

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 - 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 7th April, 1981.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, Q.C., B.Sc., LL.D., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. R. St. C. WEEKES, C.B.E., J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment); Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Minister of Communications and Works); Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, M.A. (Econ.); Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M.; Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Health and National Insurance); 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; Mr. V. L. JOHNSON, M.A.; Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Culture); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT and His Honour E. E. ALLEYNE, LL.M., (Deputy Speaker).

Prayers were read by Archdeacon F. A. Cayless.

Mr. TAITT entered the House and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Monday, 16th March, 1981.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of Monday, 16th March, 1981 be confirmed.

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Customs Tariff (Amendment) Order, 1981.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Attorney General, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Police Act, Cap. 167.

QUESTIONS

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following question:

To ask of the Minister responsible for Tourism and Civil Aviation:

1. Is the Minister aware that the Canadian airline WARDAIR proposes to terminate its services to Barbados from the end of April, 1981 until the next Winter Season?

2. Is the Minister further aware that the German Airline CONDOR will terminate its services to Barbados in May, 1981 for an indefinite period?

3. Is the Minister aware of the serious effect that the loss of these services will have on many of the hotels and apartment hotels in Barbados during the summer season of 1981, particularly with respect to their financial results and their ability to offer continuing employment to many of their employees?

4. Will the Minister state the circumstances under which this unfortunate situation has arisen and assure this Honourable House that everything reasonably possible to dissuade these airlines from terminating their services has been done?

BILLS READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Hon. L. R. TULL seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, a Bill to amend the Police Act, was read a first time.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Order No. 2.

THE BARBADOS NATIONAL STANDARDS INSTITUTION (CERTIFICATION MARKS) ACT, 1981

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 2 stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, to move the second reading of a Bill to make provision respecting the Certification and marking of goods.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I should like to say first of all how happy I am to see the Opposition benches occupied. At least it is certainly a welcome sign and I hope their presence here is indicative of the fact that there will be useful and fruitful exchange on both sides on matters which will come before us today. It is certainly a welcome change and I hope that nothing at all is done which will cause them to run away.

The document which I have in my hand and which I am sure is already a document of this Honourable House, and which is much read by the other side and which has now become the bible of this Honourable House and I believe the country at large, contains the party's policy with respect to standardisation, and I wish here to restate the position with respect to this question, and it comes on page 5 under "Consumer Protection".

"The Barbados Labour Party recognises that consumers are at a great disadvantage compared to manufacturers and suppliers. Its members in Parliament have repeatedly urged the DLP Government to reform and strengthen the laws governing consumer protection and consumer credit. As part of its commitment to the provision of cheaper and better goods, fairer trading practices and accountability by manufacturers and distributors, a BLP administration will:-

"Financially assist and strengthen the Consumer Association, encouraging it to establish further branches throughout the Island."

12.30. p.m.

Pass anti-dumping Legislation to prohibit the dumping of goods which are considered to be less than fair market value and which constitute unfair competition to Barbadian Manufacturers.

Strengthen the Bureau of Standards, confer on it adequate powers and widen its responsibility to advise on measures to control false or misleading advertising and the testing of advertisers' claims, etc."

The Barbados Labour Party in its efforts in this Government to carry out fully it pledges to the consumers has been able recently to recruit an advisor on Consumer Affairs from Ontario. He used to be a Minister in the Ontario Government dealing with standardization and he is regarded as an expert in this field. He was recently in Barbados and we have had many fruitful discussions but the problem with respect to standardization is that unless you have the force of law in order to ensure that standards are maintained, you are going to always have a problem of counterfeit products and I say that without any apology.

We have become part of a larger organization throughout the world which is committed to standardization and we have been discovering in Barbados that because of standards which are not mandatory, that our products which are manufactured here, are experiencing great difficulties in getting into certain markets abroad.

The Barbados National Standards Institution, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, although Government supported, is not a Government Institution as such. When it was conceived, the idea behind it was that it would be supported in the initial stages by Government and that the manufacturing Sector in the Island would in the fullness of time take over from the Government.

Unfortunately, they have not been very fast in doing this. At least they have not been having any speed, at all in doing this and we find that despite the fact that we have been trying to persuade the manufacturers in Barbados mostly to get involved in standardization that we have been finding great difficulty in getting them to come forward.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, that we must have certain items which must be mandatory as far as standards are concerned and these items in the main will deal with food, particularly, because food, as you know, Mr. Speaker, is vital to the health of any community. In Barbados we are now seeing the emergence of a number of canning factories in the country. We have BARPAC and we also have one that is centered here in Bridgetown which comes under the aegis of Hanschell Inniss, the Harrison chain of Companies and I understand that there are many other Companies that have made application to

the Ministry of Trade for permission to manufacture their products in Barbados.

These products can only gain acceptance and admittance in countries which are adopting standardization, if they have the official Standards Mark of the Barbados National Standards Institution and, as you are aware, Mr. Speaker, the industrial sector has made a significant contribution towards the national well-being in terms of income and foreign exchange and therefore it is incumbent upon us, as a Government, that we should try to protect them even from themselves, by creating the climate whereby the goods as manufactured by them can be regarded as of such a high standard that they will have no problem when it comes to other countries receiving these goods.

Under the Act, the Minister on the advice of the Barbados National Standards Institution, will put out a list from time to time on those items necessary to be made mandatory. From the inception of the Barbados National Standards Institution they have perfected over 125 standards and of these 125 something like 30 standards are regarded as standards that should be made mandatory and we feel that the time has come when a positive approach should be made in this matter towards a comprehensive policy of consumer affairs and the well-being of consumers in this country.

After the Report of Mr. Hanover, who is the advisor, is submitted and the consultants come here to further carry out the study with respect to consumer affairs, we would hope, then, to put existing legislation and wherever legislation does not exist to put it in proper and good shape. We were hoping long before this time to come up with a very positive approach but we experienced great difficulty at the time in recruiting some person whom we thought was equalled to the task which we have now undertaken but as the saying goes, it is better late than never.

This part of the legislation which we are dealing with here today, Mr. Speaker, Certification and Marking of Goods Act, is the beginning of the whole package of legislation to deal generally with consumer goods. I do not know how many people might be aware but the Barbados National Standards Institution has been advising a number of manufacturers as to what type of goods they should bring into Barbados and if they are manufacturing, what type of product they should put on the market.
12.40 p.m.

They have been testing fabrics and the type of dyes that should be used in these fabrics and they have been giving the manufacturers of fabrics their experience in these matters. They have been looking at things like honey, we were at one stage exporting honey and it was discovered that that honey was defective, it was not in

the type of shape for export and they were involved to the extent to advise as to the standard of honey.

Quite recently, they have been looking at bread and on that, it might be necessary to say that I have recently given the instructions that all the manufacturers of bread should be told in blunt terms that because they have not been able to get the type of increase that they were hoping for we do not expect to see any lowering of standards as far as bread is concerned and instructions have been given to the Barbados National Standards Institution to ensure that what is on the labelling of bread and that the ingredients should be put on the labelling of bread as well. We have been looking at feed, we have been looking at the type of mixture for concrete and a host of things we have been looking at for the manufacturing industry because if things are to be marketed under BNSI and therefore, the name of Barbados, we expect to have high quality goods because we are not only looking at the CARICOM markets, we are looking farther afield and with that type of approach and the type of acceptance which we hope that proper standards will give, our country and products will gain wide acceptance.

In Trinidad, we have had discussions with respect to the products coming from BARPAC and we have assured them that we will make sure that whatever comes out from there is a product which we put forward to them. With this piece of Legislation, Mr. Speaker, I feel that we are moving in the right direction and I have no doubt whatever in my mind that the Honourable House will give full backing to this Bill. This Bill is of great importance to the manufacturing development of this country, it is useful for the agro industry sector and all industrial sectors and I commend this Bill to this Honourable House for its acceptance.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is.....

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Minister introducing this Bill unfortunately found it necessary to give a little discourse before launching into his position on the Bill and as he did Sir, he reminded me of what one Honourable Member in the House of Commons recently said of Sir Geoffrey Howe. He said that:

"An attack by Sir Geoffrey was like being savaged by a dead sheep."

It is in such vein Sir that we pass the little note of the Honourable Minister.

This Bill is about five years late, Sir, and I would have hoped that when the Honourable Minister brought this Bill and the companion Bill that he would explain to this Honourable House why it has taken five years for this measure to reach this Stage.

Mr. Speaker, as early as 1972, when the Honourable Members of this Side were in the vanguard of moving Barbados into the twenty-first Century in the context of the arrangements to be made for the citizens of this country, we recognised that there were a number of measures which had to be undertaken if Barbados and Barbadians were going to survive in the last quarter of the twentieth Century and move into the new Century. As an agricultural society developed along agricultural lines, the concept of buying and selling in the commercial sphere and not always, indeed for a long time had not at all taken much notice of the consumer. Rather, the history of our country suggests that it has always been a sellers' market, it has always been a situation in which he who was selling not only dictated what was to be sold, but he dictated how it was to be sold and at what price it was to be sold. Unfortunately, in the last five years, we have seen a return to that rather negative philosophy of buying and selling in the community.

But Sir, more important, we had hoped during the five years that we would see a continuation of the dynamism started in the early part of the seventies towards a higher quality of life for consumers in this country. Mr. Speaker, in 1972, when I addressed the Barbados Standards Institution when we established the Barbados Standards Institution, there were Sir statements which I made then which are still valid today. I recall, Sir and I am quoting from notes of a statement I made Sir and would be happy to make it a document of the Honourable House if necessary, but Sir, I remember making the point that standardisation was vital and necessary for a country like Barbados that had been moving from an agricultural community into an industrialised community. I said then and I quote:

"Quite a number of items which are imported into this community are of questionable quality. It is a fact that certain products which come to Barbados as first quality items are sold in the more developed countries as seconds."

I made the point then that some of the meats and certain fish, which were sold in Barbados then, while they may merely pass the existing health standard were at the most of inferior quality.

I recall, as an example Sir that soon after I took the responsibility for the Ministry of Trade, it became clear that certain kinds of so-called salted fish brought into Barbados were not available anywhere else in the world, except in Jamaica and in Barbados and steps were taken immediately to bring about the cessation of the importation of that kind of fish which in North America was being used for the production of cat food and dog food.

12.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I noted in that speech that there were other aspects of poor quality. There were, and there still are, some people in this society who believe that once they have delivered a gadget and they have received a price that their responsibility had ended at that point. I indicated, for example, that the need to supply spare parts formed part of the responsibility to any supplier of implements or instruments in a society like Barbados, and I went on to make this point, Sir. I said that ours was a rapidly developing country and we must build together as a nation to promote the health and well-being of the people of Barbados, and I quote now, Sir. I said: "This means that all interests in Barbados must co-operate in those areas where the benefits redounding to the country would be greatest. In this respect we see the establishment of a National Standards Institution as another area in which both Government and industry should participate."

We received assistance of \$434,000 from the United Nations Development Programme for the establishment of a Standards Institution. We received the assistance of a Dr. Gosh, who regretfully died in service in Barbados, but he had been here for two years assisting in the creation and development of a Standards Institution. We sent out the present Director of the Barbados National Standards Institution to a long course in India, in Europe, in North America, so that he could become proficient and be capable of directing the new Standards Institution when it was created, and subsequently we sought further overseas assistance and we got Dr. Singh, another Indian, who came here and who was an expert in the field of quality control, and who spent a substantial amount of time in Barbados assisting manufacturers and producers in aspects of quality control and quality development.

Mr. Speaker, without relating the entire history of the National Standards Institution, it is necessary to put in perspective the attitude of this Government in relation to quality in Barbados. This Government, the Democratic Labour Party Government, pursued relentlessly the establishment of the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity and the Barbados National Standards Institution because we saw them together as operating to uplift the total quality of manufacturing and production in this country. We saw the Standards Institution not only as being crucial because independent countries ought to have Standards Institutions, but because, Sir, our society was in the state of changeover where many of the importers in the community continued to see themselves as importers, while new and different people were taking on the responsibility of manufacturing and producing in the new areas of development.

We felt it was necessary for us as a Government, and we still feel it is necessary for us as leaders in the community, to insist that the people of Barbados always have at their disposal a quality product, whether it was produced in Barbados, or even more importantly, when it is imported from outside of Barbados.

Recently, Sir, to give you an example of why this is necessary, there was a newspaper story about some foreign matter being found in a tin of corned beef. The newspaper reported it as being the meat of a rodent. I do not know that this is necessarily so, but what seemed to have been clear was that it was not corned beef in that particular can that was sold as corned beef. That could happen perhaps anywhere, but if in fact the system which had been started in the Ministry of Trade had been continued where prior to the importation of any new brand of corned beef or other similar product into this country it was tested extensively by a number of the agencies which exist in this country, the chances are that if in fact foreign matter was being imported as corned beef it would have been found.

I do not wish to dwell on that, because I do not think that that is the only matter, or the matter on which one can fault the present Government, or indeed any of the Ministers who have been responsible for consumer affairs, what I wish to point out is that there ought not to be any Labour Party way or Democratic Labour Party way when it comes to the question of standards for the people of Barbados. If the political people on that side, as the political people on this side continue to say that they are for the upliftment of the standards of the people of this country, then there ought not to be any glad crowing or any bragging at the fact that five years later they have brought down a measure that was put in train in 1972. It was put in train, Sir, and it was argued and it was successfully stated that mandatory standards form a significant part of the policy of the Barbados National Standards Institution. Why should it take five years to come?

Mr. Speaker, in 1975 I addressed the Life Underwriters' Association. They have some very high standards of operation. Life Underwriters try to operate at a very high level, Sir. In order to sell insurance an insurance agent has, when he appears before the potential customer, to look good, smell good, speak well, among other things. The hon. member used to be like that, Sir, when he was an insurance salesman. I cannot speak for him now, Sir, because I have no close contact with him, but the fact is that no insurance agent can sell a policy in Barbados unless he is selling it to the people in his household, unless he takes the trouble to package his product, and invariably the product which he is packaging involves his own presentation, his personal presentation. I used

them in an analogous way to deal with the quality situation in Barbados. Here is what I said, Sir:

"Ladies and Gentlemen, there is a clear duty and responsibility for a Government to protect the consumer from producer error and sellers abuse. There is a compelling need to foster and encourage responsible production-consumption relationships, but consumers in Barbados should recognise that they have the advantage and strength of numbers. Collectively the consumer is a force that neither Government nor business could long ignore. It is the consumer's decision, consumer's action that is the final authority, and any response by business is, or ought to be, a reaction to consumer behaviour."

Now, Sir, when I hear the hon. member speaking of a gentleman who I believe came from CIDA and passed through Barbados briefly a couple of weeks ago, a gentleman who in the course of the Government putting together a programme, they were — if you will pardon the expression — scrambling around to find people for him to talk to to give the impression that there is a programme. Mr. Speaker, in 1981 it is disgraceful that we do not have a thriving consumer organisation in the country.....

1.00 p.m.

And I am saying that in a community like Barbados the Government has a responsibility to assist and spearhead consumer organisations in the country. The Minister gets up and reads from his manifesto about what they promised to do. I do not believe that any Minister who is reasonable, that is as far as I can go in this Honourable House, should get up and look at his manifesto where they made certain specific promises concerning consumers and read it and feel that he is being fair to the people of Barbados. How can he get up and read that? For four years the consumers of Barbados have dwelt in this community as if the Government and them were strangers. Let it not be denied, it cannot be denied, it may be denied by them, but let them go out in the highways and byways and ask the people if the people believe that this has been a Government which is interested in the consumer in this country. If there is one area that none of the hon. members on that side — the hon. member who is up front I would exclude for the time being — can go out into the highways and byways and produce chapter and verse on what they have done for the consumer in this country. Do they believe that any Minister, be he Prime Minister or otherwise, can do that? I heard on my television and watched some of the brutalisation of people who are unable to respond to them. Do they believe that that is the way that you deal with consumers in this country. (*Asides*) It was

intellectually dishonest to take four increases in 1974, one after the other, and say that you had four increases in 1974 and cite that as an indication.....

Mr. SPEAKER: These are standards. I take it you are referring to standards.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir. I am dealing with the standards which they operate. (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: You just stick to the standards.

Mr. TAITT: Anyone who indicates that four rises after the other constitute some inefficiency when in fact they did not compare what the four rises would have been without controls could only be described as an exercise in intellectual dishonesty. (*Asides*) When anyone in the discussion attempts to suggest — I am talking about the standards, Sir — in the importation of cement into this country that (a) proper standards are not required and (b) that any attempt was made to take money from one area to put it into another, that, Sir, is not true because the files would demonstrate that it is not true. (*Asides*) The cess, Sir, for your information was a rice cess. The cess was a cess....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please; stick to the debate and do not get carried away. I do not want to interfere.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, in protecting the consumer it was necessary because there was fluctuation in the movement of shipment cost. It was established by the private sector that in order to maintain a standard price over a reasonable period of time — this is something which anyone who remotely understands the movement of goods and services will appreciate — rather than having a fluctuating price over five weeks or so, that the price would be fixed and that when the price moved upward the importer would benefit from the arrangement, and when the price moved downwards the consumer would benefit from the arrangement. Any attempt to parley that into a form that it was not, again could only be described as being intellectually dishonest.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: On a point of order, I will have in the fullness of time to reply to the hon. member, and I would want to be on clear wavelengths. I do not know what he is talking about the price going up and down.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please. I appreciate the Minister's anxiety. I too am trying to relate what the hon. member is saying with what is really before the House proper. I am appealing to the hon. member to stick to the Bill that is before the House.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, that it is necessary for the people of Barbados to be able to purchase products in

comfort is vital. When, for example, a person goes to buy a cement block, that person when building a house must be able to go to sleep in the knowledge that the strength of that particular block is what it purports to be.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is now on the point.

Mr. TAITT: It is for these reasons, Sir, that when recently we heard that a large construction in Florida had crumbled and hundreds of people or scores of people were either injured or killed that one could sympathise with the concept of standardisation, for when the investigation of the cause of that tragedy takes place, the chances are that it will be found that some one of the myriad people involved in the construction had in fact cut a corner here or cut a corner there. It seems axiomatic that people in the profit-making sector when not, shall we say, supervised in the broadest sense or when not supervised at all will in their effort to make profit cut corners. We have seen it in Barbados.

Many a person in Barbados today is reeling under the attack of shoddy work which may come not from the majority of people who manufacture, not from the majority who produce, but the odd person who in an attempt to cut corners to arrive early at a goal he or she had set themselves, took the short route instead of going through the processes that are necessary if we are to have a proper standard of living and a proper standard for everything in Barbados. So that the architect in Barbados has standards which are set primarily by the quality of his profession. But even the architect requires some guidance from his professional organisation. The producer of the product used, whether it is steel, whether it is concrete blocks or whatever needs some guidance so that he can be aware that there is a standard below which he will not go.

Sir, in the larger community it is possible through the courts to recover damages if one is able to prove negligence, but Sir, it is not always possible, it is not always feasible for everyone who has been damaged to find relief in the courts. It is therefore the responsibility of a Government in a society such as ours to take the lead in ensuring that there is a standard below which manufacturers and producers will not fall.

Sir, let us take the production of agricultural produce in Barbados. In the early Seventies we had reached a stage where the grading of produce had started becoming automatic in the society. I recall, Sir, that the Development Division of the Barbados Marketing Corporation assisted by the Barbados National Standards Institution in cooperation with the regional approach to standardisation and the regional approach to the production of agricultural products had in fact created a standard for onions.

1.10 p.m.

Now, not a BNSI standard but a quality standard. They had reached a quality standard for carrots, a quality standard for all of the other products in Barbados and whenever you purchased, whether you purchased yams, carrots, beets, whatever you purchased in Barbados the chances were that that the source, at the plantation itself, they engaged in grading.

In recent times, Sir, it appears that there has been a falling back. It appears that the rigidity of standardization which had started in the early 1970's has taken a back step and now, Sir, what is happening is that the consumer finds himself or herself paying the same price for the high quality product as he or she pays for the low quality product.

It is vital in a society like Barbados that the Government takes the lead in assisting, patrolling and finally mandating that certain standards form part of the society's goals and the society's norms so that the coming of this Certification and Marking of Goods and the companion Bill which I presume will follow it, is a matter which will find no argument of this side. It will find no rejection on this side.

We were the pioneers in Barbados. We were the pioneers of standardization in Barbados. We created the Barbados National Standards Institution. We put the Institution at Flodden. The Prime Minister of that day had no objection to living in a house a few yards away from the Standards Institution. We found it necessary to utilize the Government's properties to effect the policies and I recall, Sir, that the Prime Minister of that day, when we were searching for a site, the Prime Minister of that day himself came out and suggested that that site would form a good enough place for the Standards Institution and we built the Laboratory and extended it further than it was intended precisely because as individuals we, in that particular Cabinet, every one had an interest in seeing a high standard for all of our systems and products in Barbados.

We rejoiced with the Barbados National Standards Institution creating its first 13 standards in its first year. I do not think that I ought to glory in the fact that I was the first President of the National Standards Institution because it was a matter of law. We created it in such a way that whoever was the Minister responsible for Consumer Affairs that the Minister would be the President.

The President can take no praise for being President but the Minister can take praise for insisting that certain directions and that the National Standards Institution go in certain directions and I think that the Minister who is now responsible for Consumer Affairs would be able to tell this House that from the

files he saw that mandatory standards had always formed part of the direction given to the Standards Institution and so that you could get cooperation from the private sector, we did not create it as a Government Institution. We said that we would arrange, and if I may, Mr. Speaker, refresh my memory, we said that we would set it up in such a way that the Government would finance in the first instance a substantial part, but not all of it. I think I have found it, Sir.

We said that we would get the private sector involved and we would ask the manufacturers to become members. We would make it a private Company so that would not create problems for them and we pointed out then that the immediate goals of the Institution were to evolve standards suitable for the country and its needs rather than depend on foreign standards which often are not completely necessary to the nation's requirements.

We said we wanted to help quality production in the country for its needs and within its capabilities; to ensure importation of the right quality of material, that is, quality best suited to this country and therefore according to the standards set by our Institution.

It was created, also, Sir, to help coordinate standards with the Caricom countries so that we could have Regional standards, so that we could be assured that Caricom trade would proceed a pace. We wanted to establish quality control laboratories and then organize a Certification Marking Scheme.

In 1972, Sir, this is what we said to the UNDP, we want a Certified Marking Scheme, a third party guarantee mark of quality for goods manufactured by licensed firms, consumer protection. Those were the aims and objectives of the Standards Institution, that it would help in the process of change-over in the metric system of measurements if that system would ever come and we had certain longterm projections for the Standards Institution that we would place agricultural and industrial production in the country at a high quality level thus leading to the overall economy in Barbados, that we would help economic production by instituting continuous quality control in the industrial organizations thus avoiding inefficient production runs due to bad utilisation of product and plant, machinery and material; avoiding large scale rejection of final product as either completely unusable or of substandard.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the export performance of a country, when one compares the performance of the Japanese who between 1929 and today have become the foremost exporters of products, if you consider that in the Caribbean Region we have more raw materials, we have more local resources in the entire Caribbean than they have in Japan, that is not always recognized, but in the region that constitutes the Carib-

bean community, it is considered that we have more local resources, more raw materials than they have in Japan and Japan by dint of its commitment to quality production, its industriousness and its explicit businesslike approach to development, has managed to become the foremost exporter, the foremost producer of industrialized goods.

We in the Caribbean, Sir, can do it but because of certain drawbacks we have, we have not been able to get into the game early but if we pay attention to quality, Sir, if we pay attention to quality at home, then we guarantee that we would be able to sell in the larger markets which would require no more than our finding those markets. If we produce at a high quality for the Barbadian consumer, then we would have no difficulty producing at a high quality for exports. That is why we felt that the twin development of the Institute of Management and Productivity to provide managerial skills at the middle level, to provide a certain approach to management, to industrial development, together with the Standards Institution, which would set the standards and indeed, Sir, please note that standards are not to the highest standards.....

1.20 p.m.

They are the standards which are considered achievable at a given time by the community taking into account all the circumstances and all the factors. That is what the standardisation is about. That is why we went out and we got the expertise and we left the Standards Institution with the projections which we say that the Members who have sat in that Chair had no other course than to allow it to happen and the only quarrel we would have is that it has taken so long.

Hence, Sir, we are going to support this Bill because in a sense this is our Bill coming four, five years late. We would prefer to find out why the Honourable Attorney General's Chambers took so long, or why the Government took so long to bring this scheme down and we expect to see certain improvements on this of which will have to await the development of the institution itself. We expect that the combination of this plus the other Bill irrespective of which political Party sits in the Government will see a continued development of the infra-structure of the industrial sector of Barbados because the industrialists themselves, the manufacturers themselves will finally have come to terms with what is required if they are to move from being small manufacturers to larger manufacturers.

The fact that Barbados has a small population base is no excuse for us not to be going out into the larger world. I recall Sir, that Playtex International located in Barbados, a factory brought here and manufacturing at Wildey has been for the last eight years as I understand it

selling its products in the Parisian market, in the Switzerland market, in the English market and in the American market. Now, if they are using Barbadian labour, they are using Barbadian facilities, they are using Barbadian management, if they are able to do that, then it means that other Barbadians are able to do so and all we need is a combination of good management, proper standards and a commitment on the part of those involved. So, Mr. Speaker, I will support the Bill and we will support the Bill and I regret if the Honourable Minister should seek in this Bill to make it a partisan matter.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member has taken a very long time to relate obviously what has been a policy decision not created for the benefit of one political Party, or the other, but a policy decision, which had to come in any event, as long as Barbados was moving from the purely agricultural to an industrial society.

One cannot deny the fact that the BNSI was brought into existence by the Democratic Labour Party, the Party in power at the time, but there are certain things which go along with industrialisation and which must continue irrespective of which political Party is in power. I have no quarrel with the Honourable Member about what he said about standards *et cetera*, but why I seek to clarify certain matters which is because he started off by saying that this Bill in question is five years late in coming to this Honourable House. In saying so, the Honourable Member is trying to get political kudos for himself and the Democratic Labour Party and I want to set the record correct.

There is no doubt about it, there had to be a Bill, there was BNSI, but when the Democratic Labour Party went out of existence the state of existence of the institution was such that no Bill could have been introduced in this Honourable Chamber. In the first place, the building was not even completed, the structure of the building was not even completed. Secondly, he should have said to the Honourable Chamber that BNSI, the institution itself is made up of Government and private businessmen, industrialists and others. He should talk about the contribution between.....

Mr. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. I am not sure if the Honourable Member was out of his place Sir, but I was at pains to point out that when we established the institution, we made it a tripartite institution, we made it a private company precisely because we wanted the private sector to participate. Government, the private sector and other organisations.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: The Honourable Member seems juggy. It is a tripartite organisation. I was coming on to the question of financing the institution. The Honourable Member would know, that despite the fact

that it is a tripartite organisation that Government has always had to carry the total expenses of that institution. There were times when the Civil Servants in this country even thought of changing the structure of the organisation because of the funding difficulties.

Another point that must be raised Mr. Speaker is this that if you look at the bill carefully and see what is set out in the bill, the Honourable Member is well aware that there was no way that this bill could have come to this Honourable Chamber, unless you were intent on passing a bill which was non-effective until the time when the institution was properly set up.

The first thing I would like to say is that I doubt that BNSI at this given moment is equipped to carry out all that it should, that has been set out in the bill before the Honourable House. When I was the Minister responsible for Agriculture — and the Honourable Member is talking about he is proud to say that he is the first President of BNSI. It is laid down in the Constitution that every Minister of Agriculture be the President of BNSI, so if it fell under the Ministry, or his Ministry, he would be the President, but the point about it is this when we became the Government I looked at BNSI Mr. Speaker and it is clear that BNSI and the Government Analysts were carrying out similar functions. There was the need for a lot of expensive equipment, which meant that you would have had a duplication of equipment between BNSI and the Government Analysts.

It is at that time that I set about looking at the amalgamation, or constructing another building within close proximity of BNSI so that Government could be spared the expenses of having to duplicate equipment between the two institutions. The development of that has been that a new building, the Government Analysts' building has now been constructed within the same compound of Culloden Farm. The Honourable Member must understand that there are certain projects in a country, whether they were created by one political party, or the other that have a continuing effect and must be carried on. Nobody is quarrelling with that, but why I speak is because the Honourable Member must not try to give the impression that his political party left the bill which was completed and should have been brought to the Honourable House very early, or late in 1976, or very early in 1977, but for political purposes, or through inefficiency, or something it is now coming to the Honourable Chamber. No way. There is no way that this bill could have come before this Honourable Chamber before now.

He said that Government should be — or there should be a disgrace at not having a driving consumer association. Now, Mr. Speaker, as the Honourable Member read in the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party, this Party believes in consumerism, but over the

last three, or four years, there were at least four different groups of consumer associations which have been set up in Barbados and each one of them has had its own head and there have been no more than dog fights between the various associations. I myself called in the two that were in existence during my reign in the Ministry of Agriculture. I sat down with them and I put suggestions to them. I said Government was prepared to pay the expenses of running the offices of the associations provided that we could see something which we believe would be a thriving consumer association.

1.30 p.m.

At that time, Mr. Speaker, there were several complaints about shoes coming into Barbados, there were complaints about certain beds that were being produced in Barbados, there were a number of complaints about the product being turned out by BARPAC at the time, and we tried to encourage the various consumer associations to work together for the benefit of the Barbadian public, but because each president or head of the association saw himself as a tin god within the society they could not get together. As a matter of fact, I believe one association went to a particular lawyer in Barbados and had a Constitution drawn up in the form of a company, but yet still nobody paid up any contributions. I do not believe up to now they have ever had an Executive Council of either of the Consumer Associations that were ever established in Barbados, and I do not believe that Government has the right to set up a Consumer Association.

When we created the Department of Consumer Affairs, we advertised for an officer to run that particular Section. We had a young lady who came from Canada and worked with the Department for about three months and suddenly disappeared, as I understand it, because she had relatives of hers who became ill in Canada and she thought it best to go back to live in Canada. Nobody can say that this Government did not do anything to bring consumerism to the forefront in its period of Government. So the hon. member must not talk about being disgraceful. You can carry a cow to the water but you cannot make it drink.

Mr. Speaker, we have done everything possible to organise or assist in organising consumers in this country. I believe, as I have said, the only semblance of an association is the one which I believe is now headed by Mr. J. L. "Happy" Bryan. I do not know how well it functions, because that is not in my portfolio, but the hon. member must place the facts before the Chamber. As I said, he is seeking to raise himself out of the doldrums which have existed over the past week. I have no quarrel with him in that respect, but I want to put the record straight.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the bill before the House, you will note that not until BNSI as an institution was properly created, until it had all the machinery in place, until it had all its personnel, because I believe up to two years ago we were still looking for the particular personnel for the Department. We even organised a training programme to send existing members of staff abroad to get further training. In the Weights and Measures Division we asked for UNDP assistance, we asked for assistance all over the world, Commonwealth assistance to get somebody to bring to put in that Department to train Barbadians in that Department. I am satisfied that the bill has come before the Chamber at the appropriate time and could not have come five years before, as the hon. member is trying to indicate.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a short contribution on this Bill which I think both sides recognise as vital, particularly at this time of our development.

It is clear that the whole concept relating to standards was a concept which was the brainchild, as it were, of the hon. member for St. Michael South West and the Democratic Labour Party when it held the reins of Government, but that is at this point in time neither here nor there. It is a matter of history now, and I think we have to look at the whole import, and indeed the ramifications of establishing standards in this country.

Developing countries are plagued with a situation where they become the victims of dumping of goods and other items from developed countries, and I believe that we have to continue with whatever efforts we can to ensure that we have proper standards of importation, and indeed also proper standards relating to the whole question of goods which are produced in this country. My particular concern in this matter, Mr. Speaker, relates to the question of chemicals and dangerous substances, pesticides and insecticides which are being used in various aspects of life in this country.

If we take, for example, the question of pesticides and insecticides, it has been established that a number of these items pose very serious danger to the health and well-being of workers, particularly in agriculture, who have to use these substances. Quite recently I came across a situation where one such item had instructions in Spanish alone. I believe that the Standards Institute should ensure that when substances of this nature are imported into this country, that instructions must be written clearly in English and in the kind of language which could be understood not only by persons who have to use the substances, but also by those persons who have the overall general management of the parti-

cular activity which has to oversee this particular operation.

I am also told that we have the situation where medicines which are imported into this country also have instructions in Spanish, and indeed in a language other than the language which is commonly used here. I believe that this is a concern, and indeed should be a concern for the whole question of the standardisation and the general certification of marking of goods which are imported into this country.

I would like to just raise another point under this particular matter, and I wonder if the kind of legislation which we are passing here would address itself, or indeed could address itself, to this particular area of concern. Now, for some time there has been a spate of accidents which have caused the death of persons who are working on tractors conveying sugar cane to the sugar factories, and it has been claimed that part of the reason has been the lack of any proper standard relating to safety and proper protection. I wonder if in our whole look at standards if some kind of arrangement could not be made where we can have a proper safety standard set up which would hopefully reduce the incidence of the accidents which people encounter, the fatal accidents which take place in this country in this particular area from time to time.

Thirdly, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that there must be some very close co-ordination and collaboration between our Standards Institute and other agencies in Barbados, and indeed other sectors of the economy, which will have to conform to the standards which we want to set up here.

1.40 p.m.

There is no point in setting up an institute saying that we are aiming at certain standards and then you have agencies and other sectors of the economy as it were doing their own thing. We consider that what we are doing here is vital not only to persons who live in this country and who have got to purchase goods which are imported into this country, but it is also vital for our total export trade in terms of being able to ensure that we have the kind of standard that would propel us into a major exporting country in the world.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I can see from the comments from the other side with the exception of one or two digs that they are largely in agreement with us. I just want to put the record clear on one or two matters. The hon. member for St. Michael South West said that the Bill is five years late. Of course I do not have to tell you, Sir, that this party was not in power for five years and therefore it will not be our fault that it is five years late. I agree with him that it is late, but the fault is not ours, the fault is theirs.

It is true and I agree with him too that standardisation is something which is important and vital to all of us, and there are certain matters which should really be taken out of the political arena. I share that view and concern, but in the thrust of politics I imagine that here and there we will get more digs, but I believe when we come back next time around with them over there and we over here, we will probably get around to understanding that we must try to understand each other better than we have in the past just over four years.

Now my good friend as well referred to the fact that in 1972 when they were about to create the Standards Institution that they were thinking of putting Barbados into the 20th Century. We are already in the 20th Century. I do not know if he was thinking in terms of the 21st Century.

Mr. TAITT: Just on a point of elucidation, I did say that the 21st Century, but I know the hon. member is a little behind.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I am very glad and I am also corrected from the back bench that he said the 21st Century. I am happy to think he was thinking ahead, but by the time of the 21st Century we might very well be looking at other things and this might be a thing of the past, because things are moving so rapidly today that it is no question of thinking that something which you bring into operation today will last forever, and therefore within a matter of a decade what you believe is very important and what you believe will serve the purpose for at least 20 to 25 years will become outdated in five to ten years, so therefore all that might have happened in 1972 might very well be outdated by 1982, but these are things which happen.

The hon. member for St. Michael South West touched on the question of the attitude of this Government to the consumer and that we seemed to have been strangers out there. I am not aware of the consumers that the hon. member is speaking of, but the consumers that I know seem to be very happy over the fact that there is quite a lot of food in Bridgetown, there is quite a lot of money in their pockets and they can buy the food they want for their families and they are very happy about that. I am not aware that there was a battle. As evidence of the concern of this Government for the consumers, we have created a department within the Ministry of Agriculture and Consumer Affairs. In the past there was no such department and therefore the concern or rather the interest of the consumers was dealt with in an ad hoc manner. You got a lot of fly by night organisations that came along and they just existed for a day and overnight they died, but we thought that the consumers in Barbados deserved better than that, and therefore within the Ministry of Consumer Affairs we set up such a division, a division that has many complaints day in and

day out, Mr. Speaker, and we address ourselves daily to these problems. Like the hon. member I would very well prefer to see a consumer body that is independent from any Government. The hon. member was very uncharitable to Mr. Haldeman who came though Mr. Haldeman is a very knowledgeable man. Before he came here, all the legislation touching on consumer affairs, hire purchase, everything, went on to the man to study. When these consultants come here or advisers, whatever you choose to call them, they have come here with a clear background over the problems that exist within your community and therefore they only want to have discussions at first hand with people who are involved, and this they seek to do. They want to meet me, they want to meet the Shadow Minister of Consumer Affairs; I believe they did this; they met with the President of COPE, they met with the women of NOW, all kinds of people he met with and he has already given me an idea as to his thinking, and I believe when he comes up with a programme of action for consumers in this country it will be something that we can very well consider to be reasonable and good.

Now the point was made about the question of parts. We have already addressed our minds to this question. I do not know where the hon. member got his figures from, but as was mentioned by him the Japanese import most of the raw materials which they use. I know that in Trinidad and Tobago there is oil, and I know that in Guyana and Jamaica there is bauxite, but I am not quite sure what the resources of Japan are, but what I do know is that they have very limited agricultural resources, but within the limited amount which they have they try to maximise the use, and I know they do very well. I am not quite sure as to the statistics. I must go on to make the point that we ought not to be importing a series of cars from Japan and all over the world and when they come here, as soon as something goes wrong with the car the car has to be put up for three to six months until the part comes back from Japan. This is a situation which we have been looking at. We have been having discussions with the importers of cars, we have been having discussions with the parts operators in Barbados, but they all invariably say that it costs them so much money to put these parts by that they find it extremely difficult to stock a lot of parts today. These are some of the main problems which we are looking at, and I assure the hon. member that we are not unmindful of these problems.

The hon. member for St. Lucy touched on the question of the dumping of goods in the developing countries by developed countries. We are also mindful of that and we are very concerned about this attitude, and we assure him that we are looking at the problem. He dealt with the question of pesticides and insecticides. Now there is a Pest Control Board within the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, and no pesticide is allowed to be used in Barbados unless that Board

approves of its use. There is on that Board members from the Ministry of Agriculture and the entomological section, and we also have members of the medical profession from the Ministry of Health, and we also have other personnel, Professor Binks from the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, and we have people drawn from different places, and no insecticide or pesticide comes into Barbados unless that insecticide or pesticide is vetted very carefully by that body. I quite appreciate the question of having items coming here, especially pesticides that have labels in Spanish or French or any other language for that matter.

1.50 p.m.

In fact, I have seen things already here labelled in Chinese and when I took the Chinese Ambassador to a particular dairy in this country, the dairy owner brought out the item and asked him to read it for him. It is an item which we had for a long time. To me, this is not the sort of thing which should be allowed but if these insecticides and pesticides are coming through the correct channels and I would hope that they are, these items are unlicensed and if they are coming in through the correct channel, the members of the Pesticide Board should know but I would draw the view expressed by the hon. member for St. Lucy to the attention of the Board.

As far as the accidents by death in the factories are concerned, I agree with him that it is cause for worry and concern and I will ask BNSI to look at these problems.

Lastly, the hon. member for St. Michael South West touched on a matter which I would have preferred him to have mentioned to me and I would have given him the information to do with a newspaper report which appeared dealing with corned beef. I assure the hon. member that the item was dealt with and the Government Analyst has given me a report that it was the hair of a cow and no other matter and we are very satisfied on that but we have been very concerned with the report when we saw it, as you have been, and we took immediate steps in order to make sure that it was no foreign matter. It was the hair of a cow. I assure the hon. member.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. members for their very valuable contribution in this debate and on this Bill and I hope, Sir, that will be an indication of the attitude that we will see in the future.

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

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

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

On motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee to consider the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to raise a question with the Minister on Clause 3(a). It says, towards the ending of the Clause..... "articles and other things offered to the public commercially." I am not sure if by the addition of the word "commercially" if it does not provide some difficulty because not everything which is traded, as it were, is traded commercially. I am not suggesting that the matter ought not to pass but I think that the Minister ought to take a look and draw it to the attention of the Attorney General because to suggest commercially is not necessarily true. I recognise it only outlines the functions but it suggests "articles and other things offered to the public commercially" and I do not think that is the full intent. I just draw it to the Minister's attention.

The question that Clause 3 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 4 and 5 were called and passed.

Clause 6 was called.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I did not take it up at Clause 5 but I notice it is repeated in Clause 6. It says here, in each case they say "as the institution determines". Sir, it is usual to have an officer or a person with authority indicated in legislation such as this. I notice in this piece of legislation that it constantly refers to "issued by the institution", in this case with the consent of the institution.

I do not know what other hon. members think but it seems to me that usually it is the Minister, or the Director or some functionary who has the responsibility. It is going to present a little difficulty, I submit, if the institution has the authority. As far as I know, the only institution that has that kind of authority is the Cabinet itself. All other authority in the community tends to be designated to a specific person. Again, I draw it to the attention of the Minister for what it is worth but it strikes me that it provides a fairly easy exit for anyone who is caught in this trap to prove that the institution did or did not grant the particular consent. I draw it to your attention, Sir.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: This particular matter was drawn to the attention of the Attorney General's Chambers and they thought it was all right as it is but I will raise the matter again.

The question that Clause 6 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
2.00 p.m.

Clauses 8 to 10 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, 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. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW the Bill was read a third time and passed.

SUSPENSION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting now stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.
2.05 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. I am advised that there are no replies to Questions ready.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: We automatically go into Private Members' Business. There are a number of items under Private Members' Business standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central whom I do not now observe in his place.

This brings us to the end of Private Members' Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move Mr. Speaker, Sir, that Order Number Three be the instant Order of the Day.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

BILL TO PROVIDE FOR THE CONTROL OF STANDARDS AND THE LABELLING OF COMMODITIES

Order Number Three was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to provide for the control of Standards and the labelling of commodities.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Bill is an additional part of the package which was started this morning, the Opposition Benches dealt with a number of questions which would come under this heading, the question of marks and labelling.

For years, we have had a situation in Barbados, where a number of commodities have been coming in here and which were not represented by the labels and the marks of the items. The people in Barbados have been duped over the years, as a result of this type of behaviour. Invariably, customers went to the stores, supermarkets and otherwise to discover that the contents of the item which they paid for were not what they expected. It was because a number of people were behaving improperly in this manner and invariably the people who imported the items knew that the people who were in the business to sell were not to be blamed, but what we aim to do in this case is to make sure that whatever is labelled, the contents must be the same, otherwise there will be prosecutions in this area.

This Act seeks to tighten up the whole system of consumer protection and legislation. With those few remarks and I do not believe that this would occasion any problems from the Other Side because basically we discussed it at length this morning and it touches on the same problems, I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses One to Two inclusive were called and passed.
2.55 p.m.

Clauses 3 to 24, inclusive, were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, 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. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 6 be the instant Order of the day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 6.

THE INCOME TAX (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this Bill which seeks to amend the Income Tax Act, Cap. 73, is part of the Minister of Finance's budgetary proposals of last year. They must take effect immediately, by the 9th April, and since today we are meeting on the 7th, I propose to have this bit of legislation passed through Parliament.

Much has been said about the concessions of income tax in the budgetary proposals, and I think we can all be very happy to note that the Minister of Finance in his very last proposals just a couple of days ago gave a remarkable display for the interest of the people of this country by relieving them of the tax burden in various categories. I think we can all be justly proud of it, Sir, and this measure is to give effect on the 9th April of his proposals of 1980.

I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.
3.05 p.m.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 3 stand part.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, before Clause 3 is put to the vote, I should just like to make a comment on subsections (t) and (u). Under (t) there is provision made for subscriptions which are paid to trade unions registered under the Trade Unions Act by members up to a limit in respect of each member of \$240, and the other section to that relates to interest earned on the investment by a trade union registered under the Trade Unions Act, of the subscriptions of its members.

Now I think that the inclusion of this section in this part of the Bill relates to representation which was made, I believe, by at least two Trade Unions in Barbados to have the subscriptions of their members pass, as it were, as allowable expenses, and certainly the Barbados Workers' Union is glad to see that the position which it has enunciated in this regard has been taken into consideration in the amendment to the Act. We have had indications some time now in a letter from the Ministry of Finance and Planning that this would have been done.

As far as the other aspect of the Bill which I am addressing my mind to is concerned, that is the interest earned on investment by Trade Unions, I would just like to make the point that this particular aspect of the application of the Trade Union Act had to be clarified because I think it was about in 1977 that for the first time the Barbados Workers' Union found itself confronted with a situation where the Income Tax Commissioner attempted to call on the Union to pay income tax on the funds of the Union, and this we indicated was contrary to what used to happen in the past, and indeed was a completely new interpretation to the Income Tax Act as it related to the funds of the Trade Union, and in this particular regard we therefore had to write to the Ministry of Finance and Planning indicating that this was a completely new departure from what obtained before and we would therefore want to get this matter clarified. We are therefore glad to see that in this particular bit of legislation today that there is obviously an effort made to deal with this particular matter so that once and for all there would be a very clear position at least for the guidance of the Income Tax Department, and we from the Unions are glad that this particular matter has been straightened out because we would not have the kind of difficulty which we had experienced particularly in that year when we were suddenly called upon by the Income Tax Commissioner to do something to which we were not accustomed to doing.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: What I understand the hon. member for St. Lucy is saying is that he is congratulating the Government for assisting the Trade Unions with this bit of legislation. I hope he will say that publicly, not in here where everybody does not read the Hansard. I am happy to see that he is saluting the Government for the

very good work they are doing to assist the Trade Unions in Barbados.

The question that Clause 3 stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 4 to 19 inclusive were called and passed.

On motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
3.15 p.m.

On separate motions of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, Order No. 5 is the instant order of the day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 5.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1980

Order No. 5 was called – To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Representation of the People Act.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this item which is before Parliament, Sir, is an amendment to the Representation of the People Act. It is primarily for a number of typographical errors. For example, you will find something in it like White Park Road and it would have White Park Street. Then for Long Bay they would have Long Bay Gap, things of that nature, Sir.

I do not know if there is much I can say on this in light of the fact that we are well aware that this has been dealt with already here and there were just the typographical errors. Therefore, we thought it necessary to bring back the Bill rather than having it go through one amendment after another amendment like that, Sir. That is the reason for having it here.

I know that the Opposition which was calling for an election all last week and this is another stroke to let them know that it is count-down time. It is coming down and they are supposed to have some 27 candidates. I looked at them here today, Sir, and I saw about 25 retired people. For example, like Neville Boxill, Sir, a retired politician, liaison officer and boxer. You know, that type of thing and Eyre Hoppin retired politician; and teacher, Charlie Best, that crowd, Sir; Keith Simmons, a retiring Magistrate; Eric Sealy, a retired convict. This type of thing, Sir.

Anyhow, Sir, this would give you an idea that it is count-down time and with those few notes, a bit humorous, I beg to move that this Bill, as amended, do now pass, Sir.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I know you did not call my name. I am not retiring anything. I am an active, fighting, politician and in the next Parliament I will be over there. *(Laughter)*.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order. If the hon. member is declaring his hand from now, let him come over now.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I know your views on that, but I will be over there and my colleagues will be over there as the next Democratic Labour Party Government to replace them. That is it, but I do not know. Obviously my representative for St. James is enjoying himself. He is in the top Chair in this country as Acting Prime Minister and he is obviously enjoying it. He is also giving vent to when the countdown will be. The countdown has started. He is even talking as a Prime Minister, the countdown has started.

I note the very light-hearted way in which the Acting Prime Minister has introduced this measure but there are a few observations I would like to make on it without in any way reflecting upon the legislation that has already been approved by this Honourable Chamber.

I would like to say, first of all, that the Government is running true to form. I would think that there are very few exceptions that any major piece of legislation, indeed major or minor, which has been brought down into this particular Parliament, 1976–1981, in which under a year the Parliament has not been called upon to carry out amendments to these pieces of legislation and I think that this is an indication that something must be radically wrong with either the directions that are being given to the Attorney General's Chambers or whatever the reason. Something seems to be wrong and I do not mind how annoyed the Government benches may become, but this is an indication that something is wrong in the drafting of legislation that comes before this House.

I think that each Minister that brings down these major pieces of legislation and then within months of the legislation coming in here, we are again called upon to go over the ground to make good some deficiency which may be detected in them. I think the Government owes this country an explanation on this particular matter. Some pieces of legislation have been brought down two and three times, two and three amendments and this is an indication that that front bench, because I cannot

include the back bench in this. One member sitting on the back bench, I do not think there is any legislation that he has brought down that he has had to come back with yet. I see something circulated here today. Maybe we will look at that in the fullness of time, but something must be wrong and I think that this House must be given an explanation as to why it has been found necessary, so very often, time and time again to come down with these amended pieces of legislation.

3.25 p.m.

This one we are told has to do with misdescriptions and typographical errors. The Honourable Minister in introducing the measure has not told us which are the misdescriptions and which are the typographical errors, I believe that the Honourable Member for St. Michael South West, I do not even know, White Park has that got anything to do with you? (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Kindly address the Chair.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, nothing in here about Road View, that seems to be in order, but we have a White Park Road and Sea View Road. I know about the storm signal station pathway. The fact is Mr. Speaker that the legislation had all of the signs of being very hurriedly drafted, it had all of the signs that sufficient thought, or consideration had not gone into the original piece of legislation and when these things were pointed out, as we have to point out from time to time, from these Opposition Benches our views tend to be ignored and it is only in the actual operations of the Act, or when they come to put it into effect that the discrepancies and the omissions and commissions that relate to this Act appear to the Government.

Now, from the time I saw that piece of legislation, I travelled around the boundaries of my constituency (*Asides*). Mr. Speaker, I walked around, or drove around the boundaries of my constituency and I myself had difficulty from the description given in the Act to follow the boundaries of the constituency. I am asked now to walk up a track, the track is now the boundary of a constituency. Anyhow, I will find that track very slippery.

I am charging Mr. Speaker that these are not the only, if we call them misdirections and typographical errors, I am predicting that there are other things wrong with that piece of legislation and that sooner, or later, the Government will have to come down with further amendments to that legislation. These are misdescriptions and typographical errors it is said. There may be more substantial errors in that legislation because the parish boundaries, the particular piece of legislation has been repealed, but certain constituencies are delineated in terms of parish boundaries. Now, this has to be a colossal error and I am wondering how long it is going to take the Government to recognise that if they have repealed the

legislation relating to the parish boundaries, how can you come now and describe constituencies in terms of parish boundaries that have already been abolished? These are the things you must get up and say. To me, it does not make sense.

I do not know who is acting Attorney General, I do not know if the person on the Front Bench, or the Back Bench, I am not certain who is acting Attorney General. I do not even know who is the Honourable Minister.....: (*Asides*). Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that, as far as these misdescriptions and these typographical errors are concerned, I am saying that the Representation of the People Act, there are other and more serious errors in the legislation that we are being asked to amend, I do not wish to say very much more on this. As far as this matter is concerned, our position is the same.

"This corrects some of the descriptions of the Act" and to that extent, this Parliament having passed and having agreed to the original piece of legislation, we of course will participate in any measure to improve what was an imperfect Act from the very start. Others may wish to deal with other aspects of the measures.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it you are not reflecting on legislation that has been passed in this Honourable House.

Mr. SANDIFORD: That is exactly what I am saying.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, the Standing Orders do not permit this.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I said I am not reflecting on any legislation that has been passed. I said that before and I repeated it and that is why I am saying that to the extent that the legislation has been passed by this Honourable Chamber and that this is a measure to improve what was an imperfect Act, to that extent we will participate in it. Mr. Speaker, under your guidance, I would not reflect on that.

This purports to delete words referring to Highgate Gardens Boundary wall (*Asides*)... two constituencies touched here, the St. Michael South Central and the St. Michael South (*Asides*). You see, Mr. Speaker, we have now reached the stage where this now shifts the interpretation. This shifts the...well, I do not know what it does. It says, "Highgate Gardens Boundary wall" and now we are going to the Eastern boundary wall of Highgate Gardens and then we go on to talk about, "the Storm Signal Station pathway to its junction with Reece Road". I am not going into the details of this at this stage, but I merely wish to make the general point again that nobody on that Side can be happy that they have to take so many bites at this particular cherry. Something has to be wrong, but on another occasion and in a different place, we will talk about it.

I do not mind the Acting Prime Minister talking about retired persons, but he is the leading retired person, retired Insurance Agent, so he is part of the retired group. He seems to have forgotten that. (ASIDE: Retired lover.) I do not know about that, I do not think so, he still has pretensions. Imagine a retired insurance agent getting up here and talking about retired other people. So, if we are going to be flippant about it, I think that that is a good point on which to end this particular contribution.
3.35 p.m.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I wish I could be flippant, but having over the last four years on more than one occasion raised the issue of the numerous times which legislation having been passed in this Hon. Chamber either had to be sent back from the Other Place, or had to be brought back by way of amendment, or had to be brought in as this piece of legislation before us now has been brought in, I believe that it is proper in the circumstances to discuss this piece of legislation in the context of ministerial responsibility to Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that when the hon. member who can command a majority assembles that majority on one or other side of this Hon. Chamber and appoints those hon. members or others who will form the Cabinet, that the country as a whole has a right to anticipate a level of efficiency, a level of interest and a level of concern commensurate with the high standards for which Barbados generally, and Parliament in particular, during the earlier years when the debates show hon. members of fairly long standing in this Hon. House maintained a very high standard.

I am sure, Mr. Speaker, without in any way attempting to draw Your Honour into the debate, that Your Honour from time to time must be concerned when compared with the quality of legislation and the quality of intervention which would have been made in the earlier days of these Parliaments, when now parliamentary time has to be taken to do a number of Acts and waste a lot of paper, and by definition a lot of money, to correct obvious ineptitude, to correct errors which appear, Mr. Speaker — I can only say appear — to be committed as a result of the obstinacy which appears to prevail in the breast of certain persons who might, for whatever reason, hold ministerial responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, irrespective of which side of the House runs things.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you accusing Ministers of being obstinate?

Mr. TAITT: No, Sir. I said apparent obstinacy.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is exactly what you are doing.

Mr. TAITT: Sir, at the risk of.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I say you are accusing Ministers of being obstinate.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, there are obstinate Ministers, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are now accusing our present Ministers of being obstinate.

Mr. TAITT: I am accusing the Attorney General, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You should say no more and withdraw it and carry on with the debate.

Mr. TAITT: I withdraw the imputation, Sir. Mr. Speaker, time and time again in this Hon. House I have called upon the Attorney General, when legislation such as this was before this Hon. House, I have called upon the Attorney General to desist from his ways and to allow the country to feel that when legislation comes to this Hon. Chamber that it has had the requisite amount of time, the requisite amount of consideration and the requisite amount of study that is required for legislation of this kind.

Sir, the office of Attorney General is not a light office, it is not an office that can be held, or ought to be held in this country by persons who do not take seriously the business of Government. We on this side wish to believe that all those who hold the office of Attorney General will apply to that office the kind of quality, thought and the kind of interest which will be required not only of this Parliament, but of any Parliament.

The Attorney General is supposed to be Leader of the Bar, among other things. He is supposed to be the Chief Legal Adviser to the Government, and as Chief Legal Adviser to the Government he ought to be in a position by his experience, by his practice and by his consideration of all the circumstances to advise the Government when a piece of legislation is properly ready. As I understand it, Sir, not ever having held that office yet, Sir, as I understand it, the Attorney General issues a certificate when a piece of legislation crosses his desk, after it has been perused and examined by his colleagues in Cabinet the Attorney General issues a certificate that the legislation is fit for being taken to Parliament. In the circumstances, such an Attorney General ought to be sufficiently *au fait* not only with the practice of law, not only with the practice of Government, but with all of the aspects relating to a good and developed community.

Certain remarks made by Mr. TAITT were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER at this stage.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I unhesitatingly withdraw. With the greatest respect, Sir, I believe that it is my right and my duty to speak on matters relating to inefficiency, to speak on matters relating to ministerial responsibility as it affects the work of this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is an affront to the Chair. Please take your seat. If you run out, if you walk out, if you gallop out; please! You will please take your seat.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I will take my seat, but I do not think it is proper of the Speaker to talk about running out and galloping out.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is your right to take your seat. Any other hon. member?

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I am not quite sure of the nature of the points that the Opposition are making. If it is based mainly on the fact that an amendment is coming to the Representation of the People Act, Cap. 12, but the hon. member for St. Michael South West has pointed out that a number of main Bills have come before Parliament and soon after there are amendments. All I can submit in respect of that is that this Government is anxious to refine any body of legislation that is brought before Parliament. I know very well, Sir, that they brought before Parliament a Tenancies (Control Development) Act in 1965, the Severance Payments Act, these are two examples, both of which are riddled with difficulties and problems so that the practitioners out there quite often tell their clients in respect of these two Acts "I really do not understand the Act, go and look for another lawyer", but they never bothered to spend time amending them even though the law itself has been defective and we have the only complaint today that this Government is tidying up existing legislation. They are well aware that legislation and the legislative process is one which the Greek Philosopher Phales said is a constant state of flux, and what is a reality of today is the myth of tomorrow, and this Government despite any criticisms that we would hear from the Opposition in respect of tidying up and making neater and more effective existing legislation will continue to bring before Parliament amending legislation wherever we find it necessary.

Further, Mr. Speaker, to my mind an unwarranted attack has been made on the Attorney General. I do not know why the hon. member for St. Michael West was not sufficient of a gentleman to wait until the Attorney General was in his place to make the type of criticism that he made today, for the hon. member should well know that the volume of legislation brought into this

Parliament in the last four and a half years has been unprecedented in the history of Barbados. Not only is there a greater volume of legislation, Mr. Speaker, but the content of the legislation has been so far-reaching that in our effort to get it before Parliament and improve the lot of the people of this country we have from time to time to slip up on a typographical error, something like a misdescription, we would take the risk of making these typographical errors and these misdescriptions to put on the Statute Book of Barbados legislation that is in tune with the times and legislation that is meant to improve the quality of living in this country at all levels, and we on this side have no apologies for sitting back and holding back on legislation until the last minute.

We heard the hon. member for St. Michael South West only today in here say that this legislation is five years too late. That is the side of the mouth through which the hon. member speaks in the morning, and in the afternoon he asked why do you rush the legislation down here so quickly. You cannot win, Sir. That is the type of submission that is being made by hon. members on the other side. Mr. Speaker, I was hoping to use it on another occasion to make this point: what can we expect about the quality of some of the drafting because they have very skilled and able draughtsmen in the Attorney General's Chambers, but when you have one of the draughtsmen walking about all day and night and trying to be a political candidate of the Democratic Labour Party, he has not got time to pay attention to the legislation in hand. He is all over my constituency and by my constituency — I am referring to the one in which I live — instead of sitting down and doing the work he is assigned to do. He is carrying the message of the Opposition seeking to be a political candidate in the coming elections. I think the hon. member for St. Michael South West would do well to bend his mind towards that type of problem before he gets in here and makes the type of glib, easy criticisms that he made of the Attorney General's Chambers today.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, it is surprising that a lot of persons coming out of Cave Hill who pretend to have qualified in law seem not to have grasped the very fundamentals of the subject called "Law". I well remember the Chairman of Committees in this Honourable Chamber not so long ago standing up on your left side near that Chair and saying "When I rules, I rules; this is the highest court in the land".

Now this Chamber is the one and only place, I believe, that can make laws for Barbados, and I would like the hon. member to understand that law is a living subject. It does not stand still, and the creation of laws can lead to difficulties if it is not plain and explicit, and wherever the legislators can discover errors in the legislation, it is the duty of the legislators to correct that legislation even before it is pronounced upon by the

Courts. Now if this Government had sat back and allowed the election to be contested under what could be called faulty legislation, we would end up in the Supreme Court on the basis that the legislation was not accurate.

The hon. member in his attempt to drag down the Attorney General and members on this side goes into the procedural matters dealing with the legislation coming before the House, as he says he understands that before a piece of legislation can come to the House the Attorney General has got to sign a certificate saying that it is fit for legislation. Now if he criticises the Attorney General because an error has been discovered in the description of a boundary line, he cannot criticise the Attorney General on the basis that the law is *ultra vires* the Constitution. He does not say that. He seeks to criticise the Attorney General on the basis of a description. Is he now saying that the Attorney General should have got up out of his Chambers, taken the descriptions given to him by an officer who has been designated to prepare the descriptions and go up to the various points to check to see if they are correct before signing the certificate?

Now the very Opposition, Mr. Speaker, together with the Press have a habit of talking about Ministerial interference. One week you hear about ministerial interference when the Minister seeks to make sure that his Ministry is running in the way he wants it to go; the next week you hear that the Minister is not doing his job when an error is discovered based on the administration, not the Minister's duty.

I know it is coming near to election time, but it seems to me that the Opposition forgets about the 1971 election period and the few weeks running up to the election when they came in here a morning and changed boundary lines in St. Philip, St. Andrew and St. James to suit themselves.
3.55 p.m.

They did not think about negligence or anything of that sort but they seek today to cast aspersions against the Attorney General and an imaginary person who is now acting for the Attorney General when the Attorney General is out of the Island but if they want to talk about legislation with errors or if they believe that as time moves on, a good example for the Opposition to look at is the Pensions (Prime Minister) Act in which they passed a bit of legislation that had to be corrected by this Administration.

Now they never thought of the Prime Minister losing his seat. They thought that the then Prime Minister would have done like Eric Williams but the people of Barbados saw differently. They thought the then Prime Minister would have remained Prime Minister until he

retired because he had always said that he would never sit in the Opposition but then you have the situation that he was drawing the Prime Minister's Pension and drawing the Leader of the Opposition's salary too.

Now, why did you not criticise the then Attorney General of the day for not foreseeing a situation which was likely to arise and take care of it in the Legislation but today they come in here to criticise a correction but, Mr. Speaker, there are so many bits of legislation that needed to be corrected in their administration that they ignored.

Look at the Standing Orders of this House that they created. They created the Standing Orders of this House. We had to work on them for five years and now they go out to the Press every week and tell them that the Standing Orders want correcting, that they are wrong. Now, what do they say about that? They would expect us now to correct the Standing Orders. Why did they not criticise the Attorney General of the day for having passed the Standing Orders as being fit for legislation of this House.

We did not do it. They now cannot live under their own Legislation so every week they run out of the House. As you say, they gallop out, they trot out or they creep out and having crept out of the House they creep up into Independence Square to tell the public that Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, and the Prime Minister unfaired them on the Floor of the House. I often hear the old people saying that God does not like ugly. I do not know if it is ugly in features or ugly in behaviour but I know that God does not like ugly and when they were about to go out on Sunday night to tell the public of Barbados why they walked out or they ran out like the boy who stood on the burning deck, God decided that the best thing to do was to wash them out. They were rained out so they could not tell anybody anything.

The goodly gentleman is so ashamed that he made one solitary appearance today and went out. I believe that he should be out there preparing a brief of how to accuse and abuse the last Attorney General because he made the Laws and they passed them. I suppose he would come in here and say he has nothing to do with that period. He has something to do with now because I heard that he was the second most powerful man in this country during the 1971 to 1976 period. All of a sudden now the two cohorts are hand in glove, pocket in pocket. The hon. member for St. Michael South has now acquired the lonely position.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Deal with the Representation of the People Act.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I am dealing with the Representation of the People Act, Mr. Speaker. We are making sure that the Law is correct. We are making sure that boundaries are correct because we are making sure that that hon. gentleman should not have cause again to sit down in here and criticise the Law. He says that as long as it does not suit him, he is prepared to oppose it and we are making sure, Mr. Speaker, that when the Act has been finally passed and perfected that the only delegation that he can lead into the Parliament Yard for a confrontation with Mr. Speaker is the Eric Sealy crowd to walk through the Yard and go elsewhere.

We are making sure that he does not walk up these steps again, Mr. Speaker, but I will deal with him on another occasion but I want the hon. member who has gone outside to understand that if he is at Cave Hill that the first thing he should learn is that the Law liveth. It is not dead. It is one subject that is not dead and that every legislator is entitled to correct Laws that he has passed if he finds errors in them.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, much has been said about the amendments before us and I think that the contributions made by the Other Side have been demolished by the Minister of Education who is now Acting Attorney General.

I believe when the Acting Leader of the Opposition got up, when I introduced this amendment, Sir, got the impression that I was not very familiar with this and sought to introduce some argument, very feebly, about a track and a lot of nonsense but did not realise that right down the line that there was a demolition team behind waiting for him, Mr. Speaker.

I do not really see much in this since we have recognised the fact that there are misdescriptions and typographical errors but let me say this. It is not fair to criticise the Attorney General of Barbados. I was in here for 15 years and I would say this, and I am no Lawyer, but I would say that without a shadow of a doubt and I believe that all Barbadians would support this, that the present Attorney General of Barbados, Mr. Forde, is the best Attorney General this country has ever seen. I feel that I can say this without any fault in that argument. He has brought down.....(ASIDE) Point well taken. You do not call Sleepy Smith an Attorney General. He was a comedian. He is a grandstander. He has to perform in front of a Jury.

We are talking about drafting in the people's interest. The present Attorney General is the best we have ever had and I believe that we are going to take a very long time before we get one as good as he is because he is dedicated to his present Office. He works long hours. He is a skillful legal man and it is known that he is a very brilliant man and I am happy to associate myself with

him with any piece of legislation that comes before us so you are going to cut his throat because somebody spelt "bad" — "ba" or "bed", a typographical error.

I saw in the *Nation* a couple of days ago that the three top boys in the country are out and I am Acting Prime Minister we have no top boys here. This a great team here. I have always said that we are capable of carrying this Government. This is a good team here: There are no top boys. Somebody has to be Prime Minister and somebody has to be Deputy Prime Minister but there are no three top boys in here and that is why you can see today, Sir, that the Minister of Agriculture is leading the House, if you put it that way. On one occasion the Minister of Health led the House. That is how we operate so how can you be critical of the Attorney General's Office for typographical errors and misdescriptions (ASIDES). I will not deal with the representation of the people. Just as good as he has been an Attorney General, I am the best representative that St. James has ever had. Mr. Speaker will bear this out. Mr. Speaker will bear that out as a pack of lies.
4.05 p.m.

I have four Reporters living in St. James, four of the Advocate Reporters, three of them are men and one is a woman, and many of them report in this Honourable House Sir and I know although they may not vote for me, they have to testify, they can testify that I am the best MP they ever had in St. James because even when they are living close and it is finished they can go out there and rest their weary eyes after a frustrating day.

So Sir, without any more ado, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause One was called and passed.

Clause Two was called.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that Clause Two stands part.

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

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I think that Clause 2(g) the amendment is to delete the words "Denton Road" wherever they appear in the description of the boundaries in the Constituency of St. Michael North East and substituting therefor the words, "Rockhampton Road".

I wonder if the Honourable Minister can tell us what is the effect of this amendment. Would it mean that the constituency will be increased in numbers, decreased in numbers? What is the effect of this particular amendment? I believe that we are entitled to this piece of information. I could not ask this in the Second Reading. I think that it is appropriate now that we are in Committee because we have to know the effect of what we are talking about. Will it increase the size of the constituency, decrease it? Why this particular amendment?

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have had a word with the Supervisor of Elections on behalf of my colleague and friend the Honourable Minister of Housing and I am informed Sir that there is really no change, no adverse effect, or other effect. It was inadvertently printed as "Denton Road" in the first place, it should have been printed as "Rockhampton Road". There is absolutely no effect on the number of voters, or anything like that Sir.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would just like further to see if I can help. I just want to find out something from the Honourable Member opposite if he would help me. Is this an area that you have some apprehension about?

Mr. E. E. ALLEYNE: Mr. Chairman, Denton Road happens to be in the constituency of St. Michael North and I would wish to inform the Honourable Member that it will have no effect on the chances of my opponent, he will still lose.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Honourable Member for St. Michael North West will agree with the Honourable Member for St. Michael North that it would not have any effect on the size of the constituency one way, or the other. Would the constituency be increased in numbers or decreased? Do you know where Denton Road is?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is.....

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this Clause Two, I hesitate to even suggest to the Honourable Members that this does not by itself correct the error. I would only invite them to go back and pick up the Schedule and go through it line by line and they will find that they will have to make another entry down here, but since they have all indicated how brilliantly they have performed

and how anybody who offers a suggestion from this side is only a pretender at knowledge, I will not even dare to suggest.

I merely draw to their attention that this correction here "substituting Passage Road for White Park" does not solve the problem in its entirety. I say no more.

The question that Clause 2 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 3 was called.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that Clause 3 stands part.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Clause 3 stands part, Honourable Members in favour please say aye.....

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Clause 3 Sir. Again, they have a First Schedule here, Sir and I wish to draw to their attention for what it is worth that having abolished the Parish Boundaries that it would appear to be necessary to have a survey, a new survey carried out so that references made, they do not appear in this Bill Sir, but for example, if they look at the constituency of St. Michael North East, they will see that the constituency of St. Michael North East is described as having as its boundary, the parish boundary of St. George, the parish boundary of St. Michael and the parish boundary of St. Thomas.

It may very well be that such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for us over here, but it seems to me that if you abolish the Parish Boundaries and you have a reference to an imaginary line, or a surveyed line that there has to be a base to which this reference refers. That seems so obvious as not to warrant any intervention, but the Honourable Members must know exactly what they are doing and it seems to me that until new surveys, or a new survey map of Barbados, or some survey map of Barbados is used as a reference point that the description of constituencies which use parish boundaries as part of the description may turn out to be null and void. For what it is worth, Sir, I put that on the table.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to clear up a false impression which I have heard from the lips of the Honourable Member for St. Michael South West now for the second time. It is an impression being given in this country that this Government has invented this whole business of the abolition of Parish Boundaries.

The Democratic Labour Party created a constituency known as Christ Church West which had within its boundaries parts of St. Michael, so this business of the observance, or the.....(ASIDES).....I am telling you. That was the Government that took part of St. Andrew and put it in St. James and then put part of St. James back into St. Andrew again. (ASIDES) I know that is not the point that you are making now, but you are giving a false impression as you have done before now that it is this Government who has invented this whole business of.....

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir....

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: This is going to be another bogus point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is on a point of order.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I object very strongly to the Honourable Member saying that I am giving a false impression when she misunderstands the point which I was making. The point which I was making has nothing to do with the movement of one constituency across a Parish Boundary. It has to do with the description of a Parish Boundary and I do not think that it is fair for the Honourable Member to say that it is a false impression which I am trying to give. The Honourable Member should withdraw that.
4.15 p.m.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have no intention of withdrawing anything that I have said. Implicit in what he is saying, and it is not the first time he has said it in this Hon. Chamber, implicit in what he is saying — and it is what they intend to go out and say on the platforms too for lack of anything else to say — that this Government, this administration, this party has abolished parish boundaries and has disrespected parish boundaries, when it is that party, that administration, that Government which was the first to disrespect the old parish boundaries.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, so that there will be no doubt in anybody's mind, I am one of those persons who have argued that in creating a constituency no one is wedded to the parish boundaries which existed.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Now, let me warn the hon. member. Second reading speeches are in place...(Mr. TAITT: This is not a second reading speech). But this is how we are going now.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I beg you, I implore you to allow me to make the point, Sir. I got up and raised a point about a Schedule perhaps attached to this Bill having new maps. The hon. member, and I will grant her this that she must have misunderstood

the point I was making, I am not making the point that there is something inherently wrong with having a constituency which runs from the old St. Michael into some other parish. That is not the point, the point I am saying is that they have brought down a piece of legislation called the Miscellaneous something Act, and included in that legislation was the abolition of the parish boundaries as they relate to a survey map of 1876 or some such year. That formed part of the legislation.

My point is now, Sir, if you have abolished those parish boundaries from which a number of other bits of legislation proceeded, we use those boundaries, those lines as reference points. My argument is, if you have abolished that you have got to create other reference points, otherwise when you say as you do, for example, in the constituency of St. Michael North East that the boundary shall be the parish line of St. Michael, the parish line of St. Thomas and the parish line of St. George, which you now say, then what you are saying might not make sense because they refer to nothing.

The question that clause 3 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, 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. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CHECKER HALL, ST. LUCY, FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CEMENT PROCESSING PROJECT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, the acquisition of land at Checker Hall, St. Lucy is now the final stage of the Ministry of Housing and Lands, being the Executing Agency for the acquisitions.

Much has been said and much has been talked across the country as to what this Government has done and what it has not done. Argument put up all the time by the Opposition is that we have done all the things they had the dreams of doing.

I think that as long ago as some time in 1966 — I am subject to correction — the idea of a cement plant was mooted. It was said that Barbadians were paying too much for cement, our building programme was going on and you had to import cement from overseas, and the cost of building was escalating. Then

after a number of years we heard of the famous North Point that was bought to carry cement to Guyana, or clinker, whatever you call it, Sir, but there was no plant, there was a boat. Then the Government changed and this Government took it upon itself as it has done in the past, looking at the realities and the priorities for the country, and making sure that each and every single Barbadian would have a proper home, and that factories and hotels can be built, and therefore we will have to use more and more cement, and we went about our task in a rather professional way.

I am told the Prime Minister went to Germany looking at the type of plant, along with a number of his advisers. Preliminary work has been done, feasibility studies carried out, an Agreement between Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados was signed, and I think it is sometime during this month that the ground at Checker Hall is going to be broken to start what is a long, long road ahead for Barbadians in reducing the cost of cement to this country, Sir.

4.25 p.m.

The Opposition can talk about what they had planned to do; we can say what we have done. I think, Mr. Speaker, if you examined our manifesto of 1976, one would recognise that the promises to this country by this Government had all actually been fulfilled in four and a half years. I have taken a very close look at it: the economic position transformed, thousands of jobs to people, better housing, the small farmers in agriculture back into production. The Transport Board, in spite of what people may say, is employing more people than ever in the history of the country; they have more buses, but because of the shift in the working population in the country, one must I believe, have this problem of still not getting transport as adequately as one would like, and I feel justly proud today to be in a position as Minister of Housing to introduce such a Resolution to acquire land at Checker Hall in St. Lucy for the purpose of a cement plant. There are a number of people involved. I can assure this House that wherever possible I am going to guarantee that the owners of the land which we have acquired are paid as quickly as possible. I know a number of problems do come about with the various legal positions where some people have them in trust and at times people are not paid for their lands as quickly as they should be paid. This is not really the fault of the Government, but in some cases the problems are on the other side.

I should just like to make it clear that the Government does not set about to hold up paying people for their lands or whatever it is. I know when we came into office the Ministry of Housing could not get any credit in Bridgetown. I think my colleague on my left sitting in the Prime Minister's seat would agree that we could

not get a contractor or a business house in Bridgetown to give us a line of credit until we had settled the bills which the last administration had outstanding for almost 18 months in some cases when we came into power. I recall the land at Sion Hill, St. James where they were taking people's money and putting down people's names for house spots. John Yearwood, a former Chairman of Committees, had his name down for four house spots for his family denying the poor people in agriculture and people living in the very area in a place like Springhead where we had to bring them out. That is the sort of behaviour you had. I always say God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform. That was one of His wonders. He got rid of that administration because they could not get a cement plant off the ground, and in four and a half years, we have been able to put it in a position where we shall be breaking the ground some time this month speaking subject to correction, but very soon. I think it is on the 21st April, if I am not mistaken, that we shall be breaking ground in Checker Hall, St. Lucy, for the purpose of erecting the plant.

I am told that we have had all the technical advice about the destruction of marine life that we were hearing about, cement blowing up in the air, and I am told that it is the most modern type of plant you have in West Germany and that the West Germans produce some of the finest plants in the world. All this advice, I am told, the Ministry was given and therefore there is no problem where cement dust is going to affect the people in St. Lucy. I am sorry the hon. member for St. Lucy is not here, because when I saw him limping around in here I was under the impression that he was here to deal with this. He has left it for the Acting Leader of the Opposition to deal with.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this bring us to the end of Government Business. It has been a rather businesslike way in which the Opposition has saluted the Government for its outstanding work. I am very happy to be Leader of the House today to have such greetings and such good news that I can pass on to the Prime Minister when he returns of the outstanding work which the members on the other side said we have been doing. It is now 4.30 p.m., Mr. Speaker, and I have checked with my

colleagues down the line as to whether we should come back next week and it is agreed.

I beg to move that this House do now stand adjourned until Tuesday, 14th April, 1981, at 12 o'clock noon.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

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