
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 9th December, 1980.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.25 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J. P., (Speaker); Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment); Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, Q.C., M.A., (Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning); Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs); Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M.; Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Health and National Insurance); 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, Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry) (Leader of the House); Mr. V. L. JOHNSON, M.A.; Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT, and His Honour E. E. ALLEYNE, LL.M., (Deputy Speaker).

Prayers were read.

Dr. HAYNES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 2nd December, 1980.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations by hon. members let these Minutes stand confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am happy to lay the following:—

The Third Annual Report of the National Housing Corporation for the year April, 1975 to March, 1976.

The Fourth Annual Report of the National Housing Corporation for the year April, 1976 to March, 1977.

The Fifth Annual Report of the National Housing Corporation for the year April, 1977, to March, 1978.

Sir, I am particularly happy to lay these Reports in the light that no Report was prepared or laid in Parliament since 1972 and the backlog of the work which the Corporation had by an Act of Parliament which makes it very clear that Reports must be laid at the end of each Financial Year. The National Housing Corporation has not, since 1972, Sir, had a Report prepared or laid.

I would like to salute the staff of the National Housing Corporation for their efforts in bringing the Reports up to date.

Mr. GREAVES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to approve the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1980.

I would also like to inform the Honourable House that it is the intention of Government to deal with this

Resolution in all of its stages today subject to the approval of this Honourable House.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to grant the sum of \$376 901 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1980–81, Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1980–81, No. 24, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Resolution to grant the sum of \$521 640 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1980–81, Part II – Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1980–81, No. 25, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Ltd, Act.

REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEE

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report of the Select Committee on Boundaries and Designation of Constituencies.

I would like to make a Statement in connection with this matter. It is not intended that any debate be entered into upon this matter today. However, a certain time-table will be necessary if the recommendations of the said Committee are to be carried out expeditiously and in time for the next Electoral List to be issued on or before the appointed day which is January, 31st, 1981.

The recommendations of the Committee, Sir, are that the number of seats in the House of Assembly be increased from 24 to 27 and that the boundaries of constituencies be as set out in the Schedule appended as Appendices 1 and 2 and Appendix 3 to the Report.
12.35 p.m.

Of the existing 24 constituencies three will remain intact. St. James will be divided into two – these are the recommendations Sir – and two additional seats will be provided in St. Michael. There will be adjustments to adjust numbers of voters in all the remaining constituencies with additions being made to both constituencies in St. George, additions being made to St. Joseph from St. Thomas and St. John; removals being made from St. John, Christ Church East, and small adjustments being made in other areas including removals from St. Philip to St. John.

These matters are clearly set out in the Schedule, but we will wish hon. members to have an opportunity to study them before the Report as such is debated. The time table which therefore we anticipate is that the Report will be debated next Friday. If the Committee's recommendations are adopted, a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act will be introduced in time for it to be debated today week, next Tuesday, Sir, and debated in the Other Place on the following day. If the Bill is passed, we will return to the House on Friday week, that is Friday, 19th December formally to adopt the new constituencies. An Order will be made setting out the new constituency boundaries and a Resolution will be presented on December 19th to adopt these boundaries.

The amendments to the Representation of the People Act will not only include an amendment to Section 3 relating to the number of constituencies, but will also include transitional provisions relating to the possible holding of by-elections should one occur before the general elections, – I believe this is a standard form – and also to implement a pledge that there will be some increase in the election expenses permitted for elections to the House of Assembly. The amount of these expenses has been in force I think since 1970. So next Tuesday, the amendments to the Representation of the People Act following debate of the Report which is now laid and by the end of next week we should have the entire exercise of boundary revision completed.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Hon. C. L. BOLDEN seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, a Bill to amend the Cable and Wireless (West Indies Limited) Act, was read a first time.

OBITUARY SPEECHES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, during the course of the last two weeks two hon. members of this House suffered bereavements. I refer, Sir, to the untimely death of the late son of the hon. member for St. James who departed at a very early age in his life, and the brother of the hon. member for St. Michael South East.

All of us who had the privilege of knowing the late son of the hon. member can testify to the fact that as a young man he was a most courteous, polite and engaging personality. It is indeed unfortunate that so early in his life he has been called to the great beyond. I am sure that all hon. members in this House would like to extend to the hon. member for St. James and his good wife our profound sympathy on their loss.

The hon. member for St. Michael South East's brother had reached a more advanced age, but nevertheless he could still at an age in his forties be regarded as being a

man still in his prime. I myself did not have the privilege of knowing him very well, but nevertheless I think we should express our deepest sympathy to the hon. member not only on behalf of himself but on behalf of the family of his late brother.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the members of the Opposition we should like to join in the condolences which have been expressed by the Leader of the House. I don't think it is necessary for me to say a lot. I cannot speak personally of either of the two departed relatives, but I should like to assure members on the other side that in moments like these they have our deepest sympathy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I too would like to be associated with the expressions of sympathy expressed by both sides of this Honourable House in respect of the Hon. Minister's son and in respect also of the hon. member for St. Michael South East's late brother, Lionel E. Bradshaw. And it is for me now to request all hon. members to signify their willingness that we "Resolve that this House place on record its profound sympathy with the surviving relatives of the late Lionel E. Bradshaw, brother of Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Industry and representative for the parish of St. Michael South East, and

Be It Resolved that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to his relatives.

And in like manner "Be It Also Resolved that this Honourable House place on record its profound sympathy with the surviving relatives of the late son of the Hon. Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment, representative for the parish of St. James,

And Be It Further Resolved that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the relatives of his late son.

I must now ask this Honourable House to stand with me in silence for a moment in token of our respect.

(Hon. Members stood in their places in silence for one minute.)

12.45 p.m.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Reply to Question No. 60 asked by the hon. member for St. Lucy is now ready.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, earlier today we had given notice of a number of matters, two matters, that we had indicated that in view of the urgency of the

situation we would ask leave of the House to deal with them in all their stages.

I beg to move, in view of that, the suspension of Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 22 and 42(5) for the remainder of today's sitting.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply to consider two money Resolutions, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1980-81 No. 22

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the purpose of this Resolution is clearly set out in the Addendum which accompanies the Resolution, but it is essential to obtain the funds to meet certain capital expenditure which will be incurred as a result of the upgrading of the Barbados Mission to Brussels from the level of Charge d'Affaires to the level of a full Embassy.

It will be necessary for us to purchase certain items of furniture and a car for the Ambassador, as well as certain other items for the office of Brussels. I think it may be appropriate at this stage for me to give the House some idea of the level of staffing which we propose placing in the Brussels Embassy. It is proposed that the Embassy will be staffed by an Ambassador, a Senior Foreign Service Officer to be designated Counsellor and a Senior Foreign Service Officer to be designated either First or Second Secretary. It is proposed at the present time to designate that officer at the level of Second Secretary. In addition, there will be a Secretary to the Ambassador, who will be a home based officer, a Stenographer — bi-lingual — to be recruited locally, two Clerical Officers, a Receptionist/Telephonist, a Chauffeur or Messenger, a Maid or Cook for the Ambassador's Office, a Maid for the office and a Gardener for the residence of the Ambassador. That constitutes the External Affairs staff.

The Embassy is being located in an area of Brussels which normally houses similar Embassies, and it is intended that enough physical space will be available to house as well the staff of the Board of Tourism, as well as the staff of the Industrial Development Corporation, and in time the staff of the Export Promotion Corporation should that body decide to go to Brussels as well.

The decision to go to Brussels has been dictated in large measure by the needs of the Ministries of Trade, Industry, Tourism and Finance rather than by purely political considerations. There is no doubt that the European Economic Community is becoming, and indeed has become, of tremendous economic value to Barbados and other African, Caribbean and Pacific States, and Barbados has benefited already in a substantial manner from funds provided by the European Economic Community. In addition to the financial assistance which is given for projects, we have a guaranteed market under the EEC for 50,000 tons of sugar at prices in line with those prevailing and payable to the sugar beet farmers in the Community. We also receive various training awards and scholarships from the Community, we have access to European Development funds and to the European Investment Bank, and only last week this House passed a Resolution guaranteeing funds from the European Investment Bank for the private sector company of the Barbados Light and Power Company.

In addition, through the EEC, we have obtained permission to fish off the coast of Cayenne, French Guyana, for a quota of 25 tons of shrimp in 1980, as well as all of what is referred to as the trash fish which could be taken. In addition, Sir, Barbados benefits under various regional, the various regional funds, monies available for the various regional projects, particularly in the tourism study, support to LIAT, support to WISCO being three of those which immediately come to mind.

It is my view that the cost of a Mission in Brussels is justified by the economic benefits which will flow directly from the European Economic Community, but it is not only intended, Mr. Chairman, to use the Embassy at Brussels for the purposes of the European Economic Community, we anticipate that our thrust into Europe will become more pronounced, more intense, and to some extent more aggressive in so far as seeking financial assistance and aid and technical co-operation are concerned. 12.55 p.m.

Already Germany has become a significant source of tourism for Barbados. We have established a full Consulate General in Frankfurt and an Honorary Consul in Brahma and it is intended to pursue at that level under the aegis of the Ambassador of Brussels further investigation of our relationship with Germany in the field of tourism, in the field of investment, joint ventures and in the field of technical assistance.

Likewise with Austria, Sir, we intend to increase the relationship with that country. You will be aware of the arrangements being made for the opening of a joint cement project between the Governments of Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados and the Austrian financing will be involved to some extent.

In addition, we have to take notice of the presence of the OPEC Secretariat in Vienna and the fact that in the past years we have had access to funds from the OPEC Fund, what was formerly called OPEC Special Fund.

Our relationship with France will also take on greater intensity and it is intended that the Ambassador to Brussels, subject to the approval of the Government of France, will be accredited to that Republic and will take on at the same time Barbados' relationship with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, from whom we have benefited, I believe, in excess of \$400,000 during this financial year alone.

The Ambassador at Brussels will have responsibility for some other European countries with whom we hope to deepen our bilateral relationship who will be obligated to service those UN specialized agencies which are located at Geneva and also those which are being more and more shifted to Vienna and I refer particularly to organizations such as UNEDO and the other ones of economic significance to this country.

I believe that the decision, therefore, based on the Economic, Financial, Technical Corporation consideration is justified in the circumstances and while not down-playing the political importance of the European Economic Community and its significance to us in the Third World, I think that for Barbados it has been a wide-nosed decision rather than one based on prestige or a widening of our political entanglement or political attachments.

In addition, Sir, this Resolution also asks the Committee to provide money for furniture to furnish the house of the Consul General at New York. I would wish to go back to remind the House that earlier in the tenure of this Government, I sought permission of the House, which was granted, to sell the house at Overlook Circle. The reason was that the distance was very far away, the cost of repairs appeared to us to be very heavy and we had representation from the Advisory Council, a body composed of Barbadian citizens in New York, including the Hon. Reginald Pierrepont, that it would be better to buy a house that was closer to Barbadian Nationals in New York.

I undertook to the House of Assembly that I would not consent to a sale of 133 Overlook Circle at New Rochelle, New York, if it meant that we would receive less money on the sale than the past Government had paid for it. This meant, Mr. Chairman, Sir, waiting until the market had improved somewhat. The former Government had paid \$112,000 for the house and there were, of course, legal fees and various other expenditures involved.

I am happy to report that the market had improved and we obtained \$165,000 on the sale of the house. We were able, therefore, to purchase a house for the Consul

General in December, 1979, at a price of \$120,000 and this was bought. It is located at 8622 Sous Hall Street, Palace Wood, New York.

Before the purchase was completed, we followed the new guidelines for the purchase of property. About three properties were inspected and looked at. The Head of the Civil Service, an officer, I believe Mr. Broome-Webster from the Public Investment Unit, (he is himself an engineer), and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing inspected the houses to make sure that they complied with the guidelines laid down for officers in this category.

This is the policy that we have implemented to avoid politicians or anyone else without a stake in the Civil Service being involved in the purchase of residences overseas for our Consulate. With the house we received no furniture except chandeliers and lighting fixtures. The Consul General has had to rely on a few bits of furniture which had been placed in a flat which was rented for him since the original furniture in Overlook Circle which was not much at the time when we assumed the Government, in any event, had been distributed among other officers both in the permanent Missions in the UN and at the Consulate as well and I believe that he has had for a little bit over a year to go with the inconvenience of having scanty furniture.

Again, a special committee, composed of my Permanent Secretary, Head of the Administration Section of my Ministry and I believe the Head of the Civil Service as well have examined the need for furniture and have settled on a list of furniture which comes well within the guidelines laid down for furniture for overseas residences.

Again, we have had the Civil Service to examine the other precedence used by other Caribbean and other countries for furniture for overseas residences. We, ourselves, have examined this through the Civil Service and we have laid down guidelines which have established what furniture will be used in the residences overseas.

I would hope in the next Estimates we would probably get more money for providing them with some of the paintings in Barbados since in many cases the Ambassadors and the officers themselves have now to produce paintings for their own residences and it seems to me that it is a pity that we do not provide more of this, not only as a support to our artists but also as a necessity for our residences overseas.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that the purchase is, again, a modest one, well justified and in keeping with purchases made in areas like in Canada. The first house was purchased in Canada by the former administration and both the Chancery and the house purchased by Ambassador McComie, for instance, in Washington were very good purchases. I believe that this one is well in that category which will meet the need of Barbados. In due course we

will probably find that we will get a benefit from such a purchase and I therefore ask the Committee's approval of this Vote.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

Mr. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that.

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

1.05 p.m.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1980 — 81 No. 23

Head 41 — External Affairs — was called.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, in moving this Head, I should explain to hon. members that in effect there are three reasons for asking for this supplementary to the Current Estimates under External Affairs. One follows naturally from upgrading the office in Brussels to a full Embassy, and I have already spoken on that issue on the former Head. The second is due to rising costs due to inflation in several capitals where Barbados maintains diplomatic Missions, and the third is due to increases in the cost of utilities, communications, rental of houses, maintenance of property and the general running expenses of the Missions.

Mr. Chairman, I am particularly concerned about the rising cost of maintaining overseas Missions in the United Kingdom. I think of the places where we maintain Missions, the United Kingdom and Venezuela are perhaps those with the greatest cost involved, having regard to the increase in inflationary trends in those two countries. The value of sterling in relation to the U.S. dollar has continued in the past year to depreciate, and we have witnessed at one time an inflationary rate in excess of 23%, and it is at present currently running at somewhere between 15% and 17.5%, and of necessity this has affected not only the cost of utilities, goods and services, but with the appreciation of sterling in relation to the U.S. dollar and the Barbadian dollar, the monies provided have therefore proved less during the current financial year. It was not possible to over-provide and hence we have had to ask for the supplement under this Head.

Mr. Chairman, I am also concerned about the effect of this on the type of residences we have been able to rent for our staff, and during the past two years the staff has been compelled to move further out to the outer London to get any premises that are reasonably acceptable for officers in the particular categories. This meant of course that they are at a disadvantage in reaching the office, and we have agreed in Cabinet on a policy that over the next four or five years we will seek to purchase residences in those countries with which Barbados will always find it necessary to maintain

diplomatic relations and full Embassies in order to minimise this type of problem in the future.

I am hoping that we can every year in the Capital Estimate purchase possibly two residences in some capitals until we have enough residences for our staff, particularly the junior staff who are, as I said at first, seriously disadvantaged by rising costs and the cost has also affected our telephone services, our telex services, our water, our gas, our electricity and all other utilities.

I like to sometimes remark on this because one hears a lot of fuss being made, one may say quite rightly so, about increasing cost in our own country, but the rate of inflation in Britain has outstripped the rate of inflation in Barbados during the past year tremendously, and indeed we cannot afford for instance to have an Embassy in a place like Israel where the rate of inflation this year has been 130%; even if we were considering an Embassy in Israel, we do not want one there; but it has been rising inflation all the time meaning an increase in cost and we have to pick up the cost back here in Barbados. That is the principal reason for this Resolution. It is a supplementary in this respect.

I still hope, Mr. Chairman, that we will effect some other savings in order to keep very close to the original vote which was approved by this Committee in March this year. I believe that we have managed in the four years to contain the rise in the cost of External Services whilst at the same time achieving, I believe, some tremendous improvement in the delivery of those services and in the satisfaction which they confer on the Government of Barbados.

I like to remind hon. members that today in Barbados we get by way of technical assistance, aid which is technical cooperation, non-reimbursable, more money than we spend on our total external services. In the OAS alone we have managed within the period of four years to increase the technical cooperation by something like 4.5% or 5% of what it was in 1976, and I think it is much to the credit of the officers of my Ministry, all of them, those at headquarters and those who serve overseas, that we have managed to maintain this thrust for Barbados to participate more fully in external relations without any real increase in the staff until now, I think for the first time during the year. We have maintained our staff levels and I believe that we are one Ministry who can show that we have had no significant increase in staffing during the four years in the Government, and I believe it is true to say that the External Ministry, the vote for External Affairs, as a percentage of the overall budget has decreased during the period that this Government was in power.

Mr. Chairman, I do not like to sing praises for any Ministries which I am really responsible for; I would

much prefer people to do that, but I believe that Barbados today has achieved economy in the cost of its external relations by keeping down the cost as a percentage of the overall budget of the country. I believe that our efficiency has improved in the manner in which we service as a whole the Government's external relations. I know that we have been co-ordinating external policies much more closely than we did in 1976 so that each Ministry is not running off doing its own thing without reference to the foreign policy implications of its actions. There is still scope for improvement in that regard.

We have managed to achieve a greater measure of technical co-operation and assistance and foreign aid than at any time since we became an independent country, and on the political level we are able to project Barbados's image in a forceful way standing up for principle and at the same time having policies that can be well respected not only in the Third World but I believe in the world as a whole.

Mr. Chairman, I think that when Barbados speaks at the United Nations, it is significant that the hall begins to fill by people coming back from the corridors into the hall there, and it is significant that many countries not only those close to us and our traditional friends but others now seek Barbados' views on a whole plethora of issues and listen to those views, and increasingly I think that a small country like ours must continue to play its role in international affairs and must make sure that the domestic values which we hold dear are reflected in the international stances which we take as well.

1.15 p.m.

If I may well sum up this period of the foreign policy and foreign relations of Barbados, I will say that it has been a successful policy, a mixture to some degree of aggressiveness, a great degree of understanding, and a substantial amount of initiative and success.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

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

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

HEAD 43 – MINISTRY OF HOUSING, LANDS AND ENVIRONMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, the Resolution which I seek to get parliamentary approval arises out of the damage which was done by Hurricane Allen on the 3rd August, 1980.

To hand, Sir, we have been able to identify some 650 houses which were damaged. About 70 of them were not fit for repairs and therefore Government has taken a decision to replace these houses. Some of them were

unoccupied at the time, many of them in very very bad condition, and some of them were owned by old age pensioners who have no other source of income but their pension.

The Government's decision therefore is clearly set out, to replace the houses owned by these people, and particularly those pensioners, the Government's decision is to make sure that the Welfare Department look after those persons.

We therefore seek \$150,000 for the purpose of replacing these houses, Sir, and in this we are giving a grant of \$1,500 free to the persons whose houses have been destroyed, and we are also making it possible for a loan of some \$11,500 to make it available to the other persons at a rate of 6%.

A number of the houses, Mr. Chairman, were in very very bad shape, and we are also making it possible for them to be given a 15 year period to repay the amount of money which Government is putting at their disposal. Of all these houses only one at the time was insured, and that house has already been repaired.

This brings me on to a very important point. Only a few weeks ago, Mr. Chairman, it was drawn to my attention that the member for St. Lucy said that there was a crisis in housing. I want to make this abundantly clear on the floor of the House. I do not know what crisis there is in housing, I can say for sure that there is a degree of decency and dignity brought back to the National Housing Corporation which did not operate in the last administration. The National Housing Corporation was bent around street corners, in the various pubs, in the dining halls and in the drawing rooms of people, and it was a known fact that people were prosecuted for embezzling funds from the National Housing Corporation. Bags of cement, truck loads of cement were taken, houses were built out of the National Housing Corporation, and only today, Sir, you will recognise that not since 1972 until 1976 when we came into office did the National Housing Corporation under the last administration have the audacity or the courage to publish a Housing Report, and today my Ministry has been able to impress upon the National Housing Corporation to stay within the Act, that a Report must be laid on the Table of Parliament.

Now, I am told, Sir, about this crisis. I thought a crisis would mean the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Housing would have resigned, that the Chairman of the Board, all of the members would have resigned, that the Chief Technical Director would have resigned, and the Architects and the Quantity Surveyors, and that there would have been a go-slow. I would consider that a crisis. What there is, Sir, at the time I was in Caracas with the Chief Technical Director, Mr. Louis Redman, and the Permanent Secretary examining the possibility of bringing things into Barbados for the

purpose of setting up a factory whereby there could be additional employment by having certain competence brought into housing.

I will also state here that there is a shortage in housing, not a crisis, and the shortage emanates out of the fact that people are earning more money, and we have not even started to build the houses at West Terrace yet which could come up to approximately — I cannot commit myself to this — but I would say approximately \$80,000, and over 3,000 people have already applied and are willing to pay down their 10% on them and get the money through Barbados Mortgage Finance Company to pay down on a house that costs \$80,000. This is simply because of proper economic management of the Ministry of Finance which has made it possible for these funds to be available. I do not call that a crisis, I consider it to be a shortage.

Why I call it a shortage also, you cannot get artisans to work, you have not got them, because when they were thinking of training young people to fill the gap that was created because of the exodus of the artisans who were leaving Barbados over the years, they were thinking of filling their own bellies to their own advantage, Sir, and ignoring the young people and their skills. You cannot get plumbers, carpenters, electricians, you cannot get steel benders, none of these in housing, and if the National Housing Corporation could employ the amount of carpenters, the amount of artisans, there will not be a shortage, because the money is made available by this Government for the purpose of erecting houses in this country.

Now, I hear about a crisis, but I think they get mixed up. They look for blood all the time in everything. They try to dramatise everything. All they have to do is go into Fernihurst in Black Rock. The member for St. Michael North Central said to me one day he believes he is going to run around Fernihurst, with his medical offices there and I think there are some 120 houses there in a period of two years since I was the Minister, and he can safely say the entire clientele concerns him, so he is thinking of even running in that constituency. Then the hon. member for St. Lucy had the nerve to get up and talk about a crisis in housing. There is no crisis, Sir, there is a shortage.

We now have young people in the Key Scale earning not less than \$500 a month, with the inflation down and the cost of living down as compared to when they were in power, they were earning \$264 a month, I think, and they had an inflation rate of 40%. So they have more money now, they come out on their own, they set up their own homes, so they make the applications to the National Housing Corporation. We have young men and women who normally would have lived with their grandparents or their mothers and fathers who are also leaving home, and this creates a shortage in housing, but

there is no crisis. As a matter of fact, they never had a Technical Director at the National Housing Corporation, there was no direction, nothing at all.

So I just want to make the position quite clear from this side, Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have done whatever there is in our power to make sure that we have been able to rehouse all these victims that suffered during Hurricane Allen. We have placed many of them in some of the houses owned by the National Housing Corporation, in temporary accommodation, and we are now embarking in so seeking this amount of money in this Resolution for the purpose of building houses for those people who already lost their houses.
1.25 p.m.

I would like, Sir, to pay special tribute to the work force of the National Housing Corporation and its Technical Director and the whole administrative staff for working beyond the call of duty, around the clock, to make sure that between the 3rd August, 1980 and today we have been able to repair all of the houses, Sir, and in places like Dominica and St. Lucia, over one and two years ago they are not in a position to get even 25% of their housing stock repaired.

I feel particularly happy and I could not sit down here unless I saluted all of those persons, the labourers, the Defence Force who came out and put at our disposal what skills they had had. They worked. They helped us cut the trees down, move them from off the houses, the Light and Power Co. Ltd., The Telephone Co., each and every single man had to put his hand to the wheel to make sure that Barbadians could be rehoused after Hurricane Allen.

With those few remarks, Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 43 stand part.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, on a point of order. I would really like the hon. member for St. Lucy to get up and say what he has had to say about housing on the last occasion. He has the chance now. I am back here now. Get up and talk now. I am here to answer you about all of the nonsense you walked about and were talking. He is sleeping now, a complete political clown. That is all he is, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

The question that Head 43 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Dr. CHELTENHAM, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, the Resolutions were read a second time and agreed to.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Sitting be now suspended until 300 p.m. We are in a bit of difficulty in that two matters which notice were given of earlier today, we want to be in a position to circulate them and give hon. members time to study them. I understand that one has been circulated and the other is in the process of being circulated.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3.00 p.m.

Mr. V. JOHNSON: I beg to second that.

The question that the Sitting be suspended until 3.00 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.
1.35 p.m.

On Resumption

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

Parliamentary Question No. 60 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Lucy.

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

To ask the Minister of Communications and Works:

1. Is the Minister aware that a Cadillac Seville (MP 1) was purchased with public funds for the use of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister?

2. Can the Minister state whether —

(a) the car MP 1 is in working order at present (28.11.80) and

(b) whether the car MP 1 can function satisfactorily on the leaded gasoline which is available in Barbados? and

(c) whether the changing of steering from left to right has affected:—

(i) the stability of the vehicle?

(ii) the safety of the vehicle? and

(d) whether the electronic controls in the car MP 1 are malfunctioning? If the answer to (d) is in the affirmative, can the Minister give reason for this?

3. Can the Minister state —

(a) How many times the car MP1 had to be repaired since it came to Barbados?

(b) The longest period that this car has been in the garage for repairs since its arrival?

(c) The cost of the repairs on MP 1 from the date of its arrival to the current date?

(d) the cost of insurance for the said motor car?

4. Will the Minister state if the service from the Cadillac Seville is satisfactory?

5. If the answer to (4) above is in the negative, will the Minister inform this Honourable Chamber what steps are being taken to improve the situation?

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 60 is as follows:

The Ministry of Communications and Works is not responsible for purchasing vehicles for or on behalf of other Ministries and Departments, nor does the Ministry monitor the performance of or carry out repairs on vehicles of each and every Ministry and Department of Government.

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business is now resumed and that the Resolution to deal with the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1980.

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant order of the day.

THE SUGAR INDUSTRY (REHABILITATION, PRICE STABILIZATION AND LABOUR WELFARE) ORDER, 1980.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is the annual Resolution pursuant to the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Act, Cap. 270 of the Laws of Barbados. It is necessary annually to fix levies on sugar and fancy molasses pursuant to the said Act.

In 1979 the levy was fixed at \$39.36 per metric ton. In this particular year, Sir, the proposed levy is to be \$34.69 for a ton of sugar and 1 097.65 litres of fancy molasses. The distribution is for the Labour Welfare Fund 0.1 cent, the Provident Fund \$12, and the total production of sugar and fancy molasses for the 1980 crop was 131,741.5 tons, that is metric tons, and the levy is to be collected in respect of that quantity.

Hon. members are familiar with the history of this matter and every year a Resolution pursuant to the said Act has to be passed by Parliament. It is my understanding, Sir, that it is the intention of the Government to reform the basis of these levies, but obviously this cannot be done without appropriate legislation. Certain proposals have been made as a result of a report on the reformation of this levy scheme. I understand that submissions from various bodies have also been made. Now the Government would be in a final position after considering the reports together with the representations that have been made by the relevant bodies to come before the House some time in the course of the next year for the purpose of dealing with this legislation.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In seconding that, I will very briefly say that this matter has been in the news so to speak, in recent months because there have been certain discussions as to Government's plans for dealing with the future of the levies. I am unfortunately not in a position to deal with these proposals *in extenso* today since the Ministry of Finance and Planning is at present considering submissions made by the Barbados Workers' Union and considering them with a certain degree of favour, if I may say so, Sir, and preparing for discussions with the Union on, if possible, a joint approach or an agreed approach to the levies, and to say anything more about the future of the levies, would I think be prejudicial to the outcome of those discussions. The levies are going to be reformed, but we very much hope that they will be reformed with as great a degree of assent of the workers' representatives as is possible.

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

**THE CABLE AND WIRELESS (WEST INDIES)
LIMITED (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1980**

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 5 stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Communications and Works.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am asking leave to deal with this Bill today in all its stages.

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, seeks to amend the Cable and Wireless (West Indies) Limited Act, Cap. 275 to provide as set out in the Objects and Reasons for the keeping of such books and records by that company as would enable the amount of revenue accruing to the company in Barbados to be determined and the manner of apportionment of that part of the revenue attributed to the provision of overseas telephone services.

Mr. Speaker, Cable and Wireless has been operating in Barbados for a number of years. Over the years the Ministry of Communications and Works that has been responsible for monitoring the operations of that institution has found it extremely difficult to get from the administrators of the institution the true figures relating to its expenditure and its revenue that would give the Government some indication as to the viability of the operation. Each time that they have submitted claims for increases in the rates of services from Barbados and they have been challenged to show justification for these increases, they have contended that they cannot give us any figures in relation to the accounts because they claim the accounts are all kept in London and they are never separated to show the performance of any individual territory.

Within the last year there has arisen a dispute between the Barbados Telephone Company and Cable and Wireless as to the apportionment of the share of revenue accruing from its overseas telephone services. The companies have met with the Government and in an effort to resolve the dispute we have asked for the presentation of certain figures so that we can see exactly what the two sides have been claiming. The position is that over the years there have been an apportionment of the revenue accruing from the overseas telephone services, and that figure now stands at 30% of the revenue to the Barbados Telephone Company and the remainder going to Cable and Wireless.

3.15 p.m.

When they were asked on what basis the division had been made the answer was that when Cable and Wireless and the Barbados Telephone Company were both owned by shareholders in Britain it was a gentleman's agreement between them as to how they divide the spoils, as I recall. The time has now come when Barbados as a sovereign country must assert its position in relation to companies operating in this country.

The investment of Cable and Wireless, as I understand it, is in the vicinity of some 24 to 30 million dollars, and since the installation of the Earth Station at Bath they have reduced their staff by attrition, because of the automation of the enterprise, while on the other hand the Telephone Company has raised its investment to some \$110 million. The staff increase of the Telephone Company has gone from 254 in 1966 to now 584 in 1980, but at the same time despite the increase in capital investment in the Barbados Telephone Company, which is responsible for the increased revenue accruing in the overseas telephone service, the division of the revenue still remains at 30%.

All over the world telephone companies that are connected with Cable and Wireless — and may I say the reason for the connection between the Telephone Company and Cable and Wireless is that the overseas calls although originating with the Telephone Company must go through the Cable and Wireless for transmission either via the satellite or via land lines or marine lines to the overseas countries to make the necessary connections — but as I said earlier, Cable and Wireless has been responsible for the increased traffic and the increased revenue in this operation, and yet still we find it impossible to have equitable sharing of the revenue between the two companies.

After several meetings and discussions we have been unable to resolve the situation. I believe in two other countries it has ended in law suits in the courts in which the courts have directed that Cable and Wireless should pay over a large amount to the Telephone Companies as a share of the revenue. There were agreements in Jamaica, because JAMINTEL is majority owned by the Jamaica Government; there has been agreement in Guyana — I think it is called GUYTEL — which is owned by the Guyana Government. In the case of Barbados we still believe in the question of free enterprise but we believe that free enterprise should operate on an equitable basis, and we have not yet bought into Cable and Wireless. The Government of the Democratic Labour Party had the opportunity in 1972 to take over the assets, or to buy as much as 51% of the assets, of Cable and Wireless without putting out one cent, and to pay for it over the years out of the profits of the company, but they did not take the opportunity to do so at that time.

In the Far East there have been cases in which the courts have pronounced on the question of sharing of the revenue, and we find that if Barbados is to fall in line with other countries dealing with Cable and Wireless, we must have the necessary legal basis which would make them keep the necessary books of account.

The companies cannot seem to agree as to how the funds should be divided. Unfortunately, as I say, Cable and Wireless through their Head Office have been rather

stubborn in understanding the development of telephone in Barbados. The Telephone Company has informed the Government that it hopes to go direct digital dialling by early 1981 to selected customers, and by 1982 the whole of Barbados will be on direct dialling to any part of the world.

The cost of installing the equipment is high, but commensurate with that, the revenue to be derived from the installation of such equipment will also be high. It is therefore necessary at this time that Government takes the appropriate steps to make sure that Government can oversee the operations of the two companies.

The Bill which we seek to pass today, Mr. Speaker, gives to the Government the right to make sure that such books and records of account containing information relating to the earnings of the overseas part of the revenue of the company are kept, and the necessary amendment therefore has got to be done to the Act if we want to have it done.

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

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

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

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

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, the Bill was read a third time and passed.
3.25 p.m.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply to deal with the matter which notice was given of earlier this morning, Supplementary Estimates, No. 25, Sir.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1980-81 No. 25

Order No. 1(c) was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$521,640 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1980-81, Part 2 – Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1980-81, No. 25 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 74 stand part. It is increased salaries, Sir. It is self-explanatory.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

HEAD 81 – MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND NATIONAL INSURANCE

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: This is in reference to the Bridgetown Sewerage Project, Sir. Increased salaries, utilities, professional services have been moving quite fast and therefore the Consultants' fees have been going up a little faster than has been anticipated.

I beg to move that this Head stand part.

Mr. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that.

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

HEAD 83 – MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, the Housing Welfare Programme some time ago transferred from the Ministry of Housing to the Ministry of Labour and Community Services. This is the programme under which the houses of indigent persons are repaired and also houses are supplied to old aged pensioners where pensioner houses cannot be repaired.

This is an extremely important programme, Sir, one to which the Government is barely committed and we have already this year spent the amount of \$800,000 in repairing 152 houses and providing 39 welfare houses for pensioners and indeed, I believe, in respect of perhaps other persons who also made use of these welfare houses.

The programme, however, should be continued, Sir, because there is a waiting list and we require another \$230,000 to finance it until the end of the Financial Year. Last year we were able to build 81 houses to provide for pensioners and repair 162 but this year the building programme has fallen a little behind and we are accordingly seeking to appropriate those funds.

I therefore beg to move that Head 83 stand part.

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

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

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

On separate motions of Hon. H. B. St.JOHN seconded by Mr. SIMMONS, the Resolution was read the second time and agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St.JOHN: I beg to move, Sir, that this House do now adjourn until Friday, December 12, at 2.30 p.m.

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

The question that the House do now adjourn until Friday, December 12, 1980 at 2.30 p.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
3.35 p.m.