
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 11th March, 1980.

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 Housing, Lands and the Environment); Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. H. deB. FORDE, S.C., M.A., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs); Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, M.A. (Econ.), Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); 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.; and Mr. L. L. SISNETT.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, the 26th day of February, 1980.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, these Minutes have been circulated and subject to any alterations or observations by any hon. members as to the accuracy thereof, I beg to move that they be confirmed.

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

The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday the 4th day of March, 1980.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Since there are no observations by hon. members, let the Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have received a Message from the Other Place inviting the concurrence of this Honourable House to an amendment by that Honourable House to the Barbados Development Bank (Amendment and Validation) Act, 1980 which passed this House on 19th February, 1980.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, I beg to lay the following:—

The Draft Estimates for 1980–81

The Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) Order, 1980.

On my behalf, I beg to lay the following:—

The Annual Report of the Welfare Department for the year January – December 1978.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister, I beg to give notice of the following:—

Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) Order, 1980.

I beg to give notice of the following:

Resolution to grant the sum of \$1,145,784 out of the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1979-80, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1979-80, No. 31, which form the schedule to the Resolution.

It is also, Mr. Speaker, my intention, subject to the approval of the House to deal in all of its stages today with this Resolution. Copies have been prepared and will be circulated in good time.

I also beg to give notice of the following:-

A Bill to validate certain matters relating to Land tax.

A Bill to grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of Barbados for the year ending 31st March, 1981.

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, a Bill to validate certain matters relating to Land Tax was read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, a Bill to grant a sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and to appropriate the same for the service of Barbados for the year ending 31st March, 1981 was read a first time.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move the Suspension of Standing orders 6, 16, 18, 20, and 42 (5) for the remainder of this Sitting.

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

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

Mr. BRADSHAW and Dr. CHELTENHAM entered the Chamber and took their seats.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, earlier today Your Honour informed us that you had a Message from

the Other Place asking our concurrence with the amendment to a Bill which was passed by this Honourable House and went to them. I would be very grateful if that could be the first Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am informed that copies of this Bill have been printed and were circulated this morning. 12.25 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the object of this amendment is a very slight amendment. It is to increase the number of Directors on the Board. This House has voted for an increase from five to seven and the Senate has recommended.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Other Place.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Other Place has recommended that the number be increased by the deletion of the word "five" and adding therefor "not more than ten". The Government has no objection to this. The proposed amendment is that the word "five" be deleted and in place of the word "seven" the words "not more than ten". That is the amendment that they have introduced up there. The Government has no objection to this. It would facilitate certain commitments that the Government has given to certain organisations in Barbados who have to deal with the Development Bank and they have made representations, the Manufacturers Association has made representation that they should have representation on the Board of Directors and the number seven would be insufficient to accommodate that request. Accordingly, the opportunity is being taken to concur in the amendment and have "not more than ten" and this will give the Minister of Finance flexibility to appoint a larger number of people to make the directorate more representative of the people whom they deal with. Accordingly, Sir, I beg to move that this House do now concur in the amendment.

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

The question that the House concur in the amendment was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Item No. 1 was called - to move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of sums of money for the service of this Island.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply and I also request that the Resolution of which earlier notice was given this morning that the Committee be instructed to deal with that also

at the appropriate time after hon. members of course have had an opportunity.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Leader of the House is seeking the leave of this Hon. House to deal with a money Resolution in all its stages, intimation of which he gave notice earlier in his introduction. If there is no objection (*Pause*) there being no objection leave is granted.

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 on the Resolution, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Item 1(a) was called – to move the passing of the Resolution to amend the note to Item 11 of Head 115 – Ministry of Education and Culture; and to grant the sum of \$216,098 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1979–80, No. 30, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1979–80, NO. 30
DEFENCE AND SECURITY DIVISION HEAD
6(1) DIRECTION AND POLICY
FORMULATION

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the amount of money that is provided under Personal Emoluments was inadequate in this year chiefly by reason of the fact that a number of additional Security Guards had to be appointed during the course of the financial year to look after the security at the airport and other areas. This Hon. House for instance. This provision had to be supplemented to cater to these people. The laying of an amendment to the appropriate order will come before the House incorporating such of these provisions as the Chief Establishments Officer is of the opinion are likely to be of a permanent nature. In the meantime, money has to be voted for them and this is the object of this supplementary.

I beg to move that Head 6(1) Item 2 stand part.

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

The question that Head 6(1) Item 2 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1979–80 NO. 30
HEAD 6(2) BARBADOS DEFENCE FORCE

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the notes are very self explanatory in respect of this Item, Sir. The training provisions vote were inadequate in view of the

level of training that is taking place and the numbers of people that are in training.

Under Item 15, Sir, the Defence Force has not been able yet to get possession of the area at the Garrison which has been assigned to them. Hon. members will be aware of the fact that there were a number of Government Departments which occupied areas within the compound of St. Ann's Fort. These buildings were formally residences and it is the intention of the Government that they will revert to their former use as soon as it is convenient for the Development Bank and the other Government Department, which is, the Chief Supply Office, and we are hoping that new accommodation will be found for these two institutions at a very early date. As a matter of fact, both institutions are awaiting completion of certain buildings and in the meantime we are looking for temporary places for them so that the Defence Force can assume full control of St. Ann's Fort and surrounding areas which have been assigned to it, Sir.

I beg to move, Sir, that Head 6(2) stand part.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.
12.35 p.m.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, in introducing this particular Head 16, the Minister said that the money passed has proved inadequate in view of the levels of training which are currently taking place and I would just seek some information. I am wondering if he could tell us something about this level of training that is taking place and give this House some indication of the numbers involved and the type of training that is taking place.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, people have gone to Canada for training and people have gone to the United Kingdom for training particularly in the area of officer, Coast Guard level, and I believe there is a junior officer's course in Canada at which an officer had secured a place and that officer is now back. It is at the junior level, Lieutenant level of that type or some Lieutenant level; they have to go through this preliminary training course. Nobody has been to Sandhurst for the specialised training they have there as yet. Maybe the Hon. Attorney General is more familiar with this than I am because he is a member of the Board; I am not a member of the Defence Board, but I do see that there are two people who have gone for training in the particular areas. In addition of course there would be some people at the lower level who would have received specific training in some aspects relating to the particular work that they do, but these are the outstanding examples.

The question that the sum of \$57 278 under Head 6 – Defence and Security (2) Barbados Defence Force, stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 115 – Ministry of Education and Culture – was called.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, we are seeking simply in this matter to amend the note in the Estimates under Item 11 – Textbooks and Teaching Materials. The note should be amended to read "To provide books and other teaching materials needed in Primary Schools and to meet the needs of the CXC Syllabus".

I beg to move that Head 115 – Ministry of Education and Culture – stand part.

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

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, I seek your guidance on this matter under the current Head we are discussing because I have a problem which has now become a national issue in relation to a little boy's education at one of the top schools in this country, and I believe that under this Head I am in a position to have some clarification from the Minister of Education as to where the Ministry stands in this matter.

Most Barbadians over the week-end would have learnt of a sad story in which one of the local weeklies reported the plight of a thirteen year old school boy who happens to reside in the constituency which I represent. Under this Head I am seeking your guidance to find out whether I can express the sorry, the sadness and the fate of this helpless unfortunate youth. I want first to make the article of the Sun of March 9, 1980 a document of the House and from that I wish to refer.

Some time in January this year it was brought to my attention that a pupil of the Lodge School was expelled because.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member would just bear with me for a moment, I do believe that the matter which you obviously seek to discuss and which you wish to have brought before this Chamber could be better done so under other procedures, but here we are discussing an item dealing with textbooks and teaching materials. I am sure it is an interesting matter and one which I am sure the Committee or the House for that matter would be willing to entertain, but I can't concede that it is relevant at this particular time.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, I thank you, and it is exactly for that reason I am dealing with textbooks, because the boy has not been able to use his textbooks since November 26. If I can proceed, Mr. Chairman, I would kindly ask your indulgence to deal with the matter because it is one of national importance to the child, to the people of St. Michael North East, to the Barbados Government. I would really seek your indulgence to proceed with this matter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Chair would not concede to your request at this time. My ruling is that it could be more effectively dealt with in another way.
12.45 p.m.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, will you tell me. . .

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You cannot question the Chair.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, are we not dealing with secondary schools? Are we not seeking funds to assist other schools?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled on this, please.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for St. Michael North East has for the time that you have allowed him made reference to a matter of the Lodge School and some record will appear on this matter in the debate for today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must tell the Hon. Minister that I have already ruled on this and I'm sure that when the hon. member heeds my advice and brings the matter the Hon. Minister will have ample time and opportunity to explain the whole thing. I will not entertain it at this stage.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I abide by your rulings, Sir, but I take it that the whole of what he has said has been expunged from the record.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must say in all fairness to all other hon. members, if I can be assured that it is the wish of this House to deal with this matter, I may very well. . . I stick to my ruling and it has to remain, please.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, are we not dealing with Education?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled.

The question that Head 115 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1979–80 No. 31

HEAD 5(2) – PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICE

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, in moving that Head 5(2) stand part, I think that it is appropriate for me to indicate to hon. members of this House the situation with respect to travel and subsistence.

Negotiations between the National Union of Public Workers and the Government started in October 1978. These negotiations were completed in May 1979. It is obvious that the Estimates for 1979–80 were prepared

upon the old scales of awards for travelling. It therefore became incumbent upon all Accounting Officers in all the Ministries to scrutinise carefully their respective votes with a view to implementing the decision which was agreed not only by Cabinet but by this Hon. House. The House subsequently passed the necessary authorisation for the Public Officers Loan and Travelling Allowance Regulations, 1979 to be implemented. The House, Cabinet having declared the law of the land with respect to the amount awarded, it was purely a matter of machinery for the Accounting Officers to scrutinise their votes to see whether they had funds at their disposal. As soon as requests were made for supplementaries, those requests were duly processed and brought to this House by way of supplementary. It is therefore inaccurate for anyone to say that there has been obstruction in the implementation of an agreement which has received Cabinet approval and legislative concurrence in accordance with the Financial Administration and Audit Act of this country.

This Resolution is the last of a series of Resolutions which will come before the House to supplement the Estimates in order to give full implementation to this. I want to say, Sir, that hon. members should be made aware that Members of Parliament, Ministers are not the people who are responsible for the calculation and disbursement of Government funds, so that if there is any criticism to be attached it is criticism to be attached to the people whose duty it is to prepare and formulate for approval of Cabinet and this House the necessary Instruments to give effect to legislative concurrence in that Resolution.

Item 3 for \$4,031, is the Ministry of the Government Information Office's requirement to implement this decision.

I beg to move that Head 5(2) stand part.

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

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

HEAD 8(8) – LAND VALUATION

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Again, Sir, this is Item 4 – Travel and Subsistence. I beg to move that this stand part.

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

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

HEAD 8(9) – STATISTICAL SERVICES

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 8(9) stand part.

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

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

HEAD 11(1) – JUDICIARY – SUPREME COURT

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: I beg to move that Head 11(1) stand part.

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

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

HEAD 13(1) – CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM DIVISION

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Item 2 of this stands in a different category from the others. The new airport opened in October – the end of October, the first of November – last year and the method of cleaning the new airport is different from the previous method of so doing. A separate maintenance unit has been set up under the control of a Maintenance Division headed by an Engineer who is responsible for all aspects of maintenance at the airport, and the janitorial services which were performed on a contractual basis for the old terminal building has now become his responsibility.
12.55 p.m.

The vote for the old contract was inadequate to cover the extension area to be cleaned at the new terminal building. It is therefore necessary that the vote be supplemented. The contract expired at the end of September last year, so this synchronised with the opening of the new airport last November. The contract having expired, the opportunity was taken to introduce new staff as necessary, so that there was a trial period at the new terminal. There were people

lent to us from Canada who carried out a training system for new janitorial staff and they had the opportunity of working with these people and preparing manuals. We also had the opportunity to receive training in the necessary checking procedures to ensure that the cleaning would reach an acceptable standard. I think hon. members who have had the opportunity of seeing the standard of cleaning in the new terminal building will agree that it is a vast improvement on the old one. Obviously this is a matter that requires constant supervision and every effort will be made to ensure that there is a continuous amount of training and that the most modern methods are used to keep the new terminal building up to the standard set so far.

In respect of Utilities, Item 7, it will be appreciated that the amount of money voted for in the Ministry in respect of the old airport would be inadequate to cover the much larger area in the new terminal. It is still very difficult to predict the amount of electricity that will be used, but every effort is being made to monitor this with a view to practising the greatest amount of conservation possible. Studies are being carried out with a view to discovering whether there might be a more economical way of electrifying the area other than through direct mains from the Electric Company. Those studies have been commissioned and I may say this is a problem we share with other terminal buildings. I believe that in a number of terminal buildings abroad, because of the large amount of electricity they use they have found it more economical to generate their own electricity and use the utility company as a stand-by. A study is going on to see how we can save in this direction. However, under the terms of the agreement part of the money will be recovered as users have to pay a proportionate part of the cost of electricity in their rents, etc.

The other Item is Travel and Subsistence, and the remarks made under other Heads apply equally to this.

I beg to move that Head 13(1) stand part.

The question that Head 13(1) stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS HEAD 14(1) – DIRECTION AND POLICY FORMULATION

Head 14 Ministry of Communications and Works (1) – Direction and Policy Formulation was called.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 14(1) stand part.

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

The question that Head 14(1) stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14(3) – ROADS, CAR PARKS & BUS STANDS

Head 14(3) – Roads, Car Parks & Bus Stand was called.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 14(3) stand part.

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

The question that Head 14(3) stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14(4) – VEHICLES AND WORKSHOP

Head 14(4) – Vehicles and Workshop was called.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 14(4) stand part.

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

The question that Head 14(4) stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 14(7) – ELECTRICAL ENGINEER'S DEPARTMENT

Head 14(7) – Electrical Engineer's Department – was called.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 14(7) stand part.

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

The question that Head 14(7) stand part of the Schedule was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 115 – MINISTRY OF EDUCATION & CULTURE

Head 115 – Ministry of Education – Text Books and Teaching Material was called.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether I would still be out of place in raising under the Head of Education and Culture the matter of a boy allegedly expelled from school for eating someone's lunch.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot entertain the hon. member at this time on the matter which he seeks to pursue.

Mr. SISNETT: I really seek your indulgence in this matter, Mr. Chairman, because it is one of national interest. A boy's future is in jeopardy because of a statement from the Headmaster about eating someone's lunch.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member take his seat; he is out of order. However much I would like to indulge him I cannot.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Head 115 (11) stand part.

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

The question that Head 115(11) stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you now report the passing of two resolutions in Committee. I want to assure the hon. member for St. Michael North East, however, that he will have an opportunity as soon as Monday to raise the matter, as the Head Education will be called and he will be able to give his views on the matter.

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
1.05 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, the Resolutions were read a first time.

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, the Resolutions were read a second time.

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, the Resolutions were agreed to.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That concludes Government Business for today.

The Estimates were laid today and on Monday, in accordance with the Rules we have to start at an appropriate time so we will start at 10.00 o'clock on Monday. As usual we have five days in which to do the Estimates. Appropriate arrangements will be made as usual for the staff and hon. members so that we will be able to conclude the Appropriation for this year.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move, Sir, that this House do now adjourn until Monday the 17th day of March, at 10.00 a.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before I put the motion for the Adjournment, the hon. member for St. Lucy has submitted two Questions and I now give him leave to ask the first Question relating to an open Pond in the Parish of St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: Thank you very much. To ask the Appropriate Minister:

Is the Minister aware that there is a large open pond at Hope Plantation in the Parish of St. Lucy adjacent to the road leading to Hope Road via the Spring Hall/Hope Plantation road?

Is the Minister aware that there is no fence or other provision to protect vehicular traffic and/or pedestrians from falling into this pond?

Will the Minister investigate the above and institute such measures as to ensure there is some secure protection around this pond?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same hon. member his question respecting a Bridge at Pie Corner, St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: To ask of the appropriate Minister:—

Is the Minister aware that provision was made in the 1977/78 Estimates for the construction of a bridge at Pie Corner in the Parish of St. Lucy?

Is the Minister aware that despite acquisition of the land for the Project having been completed no work has yet been started?

Will the Minister therefore state the reasons for the delay in the construction of the bridge?

And will the Minister inform this House when construction is expected to commence and the approximate date of completion?

The question that the House do now adjourn until Monday, 17th March, 1980 at 10.00 a.m. was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
1.15 p.m.