture to Canada?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I do not understand what the hon. member means if the cows were purchased on the trip I accompanied whom? The former Minister?

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, to put it another way, can the Minister indicate whether he ever accompanied the former Minister of Agriculture to Canada with a view to purchasing cows?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I went to Canada about two days before the delegation arrived and there I met the former Minister of Agriculture, yes, and it was on a buying trip for cows.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question: Is the Minister in a position to tell this Honourable House why it has taken him 22 months to shed light on this situation regarding the cows?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member as a responsible member of the Opposition have been following the proceedings of this House he would have known that I raised this matter in my first estimates in this Chamber.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary: The Minister answered yes to a question that he went to Canada concerning the buying of cows. Would the Minister say whether he as a private individual participated in any way in the buying of cows for the Government to hand out to its friends or anybody else?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the answer to that is no.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister explain in some details the system devised for the paying of the money for the purchase of these cows? As I understand it the purchase of the cows was somehow tied up with the selling of milk to the Pine Hill Dairy, and the revolving fund was supposed to be set up by the Pine Hill Dairy to farmers and the Ministry. I wonder if the Minister could give us detailed information as to (a) whether the revolving fund was set up in that way and (b) whether the money was used by the Pine Hill Dairy for this purpose and whether the money is available in an account? Can he give us the details on that?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the member has asked more than one question but I will try to answer: The terms and conditions were:

Repayment to be by equal annual instalments over a period of five years in the case of local milch cows.

The repayment period in the case of imported cattle to be six years for in-calf heifers and seven years for yearlings.

A period of grace of approximately one year to be granted in respect of imported in-calf heifers, and a period of approximately two years in respect of yearlings before the commencement of repayments which should be in April 1971 and April 1972 respectively.

Interest to be at the rate of 3% per annum;

If repayment is not made within 15 days of the date on which an instalment falls due, the outstanding balance should immediately become payable and collectible through the court, if necessary.

Any authorised officer of the Ministry of Agriculture to be permitted to inspect any of the cows at any reasonable time.

The purchaser to maintain each cow to the satisfaction of the Chief Agricultural Officer or the outstanding balance would immediately become payable.

A Government Veterinary Officer would be called in if the cow becomes sick.

Any cow purchased under the scheme to be artifically inseminated with semen approved by the Chief Agricultural Officer.

A cow must not be disposed of without the prior approval of the Chief Agricultural Officer.

The registration papers to be retained by the Ministry of Agriculture until payment for the cow has been completed.

In the case of the death of a cow, the carcass should not be disposed of without inspection and

the issue of a certificate by a Government Veterinary Officer showing the cause of death.

The above conditions to remain in force until payment for the cow has been completed.

Any person wishing to obtain an imported heifer under the scheme would be required to make a deposit of 10% of the cost of the heifer before an order is placed for the animal by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Any participant in the scheme must be a supplier of milk to the Milk Plant and must agree to permit the Milk Plant to make deductions of any agreed amount from his four-weekly milk cheques to meet payment of his instalments.

Participants in the scheme would be required to participate in the milk recording project.

Those were the conditions. The revolving fund has never been used for any purpose. As far as I know it is only within the last six months that we have got the fund to work.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister state whether or not he at any time between 1971 and now received for himself or a company with which he was associated any cows through this scheme?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I have never owned a cow. I have resigned from a company with which I was connected and I do not know anything about cows. I keep two horses.

3.10 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is the end of question time. We now go on to Private Members' Business.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: We are now on Private Members' Business. I want to ask the indulgence of hon. members to deal with a very important Resolution on the Order Paper and to allow the Cabinet a little time to equip itself with a collective view, or alternatively a decision that will not present a collective view on these matters. In respect of the first, I anticipate that during the course of this week the Cabinet will consider both the terms of the Resolution and the speeches made in support of it. I myself have a general interest in it, as I think hon. members will recall, but we would like a little longer.

The second Resolution is one by the hon. member for St. Lucy. We would like a little longer than a week because we are now reviewing the sentiments behind the Resolution and having some estimates made as to its actuarial implications; and the Government, as an expression of a political party also want to say something. I wonder if the hon. member would, in all the circumstances, wait a little time before he starts the debate. I do not think that he will be disappointed.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that the Resolution before the House is not my Resolution. I want to be sure that I understand the Prime Minister correctly. I recognise that a matter like this involves certain actuarial projections. However, I want to make it abundantly clear that I consider my Resolution to be of the utmost importance; and I hope that this is not a tack by the Government to make an announcement that they are in agreement before we discuss it in this Chamber.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member would refer to the Debates of this House he would see that on an earlier occasion I said that this very matter of unemployment benefit under the National Security Scheme would form part of the policy of the Barbados Labour Party. So the hon. member would be aware that both sides of the House support the principle of what he is saying. It is very reasonable to argue that, having heard what I said in here that he brought the Resolution to upstage us. I give the hon. member the assurance that if the Government is going to make any announcement, it will be made in the course of the debate. It will not be stated in anticipation. We have too much respect for the House and too much respect for hon. members who bring certain fundamental matters here, Sir, to seek to do something like that. We will not do, as Mr. Tudor did in 1971 when I had down a Resolution calling for a division for income tax purposes of incomes of husbands and wives; and after frustrating us in our efforts to have it debated, it was then announced in the Budget. I give a pledge that we will not resort to that type of cheap political gimmick.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I want to be sure, just what the Prime Minister is asking for. Is he asking the House to postpone both of these Resolutions in order to give the Cabinet a chance to come to us with a collective view on both Resolutions? I was slightly off when he talked about putting it in the manifesto. I was not quite sure which manifesto he was putting it in. I know that in the current exercise that is going on outside this Chamber, Sir, that one of the candidates.....

Mr. SPEAKER: That has nothing to do with what is before us.

Mr. TAITT: When he said manifesto I was a little concerned. Now that he has confirmed it, I am trying to find out if I will have an opportunity to speak on

the Resolution which I had every intention of speaking on. I will accommodate the Government in these circumstances.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be resumed.

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

Mr. ALLEYNE: Mr. Speaker, I have to crave your indulgence to deal with Petitions which ought to have been dealt with earlier.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed with them.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that Petitions be now resumed.

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

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

PETITIONS

Mr. ALLEYNE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask leave of this Honourable Chamber to give notice on behalf of the Barbados Horticultural Society for leave to present a Private Members' Bill to amend the Barbados Horticultural Society Act, 1928. The Petition is signed by the President and the Honorary Secretary of the Society.
3.20 p.m.

What it seeks to do, Mr. Speaker, is to increase the value of estate property which the society is capable of holding to the maximum of $500,000. I believe that it is the practice to read the Prayer of the petition, and I proceed to do so with you leave.

> "And Your Petitioner will therefore pray and await the pleasure of Your Honour in requesting your indulgence that this Petition may be presented to and received by the Honourable the House of Assembly as may suit the wishes and convenience of Your Honour and the Honourable the House of Assembly, and that the Honourable the House of Assembly may grant leave to proceed with a Bill to amend the Barbados Horticultural Society Act, 1928–5 to enable the Society to increase the value of real and personal estate and property which the Society is capable of holding to a maximum of $500,000."

I believe that the Petition is couched in the sort of language that the Standing Orders contemplate, and without further ado I am asking Your Honour's leave to proceed with the Petition.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Petition, I am advised, with respect to its wording, is in order, and I order that it lie upon the Table without question put.

Mr. ALLEYNE: I beg to move that the promoters be allowed to proceed.

Mr. WARD: I beg to second that.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

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

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

RESOLUTION TO ACQUIRE LAND AT WOTTON, CHRIST CHURCH

Mr. SPEAKER: When the sitting was suspended, the hon. member for St. Michael South East was addressing the Chair.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, this Government is committed to providing at least 800 homes in any one year of our period of office, but Mr. Speaker, contrary to what people have been saying, we as a Government did not say in our manifesto that we are going to build as a Government 800 houses per year. What we did say according to the manifesto is that we will encourage the building of 800 houses per year. That does not mean that as a Government we do not have a part to play in providing the 800 houses. Mr. Speaker, this Government has taken certain decisions so that mortgage companies and building societies will now be encouraged to build and provide homes for the families in Barbados. This Government's record is well known and I can point to one in particular, and it is that this Government on assuming office was able to make available to those needing it a mortgage to a maximum of $50,000. We raised it from the maximum level as it was then of $32,000 to $50,000, and we have also made it possible for families or potential home buyers to be able to deposit a mere 10%.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this has been a tremendous improvement; it has been a benefit, a step in the right direction, because before it was not possible for

potential home buyers to deposit a mere 10%, and people in this country ought to realise that this is a Government which understands the needs of people; we understand how important it is for people to own a home, and that is why we have been doing everything. But we have not stopped there, Mr. Speaker. We are trying to explore every avenue whereby house-building and house ownership can be encouraged. I would at this point like to point out that there are people who presently rent from the National Housing Corporation; they have been paying rents over the years, but property as well as home ownership is now becoming the norm of the society, and this Government has set out to encourage people to purchase the spot of land on which they now live and rent. This is what we would term as a forward step because Barbadians like to know that they own something, and this Government is offering them, if possible, to own the lots. We have been making surveys of the various estates and lands which are now owned by the National Housing Corporation. We will survey them with a view to having available plots and conveyances so that those people who now rent will be able to purchase.

Mr. Speaker, I must also point out that those people who now rent from the National Housing Corporation would find that the amount of money which they have to pay for a square foot of land is considerably small; it does not exceed 40 cents per square foot; so you will see that contrary to what people have been saying, we have understood what it means to encourage the poor people to own their own spots, and we are doing everything in our power to expedite this situation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said, we understand moreso that people even in the country areas are complaining that they want roads and other services, and this Government has been looking into the possibility of bringing a proper Tenantry Act. In fact, we have had a Committee set up and the introduction of the Tenantry Act will shortly be here.
3.30 p.m.

It is our aim to make sure that people who live on tenantry lands are given proper facilities and at least the consolation that they have got proper roads and proper services. We want to give them the assurance that they too can benefit from the proper plans which this Government has got for house owners of this community.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure this Hon. Chamber that this Government will be doing everything to build more and more houses to meet the great demand for housing. We understand the problem, but you will see within the next couple of months our plans, positive as they are, visible signs of our progressive plans for housing. As I said, the Ministry is doing everything in its power, we are going out there week after week trying to find land on which we can build houses. That has been the job of the Ministry of Housing and Lands. We have been looking in the St. Michael area, we have been looking at the Villa Road lands, Valerie lands, adjacent lands in Villa Road, in Clapham, in Bank Hall, we have been looking at areas in St. George, in Christ Church, in St. Peter, we are looking for land on which we can build houses.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no Wotton in St. Peter.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, but as I said, the policy of house building, the policy of providing housing accommodation for the masses in this country is well taken by the Ministry of Housing and Lands, and we want to assure this Hon. House that we are confident that we will attain our goal, because the incentives are there and we are seeing a new thrust in the construction sector. This confidence is visible in the construction sector, and we will be able to achieve that goal as set out in our Manifesto of providing a minimum of 800 houses per year for families of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, I want to lend my support to this Resolution which I hope that all hon. members will lend their support to. We want to acquire the 2½ acres of land to make it available to the National Housing Corporation to put up a further 108 units. Let me say this, that we will not rest until we can satisfy the majority, if not all, of the housing needs in this country.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what it is that the hon. member who has just sat down, the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Housing, what is it that has him so confused today, because I believe that he is so confused that he does not even know how confused he is. But let me demonstrate what I mean. Just before we broke for lunch today the hon. member was making very forcibly a point that the Barbados Labour Party could not supply the housing needs, at least the promise which they had made to build the 800 houses or whatsoever it was they had said that they were going to build, and he was trying to make an excuse for that. He came back in here after lunch, after having, I suppose, been given some directions, to indicate that the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party did not say that they were going to build 800 houses but that they would facilitate the building of 800 houses, and he ended up by saying that they will not rest until they are able to provide the 800 houses as stated in the Manifesto. That is the extent of the confusion of the hon. member.

What is even more interesting, Mr. Speaker, and I am submitting that he as Parliamentary Secretary in Housing, and no other member on that side recognise that kind of interpretation which could be given to what is contained in the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party when I

deal with it until the Prime Minister got on television – I believe it was in December when he was questioned by one newspaper editor about housing – and when he was cornered he said 'our Manifesto never said that we were going to build 800 houses but that we would create the climate for 800 houses.' Now, let us look, Mr. Speaker, at the Manifesto, because we are really discussing the Wotton development, and since the Parliamentary Secretary has chosen to, as it were, widen the berth and to talk about housing, I am sure that I have that kind of trust in your.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order. The hon. member really must quote me correctly. I was neither cornered, nor did I speak, as I recall it, about creating the climate. It is very dangerous to quote what you think people said on television. I referred the questioner to the Manifesto to see exactly what was written down there, just as he is going to refer the House.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I believe that I have enough sense to recognise that if I say that the Prime Minister was cornered that I am not quoting him, so how could I misquote him if I say he was cornered? I say that he was cornered because when he was asked about the deficiency in the housing programme, and furthermore, Mr. Speaker, you will recall that the Chairman of the National Housing Corporation, I believe a couple of days before that, went on television and apologised to the nation for not being able to fulfil the promise which the Barbados Labour Party made in its Manifesto. That is a matter of record, it is a matter of history, it is a question of fact, so that the question of misquoting cannot at all arise, and certainly I can really understand the confusion of the hon. member who is supposed to be the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Housing, he just does not know what is going on or what is in the Manifesto. But the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party is a very interesting one on housing, because it says as follows, and I quote:

> "The Barbados Labour Party believes that every Barbadian has the right to decent housing at reasonable cost. The Party will therefore, on being returned to power, embark on a programme for the building of at least 800 houses per year."

The Democratic Labour Party also believes that every Barbadian has the right to decent housing at reasonable cost. As a matter of fact, the record of the Democratic Labour Party will demonstrate this is no uncertain terms, so that we are one on that.

"The Party will therefore, on being returned to power, embark on a programme for the building of at least 800 houses per year." Now, when we examine this, what are we going to find? You see, it is couched in the kind of language, Mr. Speaker, to convey the impression that the Barbados Labour Party Government would be, through the National Housing Corporation, building 800 houses. That is the language it is couched in, to convey the impression that the Barbados Labour Party will be building 800 houses, but we understand now what they mean, that they will facilitate and assist in building houses, so that if for one reason or another I had money to build a house and I got a loan from the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation, that that would be included in the 800, so that anybody at all in Barbados who is building a house, whether out of their own savings or whether with money borrowed from the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation or anywhere like that, that would be included in the 800, but we understand now what you mean by this.

But, you see, Mr. Speaker, this as far as I am concerned is another promise of the Barbados Labour Party in the last campaign which is unfulfilled. So much for that.

Let me, Mr. Speaker, deal now with the Wotton project. I must confess that I know very little about the Wotton project, but when the Barbados Labour Party came to power in 1976 on 2nd September, I believe that within a month of coming into office we saw the Minister of Housing on television condemning the Wotton project. 3.40 p.m.

And today, as a matter of fact, ever since that condemnation, one would have expected the project to have come to an end and that the Government would not have continued building houses there because this was probably the worst place in Barbados for houses – that was the impression I got, and the impression a number of people in Barbados got from the position taken by the Minister of Housing. But house building is still going on. I pass there from time to time and see houses going up. This is a tribute to the Democratic Labour Party and we are now privileged today to hear the same Barbados Labour Party that criticised the Wotton project come here and ask for permission to acquire more land at Wotton. So after all Wotton was not that bad.

I understand from the Parliamentary Secretary that at certain parts of Wotton the soil is fairly deep and not good for building purposes. I understand that that part of Wotton was intended for a playing field for the Water Street School *(Asides)* I am telling you what I understand; if you know something different you can say so. But to hear the Parliamentary Secretary for Housing and the member for St. Michael South East one must really wonder if they know about housing or building. I do not know very much about building myself but I am sure, Mr. Speaker, you would appreciate that if you bought land and found soil only to a depth of four feet you would be happy because it would mean that the cost which you would normally have had to dig for

foundation you would no longer have that problem. But the Prime Minister was making a big noise about four feet of soil – that the Democratic Labour Party bought land with four feet depth of soil and this was the worst thing that could have happened. What nonsense? What kind of Parliamentary Secretary we have to get up and make such a statement? This is utter nonsense.

We have to examine this matter in proper perspective. There is no point in trying to score cheap political points in this matter. Housing in my view is too grave a matter; it is one of the fundamental needs in this society, and I am in the process of drafting a Resolution and bringing it in here to ask for housing for St. Lucy. Housing in our view is fundamental. It is one of the basic human needs which have got to be satisfied, and I do not think anyone should be attempting to score cheap political points on this but rather should get on with the job of providing housing for the people of this country. That is what the Democratic Labour Party has always been concerned with and the record of the Democratic Labour Party in the area of housing is a proud one. If the Barbados Labour Party can get 800 houses built a year as the people expect they would be doing, we will be happy since housing is an area that need some serious attention.

So it would seem to me that we in the Democratic Labour Party would not be opposed to this Resolution to acquire the land as outlined, since it is a continuation of a project started by the Democratic Labour Party because we recognise there was a need in that area and this was one of the better areas to develop, and obviously the Barbados Labour Party realizes this was one of the projects which in their saner moments they should not abandon. So we are very much in agreement with this, but what I dislike is the attempt at cheap politics not supported by any facts or argument as we had in here this afternoon by the Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Housing.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to be very long over this and I am not getting into the minituae of whether the rock was found at four feet or indeed, as I believe that water was found at five feet; I think that was the real complaint and problem. But I want to say something about housing and the inter-relationship between Government and private housing. One of the mistakes made in this country when the Barbados Labour Party undertook as an emergency to build a steady 300 houses a year – a target which still has not been reached and that was more than 20 years ago, the mistake was made to assume that you could divorce public housing from private housing and private housing from public housing. The housing needs of a community are total; there is not the position of "I need a Government house" or "I need a private house". The man who wants a house for $30,000 or who can afford to pay $300 or $400 a month is not interested in whether his loan comes from the Government, from the Mortgage Finance Company, the Housing Corporation or from a private bank, a building society, a Trust Company or whatever; he just wants a particular type of house. Going to the other extreme, people who have chattel houses prefer to be in a government land scheme but the fact is, as with the development at Cane Garden St. Thomas, private persons have shown that they can sell or rent out land for chattel houses and get a huge market for it. Of course at Cane Garden there has been other problems of a political nature and we now see that what was perhaps intended to be a bungalow development has become a moveable house development. But it is clear that there is a demand, so it does not matter whether it is private or public housing, and it is within this context that the 800 houses pledge should be seen. I remember how Mr. Harold MacMillan whose political career up to 1953 was characterized as having the right connections in Britain suddenly became characterized for great ability to carry out a programme. The Conservatives promised in 1951 that they would build 300,000 houses a year and Mr. MacMillan was made Minister of Housing. He did not seek only the local authorities such as the London County Council to build the houses, but called together all the private builders in England.

3.50 p.m.

I am speaking about an entire integrated house building programme with allocations of material, notification of housing staffs and so on, put together in the British Ministry of Housing, and McMillan did in fact achieve by 1953 his 300,000 houses. Now, this is what the Barbados Labour Party is hoping to achieve. We are undoubtedly meeting difficulties because this is a new concept to the Ministry of Housing and the National Housing Corporation. If there is to be an integration with the private sector in house building – and we are only in a limited way beginning to get it off the ground – I have given instructions that the Town and Country Planning Department must prepare legislation or regulations under which all housing starts will have to be notified to them, so that we will know at any moment how many houses are being built in Barbados.

It is hoped that the Ministry of Housing will monitor very carefully the supply of building material; and also the supply of building labour and manpower, a survey of which has been commissioned, and which we hope will soon be available for study by Ministries, can be distributed so as to give the best possible integrated approach to house building. Indeed, we are trying to think in terms of making sure that the Polytechnic supports by its training programme what we believe will turn out to be building and construction workers by the end of this year, and perhaps certainly more so by the middle of next year. We are trying to make the Ministry of Housing more than a mere administrative authority for

the National Housing Corporation. We are trying to get it interested in Housing throughout Barbados.

Now, how do we influence private Housing? We are trying to achieve this by having more funds available for house building, and at the same time having them available on better terms. We have promoted an issue of housing bonds which will provide more funds for the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation. This very morning I met with the President of the National Bank who informed me that we are now in a position to restructure the Board and make it more representative, as it was previously dominated by the Commonwealth Development Corporation who owned the majority of share holding. We have now bought the Mortgage Finance Corporation and we are running it as a subsidiary company of the Barbados National Bank; and I trust to appoint the present Manager of the National Housing Corporation as one of its directors so that there can be an inter-relationship, since many of the Housing Corporation's house building programmes are finances through mortgage finance; and yet there was no real close relationship.

We are also encouraging private and semi-public organisations such as the Barbados Workers Union – we still stand by the pledge to assist the Barbados Workers Union with its Mangrove Scheme with funds coming from appropriate sources to enable the workers' representatives to carry out a Housing programme for their members. When the Town and Country Planning legislation is complete, we believe that we will be able to monitor – at least we want to monitor the construction of houses at the most private level. I mean people who are in a position one way or another to go to the bank and get perhaps overdraft facilities to build a house, and get long term financing at a later stage. There are a few people who are in that fortunate position still, Sir, in Barbados.

We want to draw these strings together, and then we will be able to build up to this 800 houses a year target, and ensure that this is met, and, I hope, exceeded by 1980 or 1981. Anybody who reads our manifesto will see that right next to talking about building 800 houses a year, we said that the necessary steps will therefore be taken to direct finance towards mortgages for owner-occupied building, and in this way provide a badly needed stimulus to schemes for privately financed Housing. This is the approach that I have taken, and it was made clear in the manifesto. It is a misrepresentation of the manifesto to suggest that at any stage we were thinking only in terms of construction programmes to be carried out by the National Housing Corporation. You only have to read what we say about the 90 per cent mortgages. We have that, Sir. Read what we say about the importation of building material. Read what we say generally about tax concessions to persons who are prepared to lend money for housing projects, and it will be appreciated that we are talking of an integrated housing programme which in the end is the only sort that will satisfy people fully and entirely. As to the details, I am sure that the Chairman of the National Housing Corporation, the hon. member for St. Philip North will deal with them; and I am sure that the Leader of the House is sufficiently familiar with these matters to answer hon. members' queries; but the policy context within which we have framed our Housing policy – our Housing programme – has to be understood firmly by hon. members.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to speak on this particular matter; but after hearing the Prime Minister in his intervention, I think it is appropriate that I should speak because I consider his intervention to be a very important one; and perhaps embedded in his statement is a groping on the part of the Barbados Labour Party Government for a way of dealing with what is one of the major problems in this country – the problem of providing adequate housing for the people of this country.

I will come back to that theme a little later, but in respect specifically of the Resolution that is before us, I would certainly like to know what are the steps being taken by the Government in order to ensure that an integrated development takes place at this Wotton development. I believe that the Minister in introducing this Resolution did refer to the fact not only that terraced housing and wooden housing and other types of housing would be provided, but that the intention was that certain spots would be let for shops and maybe for other developments as well.

4.00 p.m.

I believe too that he did indicate that some 220 houses are intended to be constructed at this particular site, and I think that is a sizeable development, just as sizeable as the plans which the Democratic Labour Party had for the development of the area. In the proposals going back to 1974, as I recall them, some four acres of land were to be provided without cost to the Government to assist in the development. I believe the only charges which the Government would have been called upon to pay for these four acres of land would have been the transfer tax and other fees for the Attorneys-at-Law and so on, but in that over-all project the Democratic Labour Party had proposed that a secondary school would be provided because you were developing or the intention was that a new community would be developed in that area. There is a large development at Silver Hill; there is this development taking place at Wotton, there are several developments in Parish Land area and further to the East. There are other developments as well; so there is a lot of housing development taking place in Christ Church, and they are now in the process of amalgamating the Boys' Foundation and Girls' Foundation schools, but in our

thinking and in our development it was considered that at least two additional schools should be provided for Christ Church, and I would like to know what are the proposals within the concept of the development of this Wotton area and within the concept of the expanding housing development in Christ Church.

I would like to know what provisions are being made to ensure that the children in the Christ Church area would be given additional secondary school facilities, and I do hope that in replying the Government would be able to indicate what the proposals are, because just as the Minister in introducing this measure could point out and demonstrate the need for other facilities apart from straight housing in order that the community needs can be met, I believe that the educational needs constitute an important aspect of this particular development.

I indicated that the Prime Minister seems to be groping for a way of delivering the promises in terms of additional housing for the people of this country, and I think quite rightly he has indicated that it is a matter for both private and public agencies to be even more deeply involved in terms of the basic needs approach to the problems of this country. I think that if this particular line is followed, what the people of this country will want to know would be what are these steps that are to be taken to stimulate the housing sector in order that more money could become available. It was in the Democratic Labour Party's manifesto for the 1976 general elections that housing was put at the centre of development in terms of the proposals which we placed before the people of this country. Housing, because of its ramifications into the other sectors of the economy was placed at the centre of the developmental strategies, and I would certainly hope that the Barbados Labour Party would bring it to the centre of development, and that that Government will tell the people of this country what proposals are being devised in order to stimulate the housing sector so that there would be more funds flowing not only from the public sector but from the private sector as well in this area of housing, but not only flowing but flowing at a rate of interest which would enable the potential house owners to be able to embark on house building projects and house purchasing projects. I think this is a very vital matter and it is significant, I believe, that the Prime Minister should have spoken in the way that he did, because I think it is an acceptance of the fact and a turn around in Government policy, let me put it that way, into the realisation that Government cannot do it all by themselves, and if that particular approach were expanded into the management of the affairs of the country in other sectors, then I believe that this country will get moving again, because part of the present stagnation in this country, and no one will deny there is stagnation in the economy, is that the economy needs to be moved, and that is why I said that the Prime Minister's intervention, brief as it was, I think was a groping to find some ways and means of trying to stimulate the economy, because it is only through such stimulation that we are going to get increased employment and an upturn in business activity and a general opening up of developmental activities in this country. All the talk about the foreign reserves not ever being as healthy as they are at this present moment would have no meaning unless there is a stimulation of the economy and an upturn in business activity, and I believe that housing development such as this at Wotton – and the one thing that the Government has not said is that this was a good scheme by the previous administration to develop this particular housing project.

I believe that my colleague, the hon. member for St. Lucy, was indicating that this was a good scheme, it is a housing scheme and it is one which the Government has not said they are not going to proceed with. I believe they said it at the start, but then wiser counsels prevailed and they realised that whatever they said was bad then, they are realising on closer examination that it was a good scheme, and if they found an area in a large scheme which was unsuitable for building, if they have discovered that, I think they are wise to come and say we had to buy an additional area of land in order to provide this additional housing. There are problems in housing construction whatever the depth of the soil. I would not go into that particular point, but they went ahead and built on a site in Country Road and ran into problems. So however careful you are, you are going to have some problems.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the person replying for the Government to indicate what are the arrangements in keeping with the general statement made by the Minister introducing this measure, what are the provisions for additional educational facilities for this vastly expanding area.

4.10 p.m.

What are the provisions for additional educational facilities for this vastly expanding area? I hope that in the reply that particular information would be supplied.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member who just sat down made some references to school development in the Wotton area as part of the integrated development of the area. It is interesting hearing that coming from him, because in the past the Democratic Labour Party as a Government had been building up residential areas without concomitant ancillary facilities, and the Eden Lodge area is a case in point. The hon. member was the Minister of Education at the time they were building up the Eden Lodge development and he made no provision for schools in that area, and the result is it is the worst area of overcrowding for schools anywhere in Barbados, and now he comes today to make this point about the integrated development and provision

of all facilities in the area of Wotton, and he raises the question of plans for the building of a secondary school at Wotton.

In the 1973–77 Development Plan of the Democratic Labour Party there was provision for the building of a secondary school at Wotton and it was shelved by the hon. member who just sat down. On the 23rd July, 1973 at 10.30 in the morning the hon. member who just sat down went on a site visit at Wotton with other members of his Ministry and the Ministry of Lands with a view to building a secondary school on a site of 11 acres in that area, and in 1975 the same hon. member wrote on file that all plans for construction of a school at Wotton should be stopped, and now he has got the nerve to come in here today and ask this Government about its plans for Wotton, well we will tell you what our plans are for Wotton.

They made some valid points, it is an area that is constantly being built up, and we feel as you have said – theoretically, because when you had a chance to do something about it you did not – we feel that you must have integrated development, you cannot have a whole lot of houses going up in a district putting more and more people in these areas without providing these facilities, so we of this Government will build a school at Wotton, the same one that the hon. member for St. Michael South said should be scrapped. We know we need a school there, and the hon. member has heard repeatedly that we will build a secondary school in the area. It is that sort of contribution that ill-befits the hon. member. I always feel that he is the more responsible one over there, but whenever he feels he can slip through one of these points he tries to do so, but do not do it with education because I have all the answers in this regard.

At the same time when the hon. member was pushing in his Ministry for a school at Wotton, a submission was made by the hon. member to Cabinet all the way back in 1973 that there should be construction of four secondary schools, that what was needed in Barbados was four secondary schools. That was all the way back in 1973, and from 1973 to 1976 September when they lost the Government they did nothing about it, so let me tell you that I have already completed a secondary school within 18 months after I was in power, and I have started another secondary school two or three months ago in St. James, and the hon. member will understand also that he will get the school at Wotton, some time in the very near future. I do not propose to do like hon. members on the other side. As I said, it was in the 1973–77 Development Plan of theirs and nothing came of it, and there was provision made in the 1974–75 Estimates for construction of a secondary school at Wotton, they had a figure of $5,000, I guess to start with the preliminary work on that, and then the following year the money was taken out of the Estimates. How can the hon. member seriously come in here and make the type of point he made in that regard?

He also had in the very same Cabinet Paper of 1973 a submission that Cabinet should consider an extension to Parkinson School as part of the overall provision of school places – I think the figure was 4,000 school places – for children in Barbados. Since then we have given you an extension to Parkinson School, all this within 18 months of being in Government. We have now given Parkinson School an entirely new campus on Two Mile Hill. I wonder if the hon. member does not understand these things, and towards the provision of finding the total 4,000 places we have done substantial extensions to existing grammar schools. We are doing an extension to Lodge School, one at Harrison College is done, we are doing an extension right now at Queen's College, one at St. Michael's Girls' School, one at Alexandra School. How much do you want in two years? If the hon. member had stayed on the wicket about housing, it would not have been necessary for me to get up, because I do feel strongly that one of the more burning social problems in Barbados is a lack of housing. I live in a constituency that exhibits some of the best and some of the worst houses in Barbados, I live in a constituency where people are always crying out and constantly reminding me that they need houses of a certain kind, in fact, of all kinds, and if the hon. member had stayed on that wicket there would have been no need for me to get up, and I am joining all hon. members of this Chamber who point out that there is a crying need for greater house building in Barbados. I do not think that this needs any partisan point of view, I do not believe that you can score any points on that, the Democratic Labour Party did not build houses to suit the needs of people in Barbados, and they cannot expect that in the space of 20 months you are going to have a building revolution in Barbados that everybody will be housed, but this Government is committed to the serious tackling of the housing shortages in Barbados and there is no way on which you can score points on the other side on this, you do not revolutionise housing in such a short period of time.

My colleagues understand where I stand on this issue. Unlike the hon. member over there, I am not afraid to tell anybody on my side whether I agree or disagree with them, I feel strongly that this question of housing will have to be a top priority of any Government, and anybody on my side who disagrees with me will constantly hear from me, and that is not the style of members on the other side, what they did was put their tails between their legs every time the big chief spoke and gave in, but I do not operate that way, so as far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, the general trend of the debate seems to show some unanimity on the view that housing should be tackled and tackled soon, that it is a serious social problem.

But I do feel that the hon. member for St. Michael South should be reluctant so long as I am sitting down opposite and dealing with education to come and make that type of point such as he has made today, because the evidence is abundant that whatever failed to happen at Wotton in respect of secondary school building was a result not only of actions taken by the Democratic Labour Party but by the hon. member himself who took the decision in 1975 to shelve all plans for building a secondary school at Wotton in Christ Church.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I understand there are still certain technical difficulties with the amplifying equipment in relation to Your Honour's microphone which can now be solved if we suspend for fifteen minutes, and I beg to move that this House do now suspend for fiteeen minutes to allow them to change the wire.

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

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

On resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is now resumed. The hon. member for St. Philip North.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I think it is but fair that we put the whole question of housing in relation to Wotton in its proper perspective. As early as 27th October, 1975, the Housing Development Officer of the Ministry of Housing and Lands was informed that between five and eight acres of land owned by Mr. Trevor Ashby should be acquired for development. It was recommended to the Ministry that it might not be possible to use a fair proportion of the 34 acres originally designated for housing, because soil test, had revealed that there was likely to be serious foundation problems. It was clear that the land at Wotton was good agricultural land and to take such a vast portion of agricultural land and divert it to housing development was a dangerous proposition having regard to the constant diminution of agricultural acreage by the Democratic Labour Party between the years 1970 and 1976. Despite that, and despite the recommendations and warnings, the then Government went ahead and planned the Wotton Estate and put in roads. The roads alone cost over $200,000. I can reveal at this stage that to put in water in the area is going to cost $186,500. But to put in the roads alone was over $200,000 and that is not to speak of the money that had to be paid to the planning consultants Gill and Lashley. When the Government changed in 1976, the Minister of Housing found that substantial road development had taken place in Wotton, and it was a question then of whether to abandon the whole scheme and throw away $200,000 as money down the drain as at Warrens on the crematorium where the then Prime Minister admitted it was a mistake to build it. So we found ourselves in a position of whether to regard the money as thrown away or having regard to the fact that such large expenditure has been incurred to try to find some means of supplying a basic need by the provision of shelter for the people of this country. As I understood the Minister to say in October, 1976, he was not satisfied that this was the best place for a housing development and he would have to look at it again to determine whether to continue with it or abandon it. That is the essence of what the Minister said in October, 1976. It was decided that we would continue because the infrastructure had been laid and the preparatory work done. But for those who boast on the Opposition benches that Wotton is an ideal project, I would like to refer to the "Nation" newspaper of last year November. There was a flood in this country on the night of October 30 or 31, and for more than a week, where the housing development was to take place at Wotton there was a lake which formed an allurement for the youngsters of the area. Wotton, Water Street and Lodge Road, which proved that no matter what they say Wotton is still not the best place for a housing development and perhaps I should clarify that even further – a certain part of Wotton and especially that part bordering on the main road is not the best place for housing development. Further inland, more towards the brow, that is good for housing development; that will give no foundation problem. I understand that the Parliamentary Secretary by a slip of the tongue mentioned about foundations at four feet. Anybody going up there now would see that in some places the foundations are down almost twelve feet, and there is the system that Mr. Ward is using to prevent us from having to go even further. In some cases we are putting down foundation without even hitting rock, because a certain amount of expertise has been introduced into this scheme; the engineers and building technicians have discussed the question of floating foundations, and that has saved us from having to go right down. The next time there is a debate on housing I will bring the figures and show what it is costing us per week because of the depth we have to go; but I believe that I can say that the wage bill per week now is over $11,000, and this is on the terrace unit; I have not got to the commercial site yet.

I am glad to hear the hon. member for St. Michael South concede that "at Wotton and above a lot of housing development is taking place," and I am going to tie this up with what the Manifesto does say and what the Prime Minister said earlier today. The

Manifesto said that we would embark on a programme of building 800 houses a year; it does not say the National Housing Corporation. We recognize that the public sector has to play its part and the private sector, and we gave examples of how we would hope to stimulate the private sector. As recently as the last Budget debate the Prime Minister spoke of housing development bonds. Within six months of our coming into power the limits on mortgages has moved from $32,000 to $50,000; why not talk about that? The hon. member for St. Michael South also said that housing was at the centre of the DLP Manifesto policy in 1976. Housing had to be at the centre of the DLP policy in 1976 because in the St. Philip bye-election campaign I started to deal some blows on the DLP housing policy from the Central Bank report of 1975 which showed that 109 houses had been built in 1975 and no Government could feel satisfied in an election year with a record of only 109 houses and so they had to do something to give the public an impression that they were serious about increasing the provision of housing in this country. But their record over the years has shown that even if housing was central in their thoughts they made no progress in their actions, because statistics over the years will reveal that only once in the history of this country have more than 500 houses been built in a year, and 500 houses were built in the days when the present Minister of Housing was Minister under our old administration in the 1950s.
4.45 p.m.

Not since 1955 or 1956 have more than 500 houses been built in any single year in Barbados. Now at Wotton, Sir, we have an integrated development. At Wotton we have both the commercial and the non-commercial development. The non-commercial development is well underway; and the majority of those houses should be ready by October this year. The commercial development envisages 50 two-bedroom concrete houses, each 540 square feet. Sixty nine two-bedroom wooden houses, each 480 square feet, and we estimate, Sir, that the cost of these houses will be $900,000 for the concrete houses, and $969,000 for the wooden houses – the sale price of these houses. The installation of water will be $52,000 on the commercial side of it. The installation of electricity about $12,000; and the same roads which they put down we have had to do over again at a cost of $25,000, which is about $1.955 thousand dollars for the total commercial development. So the estimated cost of the Wotton project, Sir, should be $1.955 thousand.

If I may give some indication as to the stages of completion, we have worked out that at the end of three months – this is on the commercial programme, – we will have 12 two-bedroom concrete and 15 two-bedroom timber completed. At the end of six months, 27 two-bedroom concrete and 35 two-bedroom timber. At the end of nine months, 50 two-bedroom concrete and 69 two-bedroom timber.

Now, of course, Mr. Speaker, with an expenditure of $1.9 million on the commercial development, it is essential that the National Housing Corporation receives cash flow on a regular basis. The National Housing Corporation has a public function, among other things, to provide housing for the people of this country; but it can only provide the housing of the magnitude and with the speed and efficiency as the people themselves allow, because, Sir, money is voted in this House of Assembly for us to carry out various programmes, on the non-commercial side. These are the rented units such as you have in Wildey, Deacon's Farm and all over the place. But unless the tenants recognise their social responsibilities as Barbadians and pay their rents, the National Housing Corporation will always be in a state of debt and arrears, and there will not be the inflow of funds at a sufficient rate to allow us to revolve this money that comes in, and channel it into further development. So the people of this country have a social obligation; and I make no apologies for saying that they must honour their obligations.

There are ways and means of dealing with people who do not honour their obligations, and we have dealt with some, very satisfactorily in Wildey. From the time we started issuing writs we found that the arrears were coming in, people were paying their rents, so that the revenue from Wildey showed a fantastic increase of more than 60 per cent in the first quarter of this year as compared with the last quarter of 1977.

Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of this Government in. housing developments, specifically initiated and seen through by this Government, to have an integrated concept. It was said in the campaign of 1976, and we intend to do it during our term of office. We do not only intend to put down the structure for somebody to live in and call that home. The Corporation has every intention with the Ministry of Housing to provide, where the land admits of it, a small community centre, certain basic shopping facilities, and if finance would allow, even a small day care centre.

This is within the housing development; because we realise that if you give a man a house, and for example, no playing field for his children and no shopping facilities close by, the man tends to internalise his values in his house and his children and becomes introspective; and you hold down the cultural, physical and psychological development of the inhabitants of the home; and so to that extent, we intend, as I have said, to have an integrated complex within the housing areas; but people must realise that Government is a continuous process; and because the D.L.P. went out of power in 1976 and had houses in various stages of completion, at

Oxnards, for example, or at Lodge Terrace, the function of a responsible Government taking over was not just to abandon them and throw away the people's money, but to continue and finish, and say well, so much for a bad job; but projects which we initiate from start in future will bear a distinctive stamp of the Barbados Labour Party. We will mark down our conception of public housing on those projects which we initiate and plan in the years to come, Sir; and I believe that the people of Barbados will be well satisfied with what the Barbados Labour Party gives in terms of public housing during our tenure of office.

Mr. Speaker, I am reminded that in the same area of public housing we have started work at Haynesville. The Minister of Labour and Community Services will no doubt be gladdened to hear that there are, I think, 75 additional units going up at Haynesville, in addition to the old estate which we have at Haynesville. We are in fact looking at our old estates to see in what way they can be expanded at the same time that we look for new ground to build new houses.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are you doing about St. Peter?

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, St. Peter in the fullness of time will see the erection of a new housing estate. How soon? Before 1981. Similarly, I have every intention – I have asked, I have requested, I have expressed my desire to the Minister of Housing to let me have a housing area in St. Philip North. It only remains for me now to cajole the Minister of Housing to give me a housing area in St. Philip North.
4.55 p.m.

I feel that perhaps there are areas in St. Joseph which could well do with a housing area, and the hon. member for St. Joseph has made representations just as Your Honour has constantly been keeping in the forefront of my mind and I have been relaying it to the Parliamentary Secretary and to the Minister your anxiety about the establishment of a housing area in St. Peter; but we will allay that anxiety.

Mr. Speaker, the National Housing Corporation is still plagued by a number of problems which we found in 1976. To get over those problems there has to be a full scale and thorough-going reorganisation of the administration of the National Housing Corporation. In recognition of that I have had Mr. John Henderson, a United Nations Expert, do an investigation into the reorganisation and management of the National Housing Corporation. His report was with me in May 1978, it is with the Minister and presumably Cabinet would have seen it in due course. In the light of that report certain reorganisational techniques will be carried out at the National Housing Corporation, and they may well come before a Bill to amend the National Housing Act. I can say that we have found at National Housing Corporation that the Act setting it up is severely deficient in several respects. It hamstrings the Corporation, it does not allow for autonomy, it does not allow for creditability; where it does allow for accountability, in the five years since the Corporation has been eestablished, the provisions allowing for accountability have not been followed.

Mr. Speaker, you will never find in this House up to now an Annual Report or Statement of Account for the National Housing Corporation since its inception going back to 1973. Nothing has ever been filed in here. Nobody who wants to undertake a study of public housing can find anything in here. I have been able to get the reports up to 1974 done, I have been able to get the accounts audited for 1974 at substantial expense to the Corporation, but the situation is not satisfactory. We have power under the Act to borrow money from commercial banks with the approval of the Minister. How can we go to any bank in Bridgetown or abroad to borrow money when we cannot show them our accounts? The first time that you are in a business and you want to go and raise money from some commercial bank, the bank manager is going to tell you let him see the balance sheet for last year, and the National Housing Corporation has not got any. I have to try to get all these things straightened out now, and despite all this we only fell behind by about 30 houses last year as compared with 1976; 265 last year and 292 in 1976. But the 265 last year, you may also remember that when the Queen was coming here out of the same vote we got from this House we had to clear a site at the Halls Road/Constitution Road juction. Out of the same money we got here we had to resite 52 people from Emmerton Lane at Clapham Park; so looking at it now in the light of all those known facts, I am not being complacent because I am very unhappy with the number of houses that we have been able to deliver, but in the light of these constraints, in the light of the general constraints of the economy of this country, we did not do too badly last year. I have already said that from 1979 you will see a new thrust in housing. I have good reason for saying that and I am not expatiating at this time. More later. And there is no point in trying to run me down either; when I am ready I will tell you.

Mr. Speaker, before I sit down I must again comment on another statement by the hon. member for St. Michael South, my very good friend. I must say he is the only member of the Opposition that I listen to in a debate. (A VOICE: Don't praise him too much!) I do not mind giving him that praise. In fact, the others have nothing to say, like the Leader; you know what they are going to say before they start, 1685, 1872, a little French, maybe a Latin phrase, an aircraft or something

to do with flying aeroplanes. That is the standard format of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: Wotton is too near to Grantley Adams Airport for a landing strip there.

Mr. SIMMONS: If you are telling me that I had better bring my plane down to land, it will take time, but the hon. member for St. Michael South made what I thought was an unfair comment in his speech in that he alleged that there was stagnation in the economy. Now assuming that he accepts the economic report which was laid in this House of Assembly some months ago, assuming he accepts the findings of the Ministry of Finance, then it shows that Barbados had a growth rate of 5%, and I well remember and you even better because I remember as a listener to the wireless when Budget Statements were made between 1971 and 1976 you were an actual participant and closer to the action than I was, but I well remember the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the former Prime Minister between 1970 and 1976 saying one of two things each year; the economy has made little progress, and in one year he said the economy made nor progress. Our economy in 1977 made a 5% progress which was better than any of the other Caribbean territories except oil-producing Trinidad, and compared very favourably, although I do not like to draw comparisons with developed and metropolitan countries, but I draw it for the sake of this argument, when you look at West Germany, England and Canada, it was West Germany that had a growth rate commensurate to Barbados'. All the others were down and that is something that the public of this country must be told, must understand, and it must be explained to them that we have been trying to set right the economic ills of this country, whether it is general economic ills or economic ills of the National Housing Corporation or the Transport Board. We have been trying to make a way for a sound economic footing before we launch off into our development programme in the various Ministries.

Mr. ALLEYNE: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution relates to land acquisition and I wanted to make a short point. I would like to find out what is the general principle behind the various acquisitions because I have a difficult problem of dealing with some of my constituents whose lands had been compulsorily acquired during the regime of the last administration, and some of these very tenants are now being asked to pay rent to the National Housing Corporation in respect of those very lands which have been acquired.
5.05 p.m.

If the policy is that lands are to be compulsorily acquired for the purpose of erecting houses, fine, but I cannot understand why land has to be acquired and then the former owners of the land find that they have become tenants. This was done prior to 1976, I would like to find out what is the intention in respect of those spots of land where that problem now exists.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I think that we can reply on behalf of the Government to a number of the queries raised. It is fairly obvious that it has taken the other side a very long time to appreciate and understand the full import of the contents of the Barbados Labour Party Manifesto, that section dealing with housing. It has only now come home to them that what they thought it meant was not what in fact it meant. It has only now come home to them that systematically, month by month, year by year, this Government is in fact carrying out the specifics of the implementation of the programme as set out in the Manifesto. Now that they understand that Government said that it would introduce measures which would have the effect, in its opinion and in its desires of producing an increase in the housing stock of this country of a minimum of 800 units per year, as a result of those measures introduced by Government, now that they understand that, I hope that they would stop misrepresenting the position of Government in relation to this matter.

Sir, we have always said when we were in Opposition, when we were in Government before, and now that we are in Government, that the housing demands of Barbados are so great, so varied, that it needs the combination of both public sector and private sector effort in order to have a change in the ratio of the amount of houses built to satisfy that demand. We said we would introduce measures. The hon. member has spoken about the re-organisation of the Housing Authority; that is only one. The Prime Minister has had to remind hon. members here today of the measures that have been taken in relation to the creation of the housing bonds, a new type of investment in which the funds will be specifically tailored to improving the flow of mortgage money via the National Housing Corporation. But there are other measures, Sir, the measure of buying over the National Mortgage Finance Company. There are other measures in the form of the financial and monetary policies which have been introduced in this country to shift bank credit from the distributive sector into the productive sectors and provide and therefore encourage banks, trust companies and insurance companies in Barbados to lend more money on the mortgage market. That is another method. I know that the Ministry of Finance – because I have had some input in this – is working on tailoring and devising a system of incentives.

What is more, Sir, parallel with this, the Ministry of the Attorney General is working on the removal of some of the bottle necks which arise from the closing of transactions in Barbados from the antiquated system of conveyancing that we have in Barbados. And I want to say here now, Sir, as far as I understand it, that legislation has to be in this Parliament very soon, and I

know that that legislation has been sent to the Barbados Bar Association. They have had full opportunity to look at the legislation, to look at the Bill, to provide their comments. This Government will not be held up by the tardiness and dilatoriness of any group of professional men in this country, and this Government will introduce the legislation, having given them an opportunity and consulting them, and giving them an opportunity to make their comments. We will not be held up if they proceed at snail's pace in sending back in their comments, we will not be, we regard that as a piece of legislation which is an indispensible tool in smoothing up the philosophy of the circulation of money in this country. There are too many transactions in this country which are held up because of a lot of bogus, nonsensical, irrational, conveyancing practices which are out-moded; too many. In addition to this, Sir, this Government has gone on record that it will encourage title insurance companies in Barbados where a small premium can be paid to get around this mumbo-jumbo of conveyancing and land transfer in Barbados.

We have challenged them on this. There was nobody who used to challenge it more than when I was in That Place, I have spent more of my time trying to point our the nonsensical anomalies which date from the mediaeval time which have no place in the twentieth century, particularly the latter half of the twentieth century. I have spent a lot of time and this Government has all the legislation ready, and it has put before the professional association and we have had the comments of the surveyors' association, we have had the comments from others, it is time that we get back comments, because the Bill will be introduced in here. You can only carry a horse to the water, you cannot make him drink, and we are under an obligation in pursuance of our policy on open Government to consult. Consultation means giving an opportunity to make a comment upon the proposed field of action.

I also want to say that there are other agencies in the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Housing itself is one of those agencies, because I cannot understand that the Opposition could ever have devised a law like the law which exists at the present moment and defines the relationship between the Minister of Housing and the Housing Authority. Never have I seen such a nonsensical, inhibitive piece of legislation as the law that the Democratic Labour Party passed. I have had the opportunity of seeing the comments made in respect of the experts that the member for St. Philip and Chairman of the Housing Authority spoke of, and I am glad to see that an independent person has looked at the legal structure setting up the Ministry of Housing and its relationship with the Housing Authority, and has come to the conclusion that it is totally unworkable and it was designed to frustrate an executive institution from carrying out its work and place in the hands of a politician. It is no wonder when we read the Sunday and the Monday papers we see how it used to work; it is no wonder. Anyway, this Government is pledged to remove that as an obstacle.

When you go now, Sir, and you look on the ground you will also see for the first time in this country banks and insurance companies, and other financial intermediaries are offering loans 20 and 25 years. We want to see it go a little further. I still feel that the ideal thing in this country, having regard to the wage earnings of people in Barbados, and their aspirations, that you really need a 30 year mortgage. I would like to see that, I would like to see more 30 year mortgages particularly for the people in the middle and lower income groups, not for any hon. members on the other side, Sir, they are well able to be able to handle a lesser mortgage.

But, Sir, that is also another aspect of this plan, and we have achieved success. Look at Chancery Lane in Christ Church. We have converted people who were pure land developers before, they only used to subdivide their land, they never built anything, but we have converted them to go a step further, that is, to provide a total housing unit ready to be moved in when and they should be backed up by a mortgage institution who will pay the developer, who will then be able to use that money to go ahead, circulate it and build more. We have a number of them in Barbados today, and I am very glad to see that at long last the policies which we preached for fifteen years in the Opposition, we are now in a position to implement and to persuade developers towards our point of view.
5.15 p.m.

That is how we will get the 800 houses; and as the Prime Minister has said, we have gone further now. We are now seeing how we can ensure that the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Housing in fact know every year what are the housing starts and what are the completions, so that we will be able to publish the figures to convince people in Barbados and the people on the other sides. It is very appropriate that I should reach this point; because I want to deal with the point made by the hon. member for St. Michael South. The hon. member, in the face of all of the evidence, gets in here and states that the economy of Barbados is stagnated. I have never seen or heard a statement which is so devoid of any factual justification than that. If I were not in the House, but in another place, I would have used other methods of describing the statement.

I say that Sir, because the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund has subjected this economy to scrutiny, and it has been proven beyond any shadow of doubt that there has been a growth in the gross national product of Barbados. There is no doubt about it. Tourism has increased, not only in numbers, but from the point of

view of Government revenue and contribution to gross domestic product, from contribution to sales, in the distributive sector of Barbados. *(Aside)* The hon. member knows that you cannot release the report of the International Monetary Fund. On the front page of the report it says very clearly "for restricted use"; but the hon. member for Christ Church West is going to release to the public this afternoon that as a result of his visit to the United States that some $7 million (U.S.) is going to flow into the Treasury of Barbados for the purpose of financing our local costs and over-run in projects. It is not new, because the hon. member may have heard it last week; but one of the background papers – do not challenge me. I have the papers on this – there was a survey of all aspects of the economy of all of these territories. Between now and the 6th July you will get the documentation.

The hon. member refuses to believe that the economy of this country has improved and that the gross national product has grown. I do not understand why. I am going to pick up the paper and show the hon. member something from the Advocate. If the hon. member wants to look at part of the micro economic sector, let him look at companies like Bryden's which advertised its profits from the years 1974 – being now a public company – and he will see that in 1975 it made a profit of $1,439,994. In 1976 it was $1,692,096; and in 1977 it made a profit of $2,056,321. The hon. member, in the face of all this evidence, not only the public sector evidence but the few public companies – there are about seven or eight public companies in Barbados.

The hon. member for St. Michael South West knows that if you take up New Week or Business Week or any of them, some of the leading economic indicators are the corporate profits of the top 100 companies. In Barbados we have to look at the public companies and the tax collections from corporations; and the hon. member knows that the Prime Minister in his Budget Speech said that corporate profits last year in Barbados had increased, as a result of which collections, tax collections from the Corporation Tax in the last quarter of this financial year, which was based upon the financial results of the calendar year, 1977, were greater and more buoyant than was anticipated when the estimates were done.

In the face of all of this evidence, the totality of this evidence, the hon. member still gets up here and in other places and says that the economy is not growing. There is no hope for the hon. member.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order. The hon. member is obviously misleading the House. He says that I have got up here and said something. Mr. Speaker, I have not spoken yet.

Mr. SPEAKER: He made no reference to you.

Mr. TAITT: He said the hon. member for St. Michael South West.

Hon. H. B. St. John: I said that the hon. member for St. Michael South West knows that in the United States of America – what I am doing using the hon. member for St. Michael South West's knowledge of a certain sector to lick the hon. member for St. Michael South who does not have any knowledge in that direction. I know that the hon. member for St. Michael South West will know that you have to look at the profits of your big corporation. We can get access to the public ones. It does not help us to go abroad saying that there is stagnation in the economy of Barbados, when in truth and in fact there is no stagnation there. Let us argue about other matters. Let us argue about the rate of inflation, about price increases. Let us argue about unemployment; but do not let us try to contradict facts which cannot be contradicted; because people abroad will not always appreciate that this is only part of shadow boxing exercise, a political exercise.

Either the hon. member does not know,or does not want to admit; but you must admit the facts and then argue on the basis of the fact. I believe that this is a good piece of advice which Lord Coke gave to lawyers in the 1600s. Always admit the facts if they are correct, and then seek to use those facts to your advantage. That is what you must do. I hope that now we have had this full debate, that a particular part of the Government's housing programme will be understood and appreciated.

I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, there is a matter standing in the name of the Hon. Minister of Labour. I think that he wants to deal with it today. It is to facilitate a national festival which is taking place beginning from this month.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I would have to seek leave of the House since this was not circulated. It has to be done today, and I hope that there will be no objections from the other side. I crave the indulgence of the House to proceed.
5.25 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister is seeking leave to deal with a Resolution respecting the Crop Over Festivities and the late opening of shops. If there is no objection, the hon. member may proceed.

There being no objection, the hon. member may proceed.

THE SHOPS (SPECIAL PROVISIONS) ORDER, 1978

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, a request came from the Ministry of Education and Culture for the Crop Over Festival to stage a Bridgetown Market on 1st July. The Order therefore seeks to have the shops open in and around Bridgetown whereby persons can bring their wares and have them sold on the sidewalks of the various streets. We have asked the Chamber of Commerce and other organisations if they have any objection to this opening and they all agreed that they would have no objection since it is something of a cultural nature, and I have been told that the Crop Over Festivities are going remarkably well. I do not envisage any debate on a matter of this nature, because it simply seeks to give an Order for the shops to open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. so as to facilitate those persons who would like to sell on the sidewalks and so on during that time. I do not know if there is much more I can say on this matter, but if hon. members on the other side would like to make a contribution, that would be welcomed.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, before you put this Resolution to the vote, there are a few comments I would like to make on it. Now we know that the Minister of Labour does not get an opportunity very often to deal with matters in this House relating to his Ministry, and I am glad that today he has had an opportunity to introduce something.

Now in introducing this Resolution, the Hon. Minister of Labour indicated that the Government had consulted the Chamber of Commerce and you would have noted, Mr. Speaker, that he said "other organisations", and I detected in that that when he was about to make that particular point, he realised there was one organisation, because he said other organisations and they agreed. I want to say that the Barbados Workers' Union which represents generally speaking the workers in the shops in Bridgetown was written a letter on the 12th June, 1978, informing the Union that the Cabinet had taken this decision and that the Chamber of Commerce had been consulted and that they had agreed, and that the Government was preparing a Shops Order to bring down so that the shops could be open from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. on Saturday, 1st July, and they wanted to know what is the Union's position on this after a decision had been taken according to the letter, and the Chamber of Commerce and the Government had agreed on this. I would question that kind of consultation. But what I think is even more galling is that this letter which was written on the 12th June reached the Barbados Workers' Union on the 13th June and the letter requested that a reply be submitted by the 16th June. I feel very strongly about this, Mr. Speaker. I feel it might very well be an administrative slip up because I really do not believe that the Hon. Minister of Labour who talks so often about cooperation between the Union and the Government and what have you would agree to that kind of treatment, because in truth and in fact in my view it is a very shabby treatment which has been meted out to the Barbados Workers' Union in this particular instance, particularly since the workers are going to be involved, they will be called upon to do overtime work and obviously this could only be effective if in truth and in fact you have the cooperation of the workers in this regard.

Now the Executive Council of the Barbados Workers' Union had a meeting and this particular matter was discussed and the Minister will receive a reply in due course on this particular matter; but obviously it was not the kind of matter that we could call an emergency meeting on, so it had to wait until the constitutional time was right for the meeting of the Council. The Council expressed its concern at the manner in which this matter was dealt with because we believe very firmly that the Barbados Workers' Union is a very important institution in this community, and in matters of this nature where workers are going to be called upon to make some sort of sacrifice, even although they will be rewarded by overtime, I think we have to recognise very clearly that money is not always all, and sometimes you may want a person to work longer hours and you offer him all sorts of incentives, but he prefers his freedom to go home early because he may have other things to do. It seems to me that this was an afterthought on the part of some people who realised that the Barbados Workers' Union had not been consulted on this particular matter. As I said, the Union was written this letter informing the Union of the decision and then asking whether or not we had any objection. We do not consider that this is consultation, and I would hate to think that this would be the new style consultation which is being introduced. I am honest when I say I do not believe the Minister would want to have this kind of break down. I am sure that it can be said that he more than any other Minister on that side would really and genuinely want to have a good working relationship with the Barbados Workers' Union because he knows that if it is not there he will have a lot of problems, and any Minister would want to have his problems minimised as much as possible.

As I say, this is a matter which we feel very strongly about. We are upset to think that this kind of attitude and callousness can be displayed on this particular matter, and it need not be a situation which could have become controversial, but certainly we will

have to reply to his Ministry in that particular way and let him know how we feel about this.

The Minister did not refer to this, but obviously if you are going to ask workers to do extra duties at work or longer hours, some element of overtime would have to be in here, and I would like to suggest that the Minister look at this matter again, because as I understand it they are proposing to pay the workers at time and a half for the hours which they are going to put in after the official closing time up to 6 p.m., and I really believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is probably not too late, but the order should indicate very clearly that the rate which should be paid on this occasion should not be time and a half but double time.

5.35 p.m.

I think that we have to look at this matter in its proper perspective and to recognise that we are taking away an opportunity from the people who will be called upon to remain at the stores, an opportunity for them which they would normally have for relaxation on Saturdays or whatever they do on Saturdays, or indeed enjoying whatever pleasures they usually enjoy on Saturday afternoons, and I do not consider that the rate of time and a half is adequate compensation for this kind of sacrifice and I am appealing to the Minister even at this late stage to recommend that it be increased to double time and that this be included in the Shops Order.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I shall not detain this Hon. House very long on this Bill. The coming of this Resolution before this House provides me with an opportunity to make just a few observations in regard to Crop-Over itself and the Shops Act in Barbados.

Let me say that I will have no difficulty supporting the Resolution, but I would like to take this opportunity to appeal to the Government that this festival of Crop-Over not be used as yet another opportunity for dividing the country. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that Crop-Over ought to be a DLP Crop-Over or a BLP Crop-Over, I do not believe that the concept of Crop-Over was intended to be other than a national festival. I just wish to issue a cautionary statement to the Government that if we are not careful we may find that by attempting, as I have heard persons in the hierarchy of the Government attempting to do, to indicate that somehow the Crop-Over under a particular Government is superior to Crop-Over under another Government, we may find ourselves instead of creating and developing Crop-Over as a national pastime, a national holiday, which I believe both sides and especially those involved in tourism want to see a summer festival developed in Barbados.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, that when the festival was first designed, that it was inteded to bring back some of the cultural and historical patterns of Barbados, while at the same time creating a summer festival in Barbados which up until then had not had any particular distinctive summer festival, and it may very well be that in the early stages of Crop-Over which was administered by persons who could not fully and completely appreciate the intricacies of the cultural aspect of Crop-Over development, and I think that it would not be out of order to acknowledge that in the preparations for the Crop-Over festival this year a greater insight into the kind of administrative arrangements which ought to be made was found and as a result the festival has tended to take on a more national character. I am not one who will, merely because I sit on the Opposition, become so purblind that I cannot recognise when something progressive is happening within the national fabric of our country, and I want to say that the arrangements which have been made for Crop-Over this year – and I am sure that I would not be stepping too far if I said under the ..... I think it is Mr. Nigel Harper who has overall responsibility for the festival – it seems to me that the festival is taking on the kind of national air which it was intended to have and which is desirable for us as Barbadians not only this year but for all time, and I am disturbed as a Barbadian when I hear attempts being made to have the festival somehow put into categories. I do not believe that most members of the other side believe that this should be so, but I am merely putting it to this Hon. House that the Government would not wish to have Crop–over itself become a partisan subject.

On the question of shops in Barbados, I think my colleague has made the point for the Barbados Workers' Union, which has to be made, and I am sure that the Hon. Minister will pay attention to what he had to say, but, Mr. Speaker, on the question of the opening of shops generally I would like to take this opportunity to ask the Minister if he would give serious consideration to allowing the small family shops and small rural groceries in this country to open if and when they feel like opening so that they will be able to compete with some of the larger institutions and the supermarkets in this country. Mr. Speaker, when I had the honour of serving the people of Barbados in another capacity, I made such a proposal and I was given to understand that the proposal was on its way to becoming public policy. I have reason to believe that there are persons in the administrative hierarchy of the Ministry of Labour who did not feel that the policy could be applied to part of the population or the commercial sector without its being applied to the other, but I believe that in Barbados public policy sometimes has to be discriminatory in favour of the small man, and I cannot see why if a man has a small grocery somewhere in Brereton's Village or somewhere in Richmond Gap, or wherever, I cannot see why he has to be equated with

Goddards or DaCosta and Musson or one of these larger institutions and the policy applied has to be a blanket policy that applied either to one or the other.

We have an international definition for small business. In all of the regional and international agencies there is a definition for what constitutes a small business, and I am satisfied that it possible within the context of such a definition to have a public policy that will permit of some advantage to those who operate small businesses. While I recognise that following what was an administrative arrangement of the last Government, and this Government seems to be following the policy, and therefore we do not have the situation where the policeman is knocking on somebody's door at 8 o'clock and creating problems, I think that the law itself should be changed to allow small people to open their shops when they can. I am sure that if the Government examines it it will find that it must assist the economy. What it will mean, Mr. Speaker, is that a man who with his wife and his children runs a small shop in areas in this country can come into Bridgetown and do a job and work till 4 o'clock, go home, get a rest. feed his stocks if he has any, and then later on in the night at his convenience and at the convenience of people who live in his area, open his little shop which he and his family run, and open it until they get tired and sleepy or until people stop coming in, whichever happens first. I cannot see that that has to be a partisan position, I am satisfied that there are members on the other side who understand this particular plight and would support it, because as I said, it is clear that the administrative policies are to stop the police, or at least the police do not find it necessary now to go knocking at people's doors and creating the kind of confusion that used to be the norm when most of us in here were much younger, and I really think that something has to be done for the small shopkeepers in this country.

Mr. Speaker, so that what I am saying now will not become embroiled in any political, partisan atmospherics, let me not now deal with the question of if small shops have closed in this country. Suffice it to say that for a variety of reasons a number of small business people in this country are finding it extremely difficult to survive and are having it.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, I must stop the hon. member right now and invite him to confine himself just to the Bridgetown market.

Mr. TAITT: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am in fact winding up. Mr. Speaker, let me say that the subject is one which is very dear to my heart because I have seen, and I am sure that every hon. member in this House has seen the situation in which small shops in this country are having a difficult time and need as much assistance as they can get.
5.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that the subject is one which is very dear to my heart, because I have seen, and I am sure that every hon. member of this House has seen a situation in which small shops in this country are having a difficult time, and need as much assistance as they can get. I am sure that the opening of the shops for the Crop Over Festival will prove to be a very interesting exercise; and I wish to suggest to the Minister that after proper consultation with the Barbados Workers Union and all the other organisations, that he gives some consideration to allowing small shops to have the Bridgetown Market, not only during Crop Over, but on specified days, perhaps on Sunday afternoons.

Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister I know is familiar with something that happens in North America on Sunday mornings in certain sectors of the New York area, for example. They used to have Sunday Blue Laws; and those Blue Laws have been amended to permit certain small shops to open at specified times on Sunday mornings and Sunday afternoons. I do not believe that there is anything irreligious if there could be some kind of Bridgetown Market, not only for Crop Over, but maybe once a quarter or once a month which would give a number of those small shop keepers an opportunity to make their wares available, and will also give a number of young, independent entrepreneurs in Barbados an opportunity to ply their wares in an atmosphere and in circumstances which will not only be beneficial to them themselves, but to us in the entire community.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, sometime in February this year the Crop Over Festival was entrusted to me as Minister of Culture from 1978; and part of the arrangements that we made was the Bridgetown Market. I want to point out very early that Crop Over 1978 is only a very distant relative to Crop Over 77, 76 and 75. The hon. member for St. Michael South West quite rightly tied in past Crop Overs with tourists. Crop Over 1978 has nothing to do with tourists. If tourists come to Barbados and enjoy an authentic Barbados festival, good for them; but certainly as long as I am going to be responsible for Culture in Government, my plans for Culture will be for the people of Barbados.

The Bridgetown Market is an integral part of Crop Over 1978. The Bridgetown Market is to be a place where on the Saturday on which the market will be opened will be a place where there will be a traditional meeting place such as one experienced in the old days when the crop finished; when the people came to town from parishes such as mine with their pockets full of

money, and there were people by the wayside displaying and selling their wares, and there was an air of revelry and spending and *joie de vivre*. This is the type of thing that we want for Crop Over 1978 and for succeeding years. What you will have on that day is shops open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. We are going to have people on the streets selling and on the side walks selling, and we are going to be selling traditional bajan ware. We will have roving troubadours. We will have bands on the balconies of the great shops in town, and during the day there will be social intermingling, something that is very rear in this country. I am hoping that the market will capture something of a spirit that is long since passed in this country.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I am a little confused here. The Minister said that shops will be open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. I wonder if he really means that, or if that was an error.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Let me go on. I will talk about the union and the member later on. At this moment I am not too concerned, with that type of intervention. He can read from the paper before him exactly what time the shops will be open. Lét us get on with the Bridgetown Festival. The festival will be all that we are planning it to be, despite the fact that the member for St. Michael South West – in fact he had the colossal nerve to say that this festival, that where this festival is concerned, Mr. Nigel Harper had overall responsibility for it. Give Jack his jacket. I am responsible for the overall control of this festival. Many times when members on the other side find that something is worng, they get in here and blame the Minister. When something seems to be working out.....

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. I took it for granted that the normal ministerial situation obtained. I had no intention of taking any credit from the Minister; and I have to give him credit for having organised the Festival, arranged it, and implemented it; and he can take the glory for it. I did not intend to take away any glory from him.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, the exact words that I wrote down of what the member said were that Mr. Nigel Harper has overall responsibility for the Crop Over Festival. I thank the hon. member for St. Michael South West for saying that there is a greater insight into the administrative arrangements this year. Thank you, but what is more than that is that there is a greater conceptualising of the Crop Over Festival, and that is why you have got a proper Crop Over Festival for this year. *(laughter)*.

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members seem to be getting into a festive mood.

Hon. L. R. TULL: We on this side see Crop Over as a true and authentic Crop Over Festival in its regular sense. We see Crop Over as a time when there will be a display of indigenous culture, where they will be an outpouring from the hearts of the people of this country at the end of the reaping season. We see it as a respite from work. When you come from a constituency like mine, the biggest agricultural constituency in Barbados where the workers work hard and their blood, sweat and toil are in those fields, they are entitled as a respite from work to a time of rejoicing.

The hon. member can see it as a time for the tourists to have fun. We see it as a time for the agricultural workers particularly, and all the workers of Barbados in general to celebrate the end of the reaping season. We, Mr. Speaker, see this as a festival that is rooted in the consciousness and the psyche of the people of Barbados. What has that got to do with tourists? (Mr. TAITT: Who said anything about tourists?)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order please.

Hon. L. R. TULL: You hear about foreign reserves, balance of payments, unemployment and all of that.

5.55 p.m.

These things are concerned with the material welfare of the people of this country. As Minister of Education and Culture I am concerned with the spiritual and aesthetic development of people in this country. We started this Crop Over Festival on the 17th September with a new dimension; it will finish on 3rd July and there are a lot of activities, and the activities are for all the people of Barbados, and I do not understand, I know I have said it already, but I have to drive the point home when the hon. member for St. Michael South West gets up and talks about using this as an opportunity to divide the country. What thinking person in Barbados who has seen what has been happening in Crop Over could share that fear that Crop Over is being used as an opportunity to divide the people of Barbados?

Mr. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, the point I was making is that I have heard high ranking members of the Barbados Labour Party on the platform trying to suggest that the Crop Over Festival was for.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Bridgetown Market is not in St. Michael South Central.

Mr. TAITT: But they were trying to put it there, Sir.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, every member on this side has got a duty not only a right to go out and

say that we have organised a better festival than we have ever had in Barbados, and if my colleagues do not get on the public platform and say that a proper festival was organised, I would say they were slighting me, and there is a lot more coming. On the 3rd July there is Kadooment and I am using this opportunity to appeal to the whole public of Barbados. They can jump in the streets and from the Stadium to the Garrison and I expect 40,000 people out there. I am appealing to all members of the community to keep things within limits; I do not want any bad behaviour or that sort of thing. I have got an abiding faith in the decency of the people of Barbados that they can go out there and jump the whole day and behave themselves, but when you hear politicians talking foolishness about dividing the people of this country, that to my mind is providing a cue for some people to behave in a disorderly way. To my mind that is exactly what that type of statement will do. (A VOICE: You had better get in St. Michael South Central!) I am coming.

If I may just deal with the whole issue of the opening of shops, a submission was made by me personally even though the hon. member for St. Michael South West seems to think that Nigel Harper runs the show; you did not allow him to run it when Sleepy Smith was Minister of Education. Do you think I am going to let him run my Ministry? We sent to the Minister of Labour a request to make an Order to open the shops so that we could have a good day in Bridgetown, and as the hon. member knows the Minister was out of the country doing Government business in Europe somewhere, and he came around to conceding. It might have been a little administrative snag and the dates were a little bit too late, but that is nothing to make one big song and dance about. The fact is that the Unions were consulted and I do not believe that the Unions could seriously think of standing in the way of having this event on Saturday morning. Do not let the hon. member for St. Lucy get in here and believe that he is more concerned about workers in this country than anybody else. You do not have to work at the Barbados Workers' Union to be concerned about workers of Barbados. You get paid at the Union therefore you should be concerned. I do not get paid by them, but my interest in the workers of this country is as strong or far stronger than most of the people who straddle around the Barbados Workers' Union and earn big pay for doing very little; so do not come that way. When the hon. member for St. Lucy is talking about working an extra half day and you have to be concerned about the workers, and that even though they may be getting overtime that is not the only consideration, when he gets up and makes this point, his colleague gets up right after him, the hon. member for St. Michael South West, asking why not let them open on Sundays. One does not want them to work for one half day a year for a Bajan festival, and the other wants to know why we do not open the shops on Sundays.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, the hon. member has really either misunderstood or is misleading. I am talking about family owned shops and I deliberately made the distinction between those shops that employ large numbers of people and those shops that are family owned and run by the family. Surely the hon. member can understand even that.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I do not know why the hon. member bothers to say these things. Is he saying that family shops do not employ shop assistants? Is he saying that. (Mr. TAITT: You are an idiot!) You heard that, Mr. Speaker? What am I hearing at all? That family shops do not employ shop assitants, and are they not entitled to the same rights as people who work in big shops?

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, the hon. member is misleading the House. I said family operated. He is the Minister of Education and he must know the difference between family operated and family owned. I believe that the hon. member is misleading the House.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I have heard the hon. member say some things recently on a political platform and I thought it might be the night air that affected him, but how can he get in here in true conscience and say he did not say family owned. Everybody heard him say family owned. Anyhow I am not going to waste my time on the hon. member. The hon. member says he knows me well; he had better not start me talking.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Minister please address the Chair? Get on with the Bridgetown Market.

Hon. L. R. TULL: We have asked the business shops in Bridgetown, the ones we are hoping will be opened, to find out from their employees if they want to work. We have not said that anybody has to work. That is the way we operate on our side; we asked the people who run the shops to enquire of the shop assistants whether they want to work or not, and if they do not want to work they will not be compelled or called on to work. Do you want anything fairer than that? Why didn't the hon. member for St. Lucy say that when he was making out a case for the workers? I specifically gave instructions that these people should not be called upon to work if they do not want to, and that it was entirely voluntary for them to decide whether they were going to work on Saturday or not, and this is important in this whole exercise.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Minister of Labour can deal more adequately with that part of the contributions that relate to his Ministry, but let me just

say before I close that not all these foolish interventions.....I do not mean any made in here. There are a lot of foolish interventions being made all about the place; none of them will prevent the people of Barbados of all hues, complexions, or political parties from enjoying what is the best Crop Over Festival ever presented in this country.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Speaker, I have to be fair to the Minister because he is definitely looking for some congratulations and praise, so I will give him praise this evening. The Minister has spoken about the present Crop Over Festival and how much better it has developed. This was always planned. We always realised that the time would come when this would be so for the two years or 22 months that I have been Chairman of the Board. What the Minister must understand is that the idea behind the Crop Over – and I was nothing to do with the Board at that time – was simply this:
6.05 p.m.

Trinidad has a festive occasion called Carnival which attracts people to the country. It was not that tourists go for something that is created for them, the tourists want to go somewhere to see a native culture, and Carnival in Trinidad was such a thing, Carnival in Trinidad was not for tourists, but when the tourists realised the fantastic gaiety and excitement of it they went. The same thing applies to Rio de Janeiro, they have a carnival there, people go from all over the world to see it, not that it was done for the tourists, but having got it the tourists go to see it. This happens in Mexico as well, so the idea of the Crop-Over, although started by the Tourist Board, was not with a view that only the tourists were to be attracted. *(Aside)*. Well, it does not matter to me who was there, I was just speaking of the principle of it. The principle of the Crop-Over was to get the people in this festive mood, and in the months of May and June when the summer business was low and the people of Barbados were in such a state of festivity, that tourists would be attracted to it, therefore the Minister has taken it over and made it bigger and better, for which I congratulate him at this time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Made it superior.

Mr. WARD: Made it superior with his ability, and of course the Board only had about $3½ million, I think he had about $6 million to put into it. I do not know what Education has per annum, but it is about $40 million, isn't it? They can also blow it up bigger, they can go to the Garrison and they can go to Bridgetown, so the Minister is to be praised for his efforts, and I would just say this to the Minister. What I would like the Minister to understand is this, the bigger and better he makes Crop-Over, the more we in tourism appreciate it, because the people do not like artificial entertainment, they want something that is characteristic of Barbados which they can come and enter into and appreciate.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, my contribution to this debate is only to remind the hon. member for St. Michael South West that what he has been saying in relation to the shops seems rather contrary to his party's philosophy and voting in this same Chamber.

Before I get to that I want to say that the hon. member who has just sat down is somewhat mistaken in regard to the amount of money which the Ministry of Education has to spend on this Crop-Over festival. As a member of Cabinet I believe I should put the figures right. When the Tourist Board was operating Crop-Over they had some $60,000 to spend, the Ministry of Education has $30,000, 50% less. I am not criticising what the Tourist Board did with their money, but one thing I can say, I am happy about what is happening now that it is in the Ministry of Culture, because last year I was called upon on several occasions to participate in my ministerial position in Crop-Over, and I mentioned then to the *ad hoc* committee that I thought there should be a permanent committee set up to deal with Crop-Over and not on an *ad hoc* basis, and I am therefore very happy to see what is coming out and I should declare here and now that I am not looking at Crop-Over as a political affair for the Barbados Labour Party. I am declaring here and now, on Monday, July 3, I will be jumping at the Stadium, and from the Stadium to the Garrison, and if the hon. member for St. Michael South West has not yet attached himself to a band, I will get a suit made for him and he can jump alongside of me, because I will teach him a lot of things while jumping from the Stadium to the Garrison.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member started on the Order for the opening of shops. I have been thumbing through the two Question Books going back from 1970, and unfortunately some questions when they were not answered they were never stuck in the book, but I want to remind the hon. member that I came to Parliament in December 1970 and one of my first questions in this Chamber was to ask of the previous administration if they would forthwith amend the Shops Act, because I cannot see any country that declares itself a country dealing in tourism could still carry on the antiquated Shops Act that still exists in Barbados. They did not answer it in the first place, but two or three years later they then devised a Shops Bill which came to this Chamber, the Trade Union voted against it, and I remember Frank Walcott sitting in that corner and saying he would have none of it, and the files will

declare that the Union at that time was talking about the protection of workers.

I have said in several debates that my belief is – and I say it now again – my belief is that we should have a Shops Bill which includes certain labour clauses, and I openly declare –

(1) every shop that employs an assistant other than a relative of a family should have a time clock;

(2) every employee should be made to wear a name tag;

(3) you should have an adequate amount of shop inspectors and they should prosecute employees who are working on the premises and have not clocked in through the clock. Both employers and employees should be prosecuted for breaking the law.

I have travelled quite a lot. I have been to Spain on a Sunday and walked into shops. You go to certain shops in Great Britain and they are open on Saturdays and Bank Holidays. I said before that you should have a new Shops Act in Barbados, so when the hon. member for St. Michael South West gets up and talks about a new Shops Bill, one was introduced by his party and because their own members criticised it it was withdrawn.

I can say that this administration is looking at a new Shops Act, and it will come to Parliament shortly. I do not understand how the hon. member while his party was in power allowed his party to withdraw their Bill and now gets up and talks about shops being able to open for as long as they feel like. Baxters Road is now called the street that never sleeps, there are special licences for certain institutions like the Baxters Road shops, and I have always contended that it is simple, if the Trade Union will do their job and manage their aspect of it, we should not have all these problems, but we should not create obstacles, because you find problems. My belief is, if you want the shops to open, let us pass the legislation if both sides are agreed and iron out the problems later. There are no maybe's about it, you hear complaints about employees in Swan Street not getting the basic wage but they sign for the basic wage. We have to sit down as people who understand the situation in small countries like these, where you have an unemployment problem, and work out devices to overcome these practices.

Therefore, I would have said that this Bill this evening should be an open Bill for as long as possible, because if you are talking, whether you are talking about a national festival for the people of the country or whether you regard it as something for tourism, I have said before if one sits down and counts the number of hours that are lost to businesses simply because every shop opens at 8.00 and every shop closes at 4.00 or 4.30. If the person working in the supermarket wants to buy a dress in Broad Street she has to beg for some time or use her lunch period to go to buy the dress. If the person working in Broad Street wants to go and shop, she has to beg for time during the day to go into the supermarket.
6.15 p.m.

I think that for the benefit of the country, if the hon. member understands or believes what he said that business will multiply if you have long opening hours, I do not think that there should be any quarrel between the two sides. We should then agree on a Shops Bill, and look at the problems later. As far as this particular Order is concerned, Mr. Speaker, I am happy that it is here. It appears that the Other Side is satisfied with it. On the question of whether or not the Union has been consulted, I do not think that we should make too much fuss over that. If there has been a slip up on either side, these things are liable to happen where human beings are involved.

I do not see why they should talk so much about this; but I am glad. I am going to hold the hon. member to his word, because when the new Shops Bill comes down I hope they do not criticise it; because I have got to deal with many of the businesses in Bridgetown; and over and over again businessmen are complaining of the restrictive practices of the present Shops Act. I would hope that it would increase employment; and it would seem that there is no difference in opinion between representatives of either side and the Government.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I have been in here for a long time, but it seems that there are somethings that I am not catching on to. It seems that some of my colleagues decide to wait until I am going to bring down something – every time that I am going to bring down some form of legislation before Parliament, someone has to announce what is coming down. My colleague has told the House that Shops Legislation is coming down. I do not talk about Agriculture or Finance.

Mr. SPEAKER: Neither Agriculture nor Finance is before us.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: If Agriculture comes down as legislation I can talk about anything concerning Agriculture. I will deal with the Resolution before us since the Festival is commissioned already by the Minister of Education. I do not know what I can say. I

would like to say that the Shops Legislation is in the hands of the Attorney General, and when it is ready it will be circulated. As far as the member for St. Lucy is concerned, he quarrelled about what I consider a little error. When I came into office the first thing I did was to invite the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers Union and the head of the Barbados Employers Confederation to discuss what I consider were problems confronting the country. I wrote a letter to the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers Union asking him to come and see me; and he did not give me the courtesy of a reply or telephone to say that he could not come. Now the member is saying that we should have informed them. If they feel that people should get over time, they have shops stewards. They will not get any more invitations from me in the future. *(Asides.)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have no cross talk.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The union can talk with the business houses. They can talk about whether they should pay time and a half. It is their duty to stop people from working if they want to. I do not see the need for a letter to go to him on the 12th June and get a reply. I remember in 1975 they were up behind small businessmen. They were going to deal with small businessmen. The history of the Barbados Workers Union is already written. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is a very simple Resolution and I never anticipated all of this talk from the other side.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes Government Business and I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 11th July, 1978, at 12 o'clock noon.

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

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

6.25 p.m.