
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 12, 1983

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

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. S. Craig, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House)
Hon. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Mr. L. E. Sandiford, M.A. (Econ.)
Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, (Minister of Education)
Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Mr. J. G. Odle, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees)
Mr. B. M. Taitt, B.A. (Hons.), M.A., LL.B. (Hons.)
Hon. L. R. Tull, Q.C., M.A., (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw, (Minister of Labour, Social Security and Sport)
Mr. L. L. Sisnett
Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, M.A., M.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food & Consumer Affairs)
Mr. P. M. Greaves
Mr. R. E. Brathwaite
Hon. Dr. D. G. Blackman, B.A., M.A., Phd., (Minister of Health and Community Services)
Mr. M. A. King, LL.B.
Mr. A. Truss

Prayers were read by Archdeacon F. A. Cayless.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, April 5, 1983.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Meeting of April 5, 1983 be now taken as read.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no observations or objections, let the Minutes stand confirmed.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is an indication from the other side.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: (St. Michael West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise on a point of privilege to draw a matter to your attention. It is not serious, but I think it is important.

Constantly, over the last few months, every week in the Press there is published a statement purporting to indicate what the work of this Honourable House would be for the coming week. I have drawn it to the attention of the senior people in the Government Information Service before, and I believe that the only way one would have it corrected would be to draw it to Your Honour's attention.

If one looks at the published material concerning this day's sitting, one would see that it is announced that the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister will move the Third Reading of a Bill, *et cetera*. That has constantly led to a lot of misunderstanding and misgiving concerning the work of Parliament, and I believe that the words ought to be printed in such a way as not to give the impression that something will happen in this Honourable Chamber when, in fact, it is not slated to happen.

I can speak for myself. My constituents are constantly asking me, for example, if the Emergency

Powers Bill is coming up on this day. And that has been going on for some time.

I wish to suggest that since the information comes from the Government Information Service, that the manner in which the information is put out should not give the impression that a particular Bill or a particular process will occur in this Honourable House on a given day when, in fact that is not the case.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member moving a motion on the matter?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I did not think that it was worthy of a motion, Sir. I just thought I would draw it to Your Honour's attention.

A word in the right place, I am sure, will preclude or prevent this from recurring again.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: (St. James North): Sir, I do not even think it is worthy of comment, furthermore a motion.

When this side speaks about certain errors in the Press, the whole information service, *et cetera*, honourable Members on the other side, as political gimmickry, laud the Press; the Press is the finest place and everything. And now, this morning there is something reported in the Press that there is a Third Reading to be moved and he hopes that the Government Information Service will take care of this.

I do not even think that it is worthy of comment. How do you know that it is the GIS?

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Because it said so.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: When I looked at the papers on one occasion and made a statement in here about the IMF, you said that I was a complete ignoramus, that I was the biggest idiot in the whole world, because I read what I saw in the papers. You told me you had another paper!

Look, let me tell you something. Keep off the Press for a moment. Let us all keep off the Press for a moment. Both sides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, Sir,....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two Members are on their feet.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You are accusing the GIS....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig) please take his seat.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member is indicating that I made a statement contrary to what I actually said to Your Honour.

I drew to Your Honour's attention that the matter had been prepared by the Government Information Service, that I had spoken to senior people in the Government Information Service on this matter.

I did not attack the Press. I did not intend to attack the Press. On these matters, the Press print what they receive from Government sources. That is the point I was making, it is not the Press.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. It might be a point of explanation, but not a point of order.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Let the Clerk call....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Just a brief observation, Sir. I am not certain where the blame may be. I do not know if it is the GIS, if it is the Press, or if it is ourselves. The Order Paper itself says:

"To move the Third Reading of a Bill"

and if the Press, GIS, or whomever it may be, gets the Order Paper, they may simply state what is in the Order Paper.

It may be that there may be need for the Government to indicate from week to week what are the items of business they may be doing. That is what happens in the House of Commons. On a Thursday afternoon, in response to a question, the business for the following week is precisely indicated. But here we have the Order Paper and it may very well be that the Press or GIS may merely follow the Order Paper.

I think the Member on this side has raised a problem and it is one which we could examine dispassionately. I think all he was trying to do was to draw to the attention of the Honourable House that there is a problem here, that it raises certain concerns, that it may raise certain hopes or whatever, and that, perhaps, we could better regulate our business as an institution.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I respect that observation. That is the observation, that is the point to be made, because it is true that on the Order Paper it says, "the Third Reading of a Bill for the Emergency Powers Act," when it is in truth and in fact in Select Committee. That

is the observation. I am grateful to the Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is the second occasion on which a breach of privilege of this Honourable House has been raised by Members of the Honourable Chamber.

The first occasion arose during the Annual Estimates when the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. A. Truss) raised a matter of breach of privilege by one of the newspapers of this country. At that time, no motion was moved, as is required under Standing Order 76, and at that time, I made a ruling which said that my hands were tied, I was powerless unless the appropriate motion had been moved.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) raised the matter of privilege today, in which he said he only wants to bring to the attention of the Chair a breach of privilege of this Honourable Chamber.

I must refer to part of my ruling in the first case which was brought to my attention. If I may repeat the final paragraph of my ruling on that occasion, only to bring to the attention of the media my feeling where breaches of privilege are concerned, it reads:

"Since no motion has been moved by the honourable Member for St. Michael Central, the only course of action open to me is to warn reporters and editors of the media that they should, in their own interest, urgently familiarise themselves with the rules of parliamentary reporting."

12.30 p.m.

Here, again, I would like to repeat that it is in the interest of the media to make sure that reporters are aware of what constitutes a breach of privilege of this Honourable Chamber. This Chair will not tolerate callous reporting which will bring anger to the Members of this Chamber. Members have a right to have the business of the House reported accurately, and the Standing Orders are made not only for Members of this Chamber, but for everyone who wants to deal with the Chamber. That is as far as I will go today. If the Clerk will continue.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The 23rd Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Board of Tourism for the year 1981-82.

Sir, on behalf of the Minister of Health and Community Services, I am commanded to lay:

Health Services (Communicable and Notifiable Diseases) (Amendment) Regulations, 1983.

On behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, I am commanded to lay:

The Caribbean Common Market (Origin of Goods) (Amendment) Regulations, 1983.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to give notice of the following:

A Resolution to approve the designation of an Acting Speaker and an Acting Deputy Speaker.

A Bill to amend the Housing Act.

A Bill to remove any doubt with respect to the commencement of the Education Act, 1981, (Act 1981-25) and for related matters.

A Bill to provide for the implementation by Barbados of the Agreement establishing the Caribbean Examinations Council.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

On separate motions of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, the following Bills were read a first time.

A Bill to amend the Housing Act.

A Bill to remove any doubt respecting the commencement of the Education Act, 1981 (Act 1981-25), and for related matters.

A Bill to provide for the implementation by Barbados of the Agreement establishing the Caribbean Examinations Council.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

Statement on the findings and recommendations of the Inquiry into an attempted escape at Glendairy Prisons on 2nd May, 1982

Hon. L. R. TULL (Attorney General) (St. George South): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, consequent on an attempted escape by four (4) prisoners from Glendairy Prisons on 2nd May, 1982, Mr. W. H. C. Gollop, M.B.E., was appointed to investigate and report to the Minister responsible for the Prisons on the conditions existing in the maximum security wing of the Prisons where the particular prisoners were accommodated, with particular reference to:-

(a) the physical conditions

(b) the treatment of prisoners and the facilities available to prisoners;

- (c) the relationship between prison staff and the prisoner;
 - (d) the channels for investigation of complaints;
 - (e) the standard of security;
- and to make recommendations for improvements where necessary.

2. The Report was made available to the Minister in October, 1982.

3. The Report notes that physical conditions at the Prisons affect every one directly or indirectly and also affects the health, behaviour, discipline, performance, security and productivity of the inmates. It recommends improvements to the entrance of the Prisons including improved facilities for visitors. It also recommends the "removal of a dense ex-crescence of dwellings along the western wall", on the ground that these are "almost sure to be a source of problems of all sorts of objects, including weapons and drugs, finding a way into the Prisons."

The Report considers the space, equipment and general working conditions in the kitchen area and in the Hospital to be inadequate.

Whilst noting that woodwork remains a specialty of the Prisons, it points out that "one officer to about 25 to 30 prisoners, in a situation with sharp-edged tools, in a building out of proportion to numbers, and with gaping window spaces, must constitute serious strain on the instructor who is, at the same time, the custodian, the mentor, and the symbol of security and authority amid a mixture of men who are prisoners".

Officers' accommodation and the lighting generally throughout the Prisons come in for unfavourable comment. On the other hand, the Report states that much attention is paid to sanitation and general tidiness. It is also observed that, even though recreation facilities are limited by space and security considerations, there is nevertheless "a commendable degree of activity, which to some extent gives scope for defusing energy and possible frustration and making for socialisation."

The Report considers that there should be an increase in staff and recommends in particular that a post of Personnel Officer be established.

The Report recommends that efforts be made at improving the relationship between prison staff and the prisoners.

With regard to the channels for investigations of complaints the Report recommends that the line of command and distribution of authority be redefined both vertically and laterally.

In examining the standard of security at Prisons, the Report has suggested that the system is in need of review and upgrading.

The Recommendations of the Report are receiving the attention of the Government.

I wish also to inform the Honourable House that Glendairy Prison was built in 1852 to accommodate a maximum of 225 men and 120 women in single occupancy cells. During the past year the Prison has had to deal with an increasing number of inmates. In 1982 there was for instance, a 20% rise in male inmates over 1981 and so far in 1983 there have been further increases over the corresponding period in 1982. As a result, certain passages within the male Prison have had to be blocked off and storage space reduced. The Superintendent has thus been able to make additional cells available for occupancy in the male section. The maximum capacity of the Men's Prison was by these means raised to 250. Regrettably, the male population has continued its upward spiral, and presently stands at over 300.

The male Prison has thus reached the point of absolute maximum utilization of accommodation. On the other hand, the female Prison is under-occupied and under-utilized. There are seldom more than 12 females, but, on the other hand, there are 120 cells in that area. Subdivision of the female Prison so as to provide accommodation for thirty females and ninety male first offenders in separate compounds is currently being undertaken. This will greatly relieve the pressure in the male section of the Prison.

This work is being carried out by prisoners under the supervision of instructors, with technical advice provided by personnel of the Ministry of Transport and Works.

12.40 p.m.

ORAL REPLIES TO PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to give notice that the Replies to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 28 and 30 asked by the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) are now ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Government Business be the instant Order of the day.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Government Business is now the instant Order of the day.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

I would also like to give Members on the other side the assurance that if there is any Private Members' Business to be done, I am quite willing to accommodate them.

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

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

ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1983

Order No. 3 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Road Traffic Act was last amended in 1981, and the purpose of this new amendment is to bring the Road Traffic Act more in line with the current thinking of the present Government, that there needs to be a substantial re-organisation of the various bits of legislation that relate to the processes of Government in order to place responsibility more squarely where that responsibility should fall.

The principal amendment that we seek to put forward this morning, Sir, is the restructuring of the section of the Bill that has to do with vehicle insurance, to take it out of the Ministry of Transport and Works where the present responsibility is and place it with the Minister responsible for Insurance, who would more logically be the person who would be expected to administer those clauses that have to do with vehicle insurance.

There are a number of problems. I can identify them as problems because they pose undue hardship on motorists in Barbados in relation to the granting of insurance cover. As one example, Sir, particularly with respect to motor scooters and motor cycles generally, and other classes of vehicles like sports cars, most insurance companies now have a practice of requiring the owner of the vehicle to be the sole identified and named individual authorised to drive that class of motor vehicle.

The ultimate outcome of this particular requirement is that even though an individual may be a licensed driver of that class of vehicle, and even though he may be driving with the full authority and consent of the owner of that vehicle, if he becomes involved in an accident that clause effectively absolves the insurance company from any responsibility to cover any injuries that occur in the case where an accident takes place. It puts the driver of the vehicle in a very invidious position, because, effectively, it classifies him as an individual driving a vehicle without the appropriate insurance cover.

This, Sir, is perhaps a convenient device by the insurance companies of Barbados to evade what we would regard as their responsibility in these circumstances, and the Bill will effectively seek to put an end to this practice of inserting named driver clauses in insurance policies.

Another intent behind the amendments of this particular Act, Sir, is to provide insurance cover for third parties who may be riding in a vehicle that is not a vehicle used for hire. In other words, when a passenger is riding in a private vehicle and he becomes injured in the course of riding in that vehicle, he can only seek redress from the owner of the vehicle or from the driver of that vehicle, but he does not have any automatic cover under the present insurance Regulations. What we are seeking to do now is to expand the compulsory cover offered to make provisions for non-fare paying passengers.

Since these matters which I have identified are matters that would fall under the purview of the Minister responsible for Insurance, this is essentially an insurance matter, the thinking is that it would more logically be administered by the Minister responsible for Insurance rather than by the Minister responsible for Transport and Works.

It is quite possible that, by extending the range of cover currently offered to different classes of aggrieved passengers, it might be that the insurance companies may say that they will need to demand additional premiums for that additional risk that they take on. When you consider the amount of tragedy and heartbreak that could result when people are innocently injured in a motor vehicle accident which does not by its nature provide for their protection, it would appear logical that whatever

the considerations that may arise so far as the additional cover is concerned ought to be taken carefully into consideration.

12.50 p.m.

Attempts ought to be made to let people understand that what we are attempting to do here is look after a gap in our insurance practice in Barbados that has gone unchallenged for a long time. A reasonable premium therefore seems to be in order for this additional coverage.

I would like, Sir, to invite the insurance companies of Barbados to what might be regarded as new thinking in the whole insurance industry. For a long time, even before I became Minister responsible for Transport and Works, I have been perplexed by the fact that even in minor accidents, the need to establish guilt is so paramount in the minds of the persons concerned with the accident that they will tie up traffic for many, many hours waiting until the police come. And when the police arrive on the scene, all they do is to take measurements, which I have been informed by the people who are expert in this area and who have had more experience in it than I have had, are not necessarily helpful.

Perhaps the Honourable Member for St. James South may be able to tell me about the validity of the statement. But I gather that sometimes even when the police come on the scene and take measurements, those measurements are not always useful to the presiding officer in the court as a means of establishing guilt.

As a matter of fact, it would appear that the intent behind those measurements more often than not is to establish criminal responsibility. But in the case where there is no criminal involvement, no criminal liability, the insurance companies sometimes nonetheless seek to get information from the police and to use those measurements as a means to determining whether or not one party was at fault or the other.

I believe that we are quite ready in Barbados now, particularly given the fact that we can no longer engage in the luxury of tying up traffic on our busy highways, I believe to look at the insertion of "no fault clauses" in our insurance policies. So that regardless of whose fault it might be, it would be possible for drivers of motor vehicles involved in accidents to get out, copy down the registration number of the motor car, copy down the name of the insurance company that is carrying the coverage for the other party; and with that information alone, move the vehicles and leave the rest to the insurance companies to administer, in which case both parties get

settled and the traffic in Barbados is allowed to flow smoothly.

Just a few mornings ago, I saw a very minor accident at Culloden Road junction, and there was traffic stretching almost all the way back to Government Hill and creating havoc in that area. A very busy artery with the by-pass road, etc., and nobody could do anything about that until the police could come and say that it was all right for those vehicles to move.

I believe, Sir, that it is now time for us to seriously examine these things to see whether we can continue to allow matters to go on as they are now, or whether it is time for us to address these issues. It would be necessary for us to educate the public of Barbados, because this would be a new concept — and people are very reluctant to move off. Even when they have the assurance that the law is going to protect them, they are very reluctant to take any initiative to remove any vehicles from the scene of the accident until the police come.

I believe that there are a few persons who have recognised that there is a problem in keeping traffic stalled, and who have attempted on their own to get little liability slips from the person who has accepted responsibility. But I am told that very often the people who so willingly sign these liability slips at the scene of the accident, once they have had a day or two to reflect, then decide that they are not guilty after all and they are not going to fix the other man's car as they had promised to do.

This Act, therefore, is not one that is going to require a lot of effort. I think that the intent is clear. The purpose, from my point of view, is admirable and logical, because it places responsibility where that responsibility ought to lay. In the circumstances, I myself cannot foresee any difficulty that would be associated with the easy passage of this particular amendment to the Road Traffic Act.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: (Christ Church West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to second this Bill and to speak on the provisions, because although the honourable Minister has been, to some extent, modest in his introduction of the Bill, certainly the changes being effected by this Bill have far-reaching consequences and will be beneficial to the public at large.

I should state that this Bill has a very long history. When the present Government was in the Opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had the honour to draft a private Bill,

amending the then Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic Act, in order to effect substantially all of the changes which are contained in this Bill. Unfortunately, there was the dissolution of the House in 1976 and we were not able at that time to carry through with the Private Member's Bill.

You will recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when you were Minister in charge of Communications and Works, amendments were made to the Motor Vehicle Insurance Act in exactly similar terms. But then they were held up, because at the time we were dealing with the complete revision of the Road Traffic Act and at the time the Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic Act insurance provisions were administered by the Minister of Finance.

When the new Road Traffic Bill came down at that time, I believe that the Supervisor of Insurance together with Mr. Mayhee, and the Advisor on Insurance were then looking at several provisions of this Bill in addition to the insurance industry. I had the privilege of presiding over some of those meetings and trying to explain to the insurance industry that they had nothing to fear about some of the provisions of this Bill.

I would like to stress the policy behind one or two sections. The new Section 2(a) is significant in that it gives defence to the employee of a company, or of a person, who fails to insure the vehicle, and who is innocently driving the vehicle, finds himself faced with absolute or strict liability. Prior to this change in the law he would have had no defence and he could have found himself disqualified. The only exception to that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was the driver of a Government vehicle, because the Crown, in relation to certain classes of vehicle, was exempted from the provision of Section 37. 1.00 p.m.

So the new Section 2(a) is beneficial to the workers, particularly to those persons driving public service and other vehicles, or who may be employed by a corporation which failed to carry proper insurance policies. It is the sort of progressive improvement and reform of the law that any democratic progressive socialist Government such as this one would implement, and I am very happy to congratulate the Government, although it has taken us some time from Opposition to now to bring this provision in.

In Section 4, Sir, we also have some changes that are fairly significant. Prior to the changes in the Motor Vehicle Insurance Act and the new Road Traffic Act, there was no obligation on a person to insure for damage to property. I think that damage was raised to \$10 000; the amount is now raised to \$50 000.

Although that may sound like a lot of money, there are motor cars on the road that exceed this in value today, and in addition, what is much more serious, you

can have a vehicle completely ruining a house, maybe a chattel house belonging to some persons, and all of their possessions could exceed \$50 000. I should hope that the Minister will soon look again at this limitation and discuss the matter with the motor insurance trade because it seems to me that even the \$50 000 for personal injury is a little bit low, having regard to the current type of damage that we have been noticing being effected to property by vehicles on the road.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other provision is an improvement, Section 4(b) of Section 38, in that once before you had no duty to insure in respect of persons getting on and off certain types of vehicles. Now you have a duty to insure except the vehicle is a vehicle just being used in contravention of any enactment. In subsection 5, I should like to stress the policy there again. It is an important improvement.

There is a rule of common law that only parties to contracts can sue on those contracts, so that if there is insurance between, for instance, two honourable Members — one is the insurer and the other the insured — and the third party is damaged and that third party obtains judgment, the third party cannot sue the insurance company directly.

It is a very difficult legal process through which one has to go by calling on the insured person to lend his name to the action, and then if he refuses, you are pushed in the position that you may actually have to apply to the judge, because this is not an exception to the rule dealing with who could sue, only parties to the contract being able to sue. It does not come under *Vanderpettite* or any of that line of cases which have made exceptions in the doctrine of trust, and this harsh rule of the Crown law which still unfortunately exist in our laws. So the purpose of the section is to ensure that once there is a policy of insurance in force, you can rely on that policy even if the policy of insurance was not one called for by the particular provisions of the Act.

Sections 5 and 6 achieve these two purposes: one, to allow a person to get the benefit of a judgment even where the insurance policy was not called for by the Act once there is a policy of insurance in force, and to allow direct action against an insurance company in respect of this. And it is bolstered by the amendment to Section 50 under the new Section (a), and Section (10), which place certain obligations on insurance companies to give information to the person who has been damaged concerning the policy of insurance. That was not available before, and it is now available.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not contend that this solves all the problems concerning persons who may be damaged by motor vehicles. Motor vehicles are obviously beneficial to those of us who have to use them, be it a

bus, motor car or motor lorry, but they also can be very damaging and they can cause tremendous destruction to persons and property.

One of the inspirations behind this Bill was a particular case, which I had the honour of doing at the Bar, where a young person was mowed down. It was impossible for his mother and his children to get the benefits of their judgment against the particular insurance company, and since we could not get the co-operation of the insured at the time, we had great difficulty. We had to bring a second case. The poor old lady did not have the means to pay for bringing the case and I had to undertake the case free of cost on her behalf against the insurance company, eventually recovering judgment on her behalf.

It seemed to be absolutely wrong that, because of a rule of common law, we should be sticking so strictly to that without achieving real equity and justice in cases of this nature. The law had not kept in line with the social developments that existed in the 20th century. Before we did not have this line of motor vehicle, you had the cart that was not the same sort of problem, and it was in those circumstances that from the Opposition benches we, I think there were six or seven of us got together, sought to do something about it. You will recall the draft bill which was done in this respect, just as we did the draft Libel and Defamation Act, which was introduced in the House and unfortunately died with the prorogation of the House as well.

There is still a grey area, in which, of course, the Minister has not spoken, but the Government has taken positive steps to do something about that: that is, the person who drives a motor vehicle on the road without having any policy of insurance or in contravention of the policy of insurance which he may have. In England, and in most developed countries, this situation is covered by an arrangement between insurers under what is called a Motor Insurers Bureau, where, in circumstances where they realise they have a fund and a pool, they will pay any damages awarded by the court.

I do not believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that you had the benefit of congratulations when you were Minister of Communications and Works in having organised, along with the Ministry of Finance and Insurance and the Ministry of the Attorney General, such a system which is now in operation in Barbados. To some extent the insurers do in such instances, although the categories are not wide enough, take on some responsibility in these cases.

I believe that the scheme can be expanded, and it is possible to reflect the cost of the scheme in what would obviously be soon increase in premiums in any event. But I believe that, particularly with the introduction of the

State Insurance Corporation, there is a good deal of competition now in the level of premiums so that you can shop around and still get a reasonable premium by insurance companies.

I would like to congratulate the insurers, both those who belong to the association and those who do not, in playing their part in trying to get such a scheme established, and I hope that the scheme will be expanded so that the problems which still occur will be minimised as much as possible.

1.10 p.m.

I have no doubt that the principal spokesman on Legal Affairs or Communications and Works for the Opposition will support this measure because it is only one which can be of great benefit to people who, unfortunately, may suffer damage because of the use of a vehicle on the road.

The other point which I should like to make, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a point which has been emphasized by the honourable Minister (Hon. V. L. Johnson), and that is, making it illegal to have named the driver's policies. In short, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there is a policy — I know you clearly understand — in which the name, let us say, "John Doe" appears as the driver, also his wife, "Rachel Doe", and that car is driven by their daughter, who has a valid driver's licence, and she gets into an accident, then it is not covered by insurance. And it is possible, although somebody could suffer serious harm to the extent of a fatal accident, for the insurance company to claim that it was driven by a person who is not a main driver and escape liability in those circumstances.

We have had tremendous problems arising out of this in the tourist industry with vehicles used in the tourist trade. Particularly a lot of problems have arisen because the tourists come down, they do not realise that that is the law, they go and sign a contract, they have the main driver's clause against them, they find that one of their colleagues will use the car, an accident occurs, somebody is seriously damaged and the insurance disclaims liability in these circumstances. That is being corrected by this Bill.

There is one final thing I would ask the honourable Minister to discuss with his colleague, my learned friend, the honourable Attorney-General (Hon. L. R. Tull). The decision in England based on the Gammell case had expanded considerably the level of damages for loss of expectation of life in a way that it is going to become extremely onerous on the owners of motor vehicles to pay the premiums that would naturally follow, if we follow the Gammell decision.

In England and in other countries, amending legislation has already been enacted to limit this so that you

have a fair balance in the award of damages. For instance, in England recently there was the Administration of Justice Act, 1982, which has dealt with the matter, and in other jurisdictions in the Commonwealth — I cannot cite all the particular bits of legislation — but similar, reforming legislation has been enacted.

I trust that the Government will see it fit in this respect to limit the full implications of the Gammell decision because of the fact that I think that our Amendment Accident Compensation Act has gone a long way towards giving adequate compensation.

I notice at the moment, in some of the decisions in the courts, that perhaps the lawyers have not even fully grasped the implication of the tremendous reformatory change made by the Accident Compensation Act where, although there may not be a financial loss, there is a financial reward where the counselling, for instance, of a close relative, a father, may no longer be available to a young child. It is something similar to the principle of solatium, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, which exists in the Laws of Scotland.

I hope, therefore, that, with that change, we will see it necessary to limit the House of Lords decision, which, apparently, has been accepted here as of persuasive importance and of persuasive force with our courts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if I have spoken a little bit at length on what may appear a short Bill, it is because it is a reformatory Bill with very practical effect and of great benefits to people who, unfortunately, may suffer injury from the Bill.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wish to make one short point. It is really by way of an appeal to the honourable Minister of Finance (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams), that somewhere in the Regulations, which are either in process of preparation or soon will be, cognizance has got to be taken, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of the number of lives which have been lost over these past recent years on account of motorcycle riders who are thrown off of their cycles. Not only lives are lost, but many bodies and minds are crippled.

There used to be a ward in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital known as the "Honda Ward". I do not think there is any doubt in anybody's mind, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the tremendous toll of suffering, pain, anguish and expense that the careless riding of motorcycles cause.

I do not think there can be any doubt; it has been proved; there are statistics to show it; that in other parts of the world, the wearing of crash helmets as a preventive measure goes a long way in preventing serious damage and injury to the head in particular. In most of

the cases, persons are catapulted off a motorcycle, and on impact are into a head first situation. If they do not crush their skulls, they break their necks, and when they are not offered that merciful release, they are left to lead long lives of considerable pain and suffering.

I do believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if the wearing of crash helmets for motorcycle riders and pillion riders were to be made compulsory in Barbados, we would see a dramatic decrease in the number of deaths and injuries arising from motorcycle accidents.

So I really want to appeal to the honourable Minister of Finance that when the Regulations are made, and, perhaps, in co-operation with the insurance companies, that something is done. An assault on this problem of the motorcycle accidents can be taken from more than one corner. The Government can take action by way of legislation, the insurance companies can take action, and even those persons who are in the business of retailing these machines. The three parties must. I think that they now have a duty, in the face of the figures in Barbados, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to co-operate so that the kind of accident statistic, particularly in relation to motorcycles, can be reduced in Barbados.

There is a lot of education which has got to be done about the riding of motorcycles; in fact, about the driving of motor vehicles on the whole. But it is just this one particular point that I would like to urge upon the draftsmen and upon the honourable Minister responsible, the compulsory riding of crash helmets both for riders and passengers on motorcycles.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this amending Bill has been hailed by the Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. V. L. Johnson) and by the Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) as a great piece of reformatory legislation.
1.20 p.m.

It has made some improvements, let me admit, in the law relating to motor vehicle insurance. But it does seem to me that the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central in his presentation spoke about the many reformatory measures which he and others spoke about when they were in Opposition. And it is a little surprising that the Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic Act of 1981, which certainly came in the time of the present Government, should have been brought in without the totality of the many reforms about which the honourable Member for Christ Church West spoke.

In the debate on motor vehicle insurance, the point made by the honourable Member for Christ Church West about the need for a Motor Insurance Bureau is one that crops up time and time again, and time and time again

measures for amending the law in relation to motor vehicle insurance come into this Parliament and yet there is nothing which is included about the establishment of a Motor Insurance Bureau.

I think all of us on both sides of the House, and the public at large, would be happy about the creation of an institution like a Motor Insurance Bureau, which, in the final analysis, will provide compensation for the many people who get injured in road accidents and who, for one reason or the other because of the state of the law, are unable to recover compensation from the insurance companies.

There are still a large number of persons in Barbados who receive injuries in accidents on the road and who are unable to recover compensation from insurance companies because of certain technicalities. And they are unable to recover from the driver himself, because the driver is usually a man of straw. There are several examples that one can cite of persons who are in this position and are unable to recover any compensation.

It is about time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if the insurance companies in Barbados are not disposed to set up a fund, a bureau in the form of the Motor Insurance Bureau of the United Kingdom, then positive initiatives should be taken by Government to make sure that some sort of compensation for persons injured in circumstances of that kind is institutionalised. The sooner that attention is directed to that, the better it will be for all of us in this community. I have made the point that whenever debate on this comes up, that point is always being urged, and I think we should all continue to urge it until serious and positive action is taken to ensure that it becomes a reality.

There are a number of other aspects of this Bill which need some comment. I have no objections at all; in fact, I welcome the provisions which provide for the minimisation of the exemptions for insurance companies for responsibility in cases of accidents. I think those provisions which amend the law in that regard are welcome. But there are some aspects of this amending Bill on which I have some observations to make. In Clause 2, for instance, of the amending Bill, where the new Section 2A which provides for a defence to a charge under Section 37 of the old Act, the defence is that the person is not the owner of the vehicle. It seems Mr. Deputy Speaker, that once you amend Section 37(1) as proposed by this Bill, that certainly the expressed statement of defence in 2A becomes unnecessary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if one looks at Section 37, the old Act says this.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member deal with the principle of the Bill and leave the

question of the paragraph in the Bill to the appropriate Committee. The honourable Member can only deal with the principle of the Bill at this stage of the proceedings.

Mr. M. A. KING: As Your Honour pleases, but the principle surely must be whether it is necessary in the amending Bill to state a defence of the kind as stated there. I only wanted to refer to the section on the point with a view to determining whether it was necessary in principle to state a defence as articulated in the section of the Bill at amending.

The other aspect of this Bill on which I wish to make a comment is in relation to the power which is now given to the Minister of Finance and Planning to make Regulations with respect to certain sections of the new Traffic Act. The Bill transfers the functions in relation to insurance from the Minister of Transport and Works to the Prime Minister, who is responsible for Insurance. The amending Bill gives the Minister responsible for Finance power to make Regulations with respect to certain paragraphs in the original Bill. It does that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, without removing that same power from the Minister responsible for Transport and Works. So it does seem to me that both Ministers, the Minister responsible for Finance and the Minister responsible for Transport and Works, have the power to make Regulations, and

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It does seem to me that your argument is an argument which can better be dealt with in Committee stage where you deal with each paragraph and section of the Bill. We are dealing with the various amendments which will have to take place and can only be dealt with in Committee stage.

Mr. M. A. KING: As Your Honour wishes.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just have a couple of comments to make on the amending Bill. My colleague has touched on the first one I would like to make. I find it very difficult when the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) speaks in terms of these amending clauses as if they are something for which they should be congratulated. In fact I think he did congratulate the Government, pointing out that when six or seven of them were in Opposition, they had proposed these amendments, but with the influxion of time, they were unable to bring them to fruition. I find it difficult to accept the Honourable Member's contiguous statement in this regard. In 1981

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the honourable Member will give way. I just explained to the honourable Member that when the actual Bill was ready, the Motor Vehicle and Insurance Act, as you would very well recall Sir, the problem was whether or not you would keep it in

that Act and administer it by the Ministry of Transport and Works or the Ministry of Finance.

I will just give the honourable Member the explanation. What happened was that we decided to proceed, because the Road Traffic Act had been held up for so long. Surely the honourable Member will recall that the honourable Mr. Frederick Smith at the time giving somebody special leave to do the Road Traffic Act, which took over 15 years to be reformed. We came ahead with the Road Traffic Act, waiting to get these provisions finished. That is the only reason for the delay.
1.30 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I am sure the honourable Member will get a chance to make that other speech that he makes when he speaks again, but I was going to make a point that there was a lot of legislation which the honourable Member brought to this Honourable Chamber when he was Attorney General, which cannot be deemed to be nearly as important as the Regulations concerning the Road Traffic Act. And if he was unable to do it for all the reasons he has given, I still believe that it is somewhat fatuous to be talking in terms of congratulating the Government for bringing something in 1983 which was ready back in 1976.

Furthermore, Sir, and this is the point I want to make, we are now in 1983, and we have a 1981 Road Traffic Act, and we are still operating Regulations in 1983 that were made for the old Road Traffic Act, the 1952 Road Traffic Act. There can be no excuse under the sun for the Government to bring us these amendments today, for the Minister to introduce them and give us no indication when we might expect proper Regulations to go with what has been called — a new phrase — reformatory legislation in the 1981 Road Traffic Act.

It is remarkable that we in Barbados can be operating in 1983 with a new Road Traffic Act passed in 1981, and Regulations that were made for the 1952 Act. If my memory serves me correctly, Sir, recently the Chief Magistrate caused some cases brought in the courts to be thrown out precisely because he made the point in law that has been made in the scriptures, that it is unwise to put new wine in old bottles.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, recently I was stopped on the highway by an enthusiastic police officer. He drew to my attention that, technically, I was in violation of the law, and when I said to him, "But the 1981 Road Traffic Act has taken care of this," he said to me, "But the Regulations I am going by tell me that you are incorrect." I did not argue with the police officer. (Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: He should have carried you in).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The police officer has more sense than the Minister, he exercised his discretion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member will address the Chair.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon, Sir.

The point is, Sir, that the police officer himself was a little confused, or it is possible that I was confused, in that we were operating a 1981 Act with 1952 Regulations.

I believe that the Government owes it to the community to explain this inordinate delay in putting this matter beyond reasonable doubt. I accept that when Your Honour, in your former capacity, sought to bring the 1981 Road Traffic Act into operation, you were fulfilling an ambition to see the frustration of a lot of talk about the Road Traffic Act put away once and for all. If I recall, Sir, we were promised at that time that the Regulations would follow in a relatively short period.

It is not Your Honour's fault that the honourable Member for St. Thomas (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams) in his wisdom was not apparently able to replace the then Minister responsible for Transport and Works with a competent regime to allow for the smooth and logical development of the Road Traffic Act. It would seem to me that there has to be some measure of incompetence somewhere, either at the level of the Attorney General's Chambers, or at the level of the Ministry concerned, that so much time could elapse that there could be commentary in the courts about the need for the new Regulations, and yet today we can have a Minister, a new brand fresh Minister of Transport and Works, coming and telling us that these amendments are to bring the Act more in keeping with modern thought.

From 1981 to 1983 we are moving more in line with modern thought — that is what we were told in 1981. And instead of the honourable Member for Christ Church West getting up and congratulating himself on having had some ideas which now find expression in these amendments, he should help to explain why the people of Barbados have to operate on the roads with old Regulations which, for example, make no provision for the very valid point raised by the honourable Member for the City.

We in Barbados ought by now to be operating a modern Road Traffic Act with modern Regulations. The reason why a Road Traffic Act or any other similar Act would make provision for Regulations would be to allow the Minister, the Government, to make changes as necessary without having to go back and change the original Act, but it is unacceptable that you can pass a new Act and take so long to bring in the Regulations. And if there is a good enough excuse or a good enough reason not to have an explanation from the Minister, instead he tells us that he is bringing these amendments to put us in keeping with modern thought.

I would like the Minister to get some modern thinking on how we are going to deal with the new highway which has been opened, the Spring Garden Highway. We need some modern thinking on how you are going to educate the drivers in Barbados on the use of highways. We need some modern thought as to whether you are going to stick with the same 30 miles per hour on that highway and thus make almost every driver on it guilty of a contravention of the law every day, or whether you are going to look realistically at the kinds of driving necessary.

We need to educate our people in Barbados that on highways such as that, there is need for not only a maximum speed but a minimum speed.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Sit down).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Now the Minister *sotto voce* is asking me to sit down, when I am getting up and apparently telling him what he is to do when he is introducing legislation of this kind. Let me continue to speak to Your Honour, Sir.

We need to recognise that already one person has lost his life and I believe, without prejudice to the merits of the particular case, that whenever it is examined.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member cease to raise matters which might find themselves in another place? The honourable Member is fully aware of the Standing Orders of this House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I assure Your Honour I do not intend.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would not like you to prejudice any proceedings one way or the other by raising the matter at this point.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The point is taken, Sir. I assure Your Honour I have no intention of commenting on the merits of the particular incident, I merely wish to say that I believe that when the matter is settled we are going to discover that a high degree of ignorance will have prevailed.

I want to make the point that every day one passes on that highway one sees somebody who has parked on the highway in the same way that you would have parked on one of the other by-ways. We see people crossing the street leisurely, not being able to adjudge that a vehicle coming from some distance away may indeed be approaching at a much faster rate than they have been accustomed to assimilate their observation of the movement of traffic in relation to their own movement. 1.40 p.m.

We need to know whether, indeed, there is going to be a whole new regime for the use of these highways, whether there is going to be, for example, an overhead cross-over for those who will necessarily have to cross the Spring Garden Highway, or whether there is going to be some other method for dealing with this kind of vehicle.

We have had a tremendous increase in the amount of traffic in Barbados. I do not believe that it is necessary to point out that there are now over 30 000 vehicles on the roads in Barbados.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Forty-five thousand. The hon. Member says 45 000 and including MP 1, and the number he has contributed significantly to that large increase. I am grateful to the honourable Member, who was Minister of Communications and Works, who changed the nomenclature of the vehicles in this country, because for the first time we have been able to see clearly the large increase in motor vehicles brought about by the attitude of the Prime Minister so that we have more vehicles in Barbados now in Government alone than they had in Barbados in its first two hundred years of existence. No doubt we will hear that that is a sign of progress.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He is telling me that he has now managed to increase the number of vehicles in the Government to more than they had in the whole world in the first two hundred years of its history.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member now wants to tell me that the motor vehicles only started coming in the 1930s and, therefore, for the first two hundred years in Barbados, they could not have had any motor vehicles.

The point is, Sir, that with all of the vehicles that we have in Barbados, whether it is 45 000 or not, we really need to have Regulations.

I see that in the last few weeks we have had Regulations setting up a Licensing Authority. I think we have made the Commissioner of Police the licensing authority and we have made somebody else some other authority under the Act. I believe that this is a step in the right direction, but until we get full Regulations so that all the citizens of the country can know what is right or wrong, there will be problems.

I will give you an example of one of the difficulties. Under the old regime it was not legal to pass a vehicle on the left. Now that we have the highways where persons are going to be going into another turning lane, obviously it is legal to pass that particular vehicle on the left, even though.....

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am not dealing with two lanes. I am dealing with where you have a turning lane in the middle of the highway: that is, in effect, what happens; you branch out of one lane into two lanes for purposes of turning; so, in essence, the person who is passing on the left is still on the highway. Under the old Regulations, that is a violation.

We have talked in the new Road Traffic Act about "moving violations" versus "stationary violations". We have looked at whether we should have strict liability for certain aspects to the violation of the law as opposed to other liability. We need to move parking violations from the ambit of criminal activity. To say of a person who in these difficult times in Bridgetown takes a chance and parks somewhere and is reported, is the same criminal as someone who wilfully drinks two pints of alcohol and then proceeds to commit motor manslaughter, to say that the two of them are equal as criminals, is to raise some very serious questions.

All of these are matters which we think the Government by now, since the passing of the Road Traffic Act in 1981, should have been able to tell this population clearly, unambiguously and without a whole lot of "flim-flam." Instead, what we have is the passing of this amendment.

This amendment to the Road Traffic Act is unlikely to have a lot of controversy, Sir, because what is included in here would find acceptance, generally speaking, except for some details which will be dealt with in Committee, from both sides of the House. There are matters which have been discussed before; there are matters which have found acceptance before. But I say that while this goes somewhere toward advancing us, the failure to produce the General Regulations that are a necessary part of the Road Traffic Law in Barbados is something which the Government has to explain fully and clearly, or it has to stand as not having done its job.

It must not be felt that the only reason the 1981 Act was rushed in 1981 was to give the party the opportunity to say that they had completed legislation that had been outstanding. There are many persons who do not believe that, but if we get the kind of speech which was made by the honourable Member for Christ Church West today, talking about how this followed from when he was in Opposition, then persons are bound

to believe that even Road Traffic Law is being seen in the context of partisan politics.

I do not believe that the question of good laws for the regulation of traffic and the movement of persons on the roads of Barbados ought to be the subject of any partisan political activity or partisan political statement. This is not a time for congratulations, and I am not going to make it a time for condemnation yet. I am just going to say, as I sit down, that I believe that the Government owes it to the population to give us an explanation as to why we have waited so long, and are still waiting, for the General Regulations. And I would hope, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, the explanation notwithstanding, we can look forward very soon to an early resolution on the whole question of proper Road Traffic Laws for Barbados.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have only heard part of the address by the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King) and the speech by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), but I must say that I particularly appreciated the speech of the honourable Member of St. Michael West who has just sat down.

I think I can agree with everything he has said, and I want to disappoint my friend, the honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig), who thinks that I am rising to damn the honourable Member under the guise of praising him. I think he has made some very sound points, for example, the point about overtaking on the left, although I fear that would still be in the Regulations. The magistrates will have to hold that at a point where a road has a turning lane it becomes two roads.

On the subject of the Regulations, I think I can reasonably say that nobody on the Opposition side could have put the case more strongly for the new Road Traffic Regulations than I have tried to put it for a number of years. I have even had to threaten Permanent Secretaries with discipline by the Public Service Commission if they did not produce a draft of the Road Traffic Regulations with their comments by a certain time.

You are talking about Regulations that have been knocking around for 15 years and, unfortunately, there was a period of two years where these Regulations appeared to have become the centre of bureaucratic resistance to what was seen as Prime Ministerial determination. I cannot call on a Minister to write Road Traffic Regulations. I can only ask the Minister to have them by Cabinet at a certain time.

1.50 p.m.

Since this business of trying to get Regulations survived every Minister, barring the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite) who has held the portfolio in my Cabinet, at an early stage I considered that I could no longer handle it as a straightforward matter between a Minister and the Prime Minister. I would ask for the Regulations, I would ask to see them, directing my enquiries to the Attorney General's Office, and I would be told that they are at MTW. I would then ask MTW to send them to me and I would be told that they had gone back to the Attorney General's Office. I then asked MTW to let me see the Regulations by a certain date, and the Minister intervened to say that his Permanent Secretary had recently been appointed, was not very experienced and was trying to revise the Regulations himself, and would I not enforce that date. I let more months pass and gave a deadline stating in my minute, which was not addressed to the Minister, it was addressed to the civil servants concerned, that if by a certain date these Regulations were not in a form in which they could be presented by the Cabinet, I would treat it as a matter of discipline and request the Public Service Commission to investigate the performance of the duties by the public officers concerned.

There was then some turmoil in the department, and following the turmoil, there was a change of ministry at which it was discovered that the Regulations had been misplaced, they had been misplaced for a period of months, and I saw them for the first time last week when the present Minister said the draft Regulations have now been found and he was working on them. I think that happened on Friday; so the honourable Member's strictures are well founded.

But although we have to carry the blame for Public Service inefficiency, I cannot accept that the Government as a collection of politicians, the Cabinet, can carry any of the blame for this particular delay which I estimate has occupied not just the time since the passing of the 1981 Road Traffic Act, but perhaps occupied the time for a year before that, since it was my intention and belief that the Regulations would be ready in time to promulgate with the new Act.

The honourable Member for St. Joseph (Mr. C. L. Bolden), Your Honour Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think in his time there may have been a major stop, because I think in his time as Minister we had to reject a draft and start over again. Perhaps there were some amendments in his time. But I fully accept, I repeat, that the Regulations are way out of time, and it is only because of the change of Ministry and the subsequent misplacement of the Regulations that some severe and drastic step has not been taken to discipline the public officers concerned in this, I think, the worst example of legislative inefficiency that I have as yet met since I occupied this Chair. Our

backs are broad and we will take the blows of the honourable Member for St. Michael West, but we will take the blows and plead guilty with explanation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will just take a few minutes to respond to one or two points raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt). He was concerned about the fact that, for the first time in Barbados, we have seen the introduction of a major highway system and he is wondering whether in the process of development we have given any thought to the education that should go along with this form of development, education to be directed towards the public who would be using our highway system.

I happened to be on the spot two Saturdays ago just in time to see a young man get knocked down, and he subsequently died, on the Spring Garden Highway. That was a tragedy which I have been anticipating for some time, because I ride on that highway on mornings and I see people selling newspapers on the highway, traffic stopping to buy newspapers, I see people roller-skating on the highway and I see pedestrians turning it into a general promenade. There are a number of untethered sheep which have, so far as I now know, been responsible for two accidents on the highway, one involving the honourable Member for the City of Bridgetown (Hon. Miss B. A. Miller) and one involving the former honourable Member for the St. Philip North constituency. These are problems which we are looking into.

I recognise, Sir, that there is need for a major educational programme for the people of Barbados to understand the use of a highway system. It is not just another road, but it is developing into a high-speed artery, and people tend not to be sufficiently attuned to that kind of high speed on such a short run, and it was obvious that they miscalculate, as the gentleman a few weeks ago may have done.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member must not deal with matters which are liable to prejudice either side in that incident. Honourable Members of this House must recognise that they are immune from prosecution for anything they say in this House, therefore I would not like them to take the liberty of dealing with matters which are likely to come before the courts and their speeches may prejudice one side or the other. I wish honourable Members would kindly remember that and steer clearly away from these matters which are sub-judice.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I take Your Honour's direction. I was merely trying to point to the danger that is present on a highway system such as that one and to give

the honourable Member for St. Michael West the assurance that we in the Ministry of Transport and Works are actively engaged in a programme, involving the Government Information Service as well, to educate the people of Barbados in the use of the highway, and to provide a sufficiently sophisticated marking system so that the incidence of accidents on that highway will be significantly reduced.
2.00 p.m.

It may be too early to talk about it in any great detail, but one of the firms in Bridgetown has already indicated their willingness to participate in a marking system indicating the speed, indicating the exit points, indicating the proper road use, "SLOW DOWN" signs *et cetera*, to guide the users of that road so that we will have a high-speed road which at the same time is safe for the people of Barbados.

The speed limit which is being discussed is going to be somewhat higher than the present speed limit. I do not think it is time for me to disclose what we are thinking about in terms of the speed limit, but it will not be the speed limit that is currently in use on the subsidiary road system in Barbados. It is going to be a fairly high-speed kind of road. Of course, no one should go out there now and start driving at ninety miles per hour.

With respect, Sir, to the point made by the Member for the City of Bridgetown, I believe that it is time that we in Barbados start to look after the safety of people who may not be as prepared to look after their own safety as we would like.

I see motor vehicle accidents, I see road fatalities. I saw a road fatality last week during the night on my way home a gentleman riding a motorbicycle without a helmet went right into the back of a parked vehicle and he did not notice.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the honourable Member please desist from this type of discussion. The honourable Member must appreciate that where there is an accident on the road, the way the habit of the Police is today, there is always a criminal charge arising out of that accident.

If the honourable Member is prepared to give evidence in here, he would then have to justify that. I would not like the honourable Member to keep making those remarks. Whatever the honourable Member says is going to appear in Hansard.

I would ask the honourable Member to refrain from making remarks which would prejudice either side of a matter which is likely to come before the court.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the honourable Member would kindly give way, I beg to move, Sir, that this House be now suspended for lunch until 2.45 p.m.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

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

On Resumption:

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken, the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. V. L. Johnson) was speaking.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not be long now. In response to the question raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael West regarding the parking regulations, *et cetera* to be employed in Bridgetown, I would like to assure him that the Ministry of Transport has already undertaken the installation of new automatic parking devices, currently being installed at the Drum Street parking lot and we will do the same for the parking lot in Independence Square.

Because of the increasing volume of traffic in Bridgetown, Sir, it is becoming necessary for a traffic regimen to be developed which would regulate traffic more efficiently and more effectively. We are committed to taking this matter in hand so that we can have freer movement of vehicular traffic in the Bridgetown area.

Part of the urban development project involves a proper study for the movement and flow of traffic generally. This amendment will help, but I am sure this is not likely to be the last amendment to this Act, because contrary to what seems to have been suggested by the Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King), it is impossible in a dynamic society to arrive at a state at which we can congratulate ourselves for having provided the ultimate solution for all of the problems that are generated by the increase in traffic in our society. It has to be an ongoing process. It is not possible to anticipate with any measurable degree of certainty what the likely requirements will be in the future. We can only anticipate this to a certain degree.

The Barbados Labour Party is a Government that functions with clock proper planning; and the orderly development of our entire environment is something that

we have gone about in a very systematic way. We are not *ad hoc* people. We sit down and we think things through, we iron things out and we make projections. But sometimes, Sir, even with this level of planning, it still is a fairly frustrating task because things develop at a far greater pace sometimes than is possible to anticipate, and the planners frequently have to return to the drawing board to develop something that we can all live comfortably with.

If one looks at the way the public has begun to use the Spring Garden Highway perhaps, it is beginning to get obvious that it is a very busy highway indeed. Already, an argument can be made that we ought, perhaps, to have had a four lane highway right on through, double lanes on both directions.

But the constraints of money and so on that are put upon a small society like ours are constraints which are real constraints, which limit our capacity to provide all of the amenities that our society should rightly have, and we can only make plans within our financial competence. That is why, sometimes, we have to wait until a new day, so to speak, in order to be able to do things which we have all been able to see and agree are things which we should have in place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with those few remarks, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

On the motion of Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, in Clause 2, it is proposed that Section 37 of the principal Act be amended by inserting the words:

"who owns a vehicle".

When one looks at Section 37 of the main Act, Section 37(1) reads:

"No person shall use or cause, or permit any other person to use a motor vehicle on a public road unless there is in force in relation to the use of that vehicle a policy of insurance, etc."

2.55 p.m.

You would note, Mr. Chairman, that in the definition section of the principal Act, Section 2, the word "vehicle" is defined and the words "motor vehicle" are defined as well. The word "vehicle" in the definition section of the principal Act — Section 2 — means "a carriage, wagon, cart, motor vehicle, bicycle, tricycle, van, sledge, hand cart, barrel, or any other machine for the carriage on land of goods or persons." "Motor vehicle" is defined a little earlier in the Act as meaning, "any mechanically propelled vehicle manufactured or adopted to use on the roads."

It would seem to me that the amending legislation must have been intending to cover the "motor vehicle" and not "vehicle" in the wide sense. So it would seem to me that the proper amendment would be by inserting the words, "who owns a motor vehicle" rather than "who owns a vehicle," because it would mean, in fact, that a person who rides a cart on the road then would be covered by this section.

When one reads this section in full, if you put in the amendment, "no person who owns a vehicle shall use or cause, or permit any other person to use that motor vehicle"; they are talking about motor vehicle. So one would imagine that their intention must have been to refer in the amending Bill to motor vehicles, which have a limited definition, rather than a vehicle which has a wider definition.

In fact, if you use the word "vehicle" you include bicycle. So if a person rode a bicycle they would have to have insurance in respect of it. Roller skates are not included in the interpretation of the section. If you ride a sledge or barrel, if you push a wheel barrow on the road, then, according to the amendment, you should have insurance in respect of that. I am not sure if that is what was intended.

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

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

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

Mr. M. A. KING: I am going to make a similar point in relation to Clause 3. Maybe the Attorney General does not understand the point which I am making, but I am going to make it nevertheless.

Aside.....

Mr. M. A. KING: You said that you do not understand what I said.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please! Address the Chair. No cross talking.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the amending section says, "A person to whom a motor vehicle licence is issued shall notify the Licensing Authority etc." I believe that in the Interpretation Section of the original Bill, the words "road licence" is the terminology used, and road licence in the Interpretation Section of the main Bill means, "a licence issued by the Licensing Authority pursuant to Section 16."

It seems to me that the terminology for the amending phrase should be "a person to whom a road licence is issued" rather than "a person to whom a motor vehicle licence is issued." I would suggest that is the proper way that the section should read.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King) is drawing a distinction between a motor vehicle licence and a road licence. I frankly do not know the point that he is making, because I think we all understand, and the Act is fairly clear on what a road licence is. I have never myself been accustomed hearing the terminology "road licence" being employed with respect to the licensing of vehicles in Barbados. I would think that if he wanted to put forward an amendment, he would be talking about the Road Use Licence. But I never heard of anybody licensing a road.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, just briefly, I am not dealing with the law. I just want to make a very brief comment, out of observations, that in this day where you have some 45 000 motor cars alone on the network of roads in Barbados, very often there is an accident on one of the roads and the entire road is blocked off because of the accident, something very minor at times. You have to send and get the police to measure up the road. You have to send and get the inspectors from the Ministry of Transport and Works to test the brakes — sometimes getting these people up at two or three o'clock in the morning from their beds — and this take many, many hours. There is a lot of delay; traffic has to be diverted, and it causes a lot of traffic blocks, especially at the peak hours during the evening.

I wonder if the Licensing Authority cannot get into negotiations with the insurance companies where, like in the United States of America and Britain, those highly industrialised countries, the driver of the motor vehicles exchange the names of insurance companies and sort of accept responsibility. I think this is how it is done in the United States of America; I simply show you my insurance policy or the number, or whatever it is, and you show me yours, and I will report the accident to the insurance company.
3.05 p.m.

That sort of delay was alright when you had a thousand vehicles all told on the road, but not now today in 1983, when there are some 45 000 cars alone, something like very nearly one car to five persons in the country, something has to be done. It speaks very highly of any Government, or the people of Barbados, if I may say so, that in a small poor country such as Barbados that you have one motor car to a family of five. That is really saying quite a bit. This has nothing to do with the very large vehicles that occupy the road, then to think of your buses and other heavy duty vehicles that occupy the road.

I hope the Minister will take note of this, to ask the Licensing Authority or his Ministry to go into some form of negotiation with the insurance companies in Barbados where persons are involved in an accident, as long as it does not involve a fatality or anyone is injured, could exchange their insurance policies and the numbers and addresses, so that you will avoid this problem of having policemen coming to measure the road, and inspectors from the Ministry of Transport and Works coming out to test brakes and in these days causing quite a big traffic block over a period of time.

Sometimes one car just comes along and just brushes the bumper of another car, and you will find both cars in the middle of the road because one car was overtaking the other car. They park in the middle of the road and call the police and this brings about a very very big traffic block.

I hope that when the Licensing Authority, when it comes into being, Sir, the Minister will open negotiations with the insurance companies to see if they can organise something which would be of benefit to the people.

That is the only comment I have to make on this.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, may I just ask of the Minister responsible for Transport and Works, or the Attorney General, if he proposes to respond, what is a motor vehicle license?

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Valid point).

Mr. M. A. KING: Reference is made in this amending Act to motor vehicle licence. The first point was equally valid too, but you ignored it.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: We did not hear the first point, we heard the second).

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, there is some difficulty which is being occasioned by the point raised

by the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central. We are looking at the language of this particular clause, and if we were to take his point to harmonise this amending Bill with the original Bill, it would have the effect of making the reading of 37A very awkward, because it would then say "A person to whom a road licence is issued shall notify the Licensing Authority of any change in respect of the insurance of that vehicle." There is no antecedent to the "that vehicle" and it would create syntactical problems. I believe that we need to reflect a bit more on this amendment.

We are disposed to take the point made by the honourable Member, but we would need to pause briefly, Sir, in order to be able to reflect on the appropriate language to be utilised in this clause.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If I can add a little assistance here, I think I understand the Minister's particular difficulty, but I do not think he needs to worry about that, because both "road licence" and "motor vehicle" have been defined in the principal Act. If you say "that vehicle" I do not think you need worry about the syntax. We take the point that he was saying that it is a problem with syntax because it would be referring to "that vehicle" when in fact it was not clear.

I would like to suggest, Mr. Chairman, that you take it back, that further consideration be postponed on it and let them go back and look at it a little further.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that you report progress to His Honour the Deputy Speaker and ask for leave to sit again.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, the motion is for reporting progress. I would just like to suggest that it may be that there are perhaps about two or three other amendments which we may have to suggest from this side, and it might in fact be better to hear those amendments so that they can be all taken into consideration instead of bringing this to an end now and coming back and maybe having to take other amendments into consideration.

I am just throwing it out, it is no big problem with us, but I am just suggesting there may be a couple of other amendments.

The question that Mr. CHAIRMAN report progress and ask for leave to sit again was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Mr. L. L. SISNETT, further consideration on this Item was postponed.

QUESTION TIME

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: At this point, Sir, I beg to move that Question Time be taken. I promised the other side that I would do this, and I move that Question Time be now taken.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

QUESTION RE BARBADOS' MEMBERSHIP IN NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Question No. 28, in the name of the honourable Member for St. Michael South. 3.15 p.m.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Question No. 28 — To ask the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Hon. L. R. Tull): What benefits can Barbados expect to derive from full membership of the Non-Aligned Movement that cannot be derived from Barbados' membership of the United Nations, its Specialized Agencies and other international organisations?

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the answer to Question No. 28 is:

"The direct benefits to be derived from full membership of the Non-Aligned Movement are primarily diplomatic. The Non-Aligned Movement, which with Barbados' admission reaches a membership of 101 developing states, represents the foremost pressure group of developing nations.

"This group formulates positions on a large number of international topics — including international peace and security, international economic relations, human rights and Law of the Sea — and its decisions are almost invariably upheld by the United Nations Organization and its specialized agencies.

"Over the last decade, the Non-Aligned Movement has increasingly focussed its attention on international economic issues which aim to improve the standard of living of citizens of developing states. Its decisions and recommendations also influence considerably the policies and programmes of other international institutions. Participation as a full member therefore enables Barbados to exercise influence at source.

"Finally, full membership of the Non-Aligned Movement enhances the position of Barbados internationally for it indicates clearly that Barbados identifies with the causes of fellow developing states — not only in the Caribbean, but in Latin America, Africa and Asia."

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Supplementary No. 1. In as much as the guiding principles of the Non-Aligned Movement include solidarity, fraternity and common cause among the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and also includes the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and hegemonism; and in as much as it also deals with international economic issues and the co-ordination of positions among Third World countries through promotion of the South/South dialogue and the North/South dialogue, can we the people of Barbados expect that within that framework and within the need for solidarity and cohesion among the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, considering the fact that both Barbados and Grenada are Members of that Non-Aligned Movement — can we expect a normalisation of relations between Grenada and Cuba and Barbados as a result of Barbados' acceptance into full membership of the Non-Aligned Movement?

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member has used a particularly long preamble to get to a simple and straightforward question. The honourable Member well knows that both Barbados and Grenada are members of CARICOM and weekly, if not daily, are engaged in many areas of functional co-operation. Therefore, the honourable Member, if he had taken into consideration these factors, would realize the continuing relationship between the whole CARICOM community.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): In view of the fact of honourable Member's response to the supplementary and bearing in mind that Grenada and Barbados are members of the Caribbean Community, and Barbados and Grenada are now full members of the Non-Aligned Movement, can we take his answer to be a statement that relations between Grenada and Barbados are now normal?

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Barbados and Grenada are not only Members of the Non-Aligned Movement, they are also Members of the United Nations, they are Members of the Organization of American States and they are Members of CARICOM and, therefore, within the context of these organizations, the Governments of Grenada and Barbados engage regularly in collaborative work.

The question whether it is normal or not perhaps is a subjective one, and therefore the honourable Member must come with a better explanation as to what he is trying to get out of me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Supplementary No. 2.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Supplementary No. 2. In looking at the costs and benefits of the Non-Aligned Movement, will the Minister indicate what are the costs involved to Barbados of full membership of the Non-Aligned Movement?

Hon. L. R. TULL: The Non-Aligned Movement is not a membership club where you pay membership fees. The Government of Barbados will not have to make any contribution to the operation of the Non-Aligned Movement. The costs that will be borne by the Government of Barbados now that it is a full member of the Non-Aligned Movement bear hardly more on the taxpayers than they did when Barbados was an observer. Barbados has been an observer of the Non-Aligned Movement for over a decade, and has been attending meetings of the Non-Aligned Movement with observer status. The fact that we are attending now as a member does not seriously increase the amount of expenditure. It depends on how big the delegation is; that is all.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Supplementary No. 2, Sir. In light of the statements made by the Minister and bearing in mind the disparity in definition in various countries as to what is true non-alignment, will the Minister give this Honourable House the assurance that at a very early date he will indicate to the community the Government's understanding of its non-alignment in the context of the Non-Aligned Movement?

Hon. L. R. TULL: The foreign policy of the Government of Barbados has not changed to any significant degree by its membership in the Non-Aligned Movement. Anybody who is aware of the membership of the Non-Aligned Movement would realize that it includes a number of countries with very wide and diverse political and ideological orientations — from countries that are Marxist, on the one hand, to countries that are more capitalist than the United States. There is a wide spectrum of states, from very moderate states to very left-wing states.

They find common cause, however, in a number of issues, such as were articulated by the honourable Member for St. Michael South, questions of Southern Africa, of colonialism, of racism. These are issues in which all countries who are members of the Non-Aligned, regardless of their ideological orientation, will find common cause.

There are, however, a number of areas in which Non-Aligned countries, regardless of their ideology, can work together, and the chief among these areas is the economic areas. The Movement is made up of members of the developing countries and they share a number of problems — high unemployment, high foreign debt, low prices for commodities, whether they have a socialist orientation or a capitalist orientation. But they can find common cause in many areas, primarily the economic areas, and if you look at the report of meetings of the Movement in respect of the economic area, you will see exactly what I am talking about.

3.25 p.m.

There is also the question of parallel co-operation, more commonly called South-South co-operation, and since the Movement has been addressing itself more to economic issues than political issues, there is greater evidence of areas of collaboration among countries of the south without their looking, as someone said to me recently, to continue only as aggressive beggars. So there is an increase in the amount of economic co-operation among countries of the south which substantially form the membership of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: The final one, Sir. In as much as the Minister has indicated that membership of the Non-Aligned Movement will enhance Barbados' position internationally and enable it to exert its influence at source; and in as much as the Minister has also said that the benefits are largely or substantially diplomatic; will the Minister state whether the facts influencing the decision of Barbados to seek full membership in the Non-Aligned Movement has anything to do with Barbados' efforts to gain a seat on the National Security Council of the United Nations.

Hon. L. R. TULL: You mean the Security Council because we are already a member of the National Security Council. The answer is "No". The decision of the Government of Barbados to seek a place on the Security Council predates its decision to join the Non-Aligned Movement by almost two years.

The application to join the Non-Aligned Movement came at the culmination of many years of discussion as to whether Barbados should become a member or not, and this discussion started during the time that the honourable Members were the Government. Indeed, it was the Opposition, then Government, that sought and achieved observer status for Barbados in the Non-Aligned Movement.

But we believe either you are in or you are out, and the status of observer in the Non-Aligned Movement means nothing more than sitting in the stands at the Stadium and watching the players on the field. That is all observer means. We feel that if you pick up all this money to send people to Baghdad and Algiers and so on just to sit in the pavilion and watch the games, that we could spend the same money and join the games.

The direct answer to the question is, "No", it is not true that the Government has decided to join the Non-Aligned Movement because of its quest for a Security Council seat.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Will the honourable Member indicate whether, since he has indicated that the Non-Aligned Movement's benefits will be primarily diplomatic, it is reasonable to assume that Barbados'

quest for a seat on the Security Council would achieve nothing more than diplomatic benefit as well?

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the supplementaries must relate to the substantive question, which is the Non-Aligned Movement. It has nothing to do with the Security Council. I will answer him if you so rule.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like the honourable Member to answer the question. I think he is capable of giving the appropriate answer.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I can answer anything they ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The question of the honourable Member relates to whether the ambition of Barbados to become a member of the Security Council is for diplomatic reasons. The answer is that and more. Barbados feels that it has acquired the type of prestige in international institutions, and beyond that, it has reached the point where it can bring that prestige to bear on important decisions relating to peace and security in this world.

Asides

Hon. L. R. TULL: I am sorry. The honourable Member thinks that it has to do with a turn. There is no turn in the Security Council. There are two seats on the Security Council allocated to Latin America and the Caribbean. There must be at least 31 countries now, I think, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member should not be distracted by the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) into the bushes on the Spring Garden Road. Let us keep strictly to the original question.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The answer in sum is that the reasons are partly diplomatic, not totally diplomatic. There are other considerations, including the fact that we feel that Barbados' international prestige should now be brought to bear in wider areas in the international community.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no more supplementaries, that brings us to the end of questions on Question No. 28.

QUESTION RE REPORT ON PRISON ENQUIRY

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 30 stands in the name of the honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Parliamentary Question No. 30. It reads as follows:-

To ask the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Hon. L. R. Tull): 1. Will the Minister cause the report of the Gollop inquiry into certain conditions and disturbances at the prisons to be laid on the table of this Honourable House as a matter of urgency? 2. Will the Minister state why it has taken the Government such a long time to make the results of the inquiry public. 3. If the Minister is unable to lay the Report, will the Minister make a statement at the next sitting in relation to the findings and recommendations of that inquiry?

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Reply to Parliamentary Question No. 30 is as follows:

"1. The Honourable Member is aware that a function of the Prison Service is to ensure and maintain security. It is considered that the release of the Report in question will be an infringement of that function and will not be in the best interests of the public.

"2. I draw to the attention of the Honourable Member the Statement which I read today in this Honourable House."

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to ask the Minister why it has taken Government so long to make the results of that enquiry public. This was indeed part of the original question and I do hope that this is not really counted as a supplementary because it has not been answered yet. That was in the original question.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I rule that to be Supplementary Question No. 1.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, a long time passed between the appointment of the Commissioner and the submission of the Report to the Ministry. After that the normal bureaucratic ways of getting the Report ready and passed to Cabinet and all that, did take some considerable time.
3.35 p.m.

But in addition to that, in accordance with the substance of the answer that has been given, one felt at the time that it was not necessary to make the report public — for the reasons that I have already given.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Supplementary Question No. 2 by the honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Would the honourable Minister say what specific recommendations have been made in the report, apart from the post of Personnel

Officer, in respect of the provision of additional staff for the Prisons Department. And does the honourable Minister consider.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That would be Supplementary Question No. 3.

Laughter.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Hear, hear, Sir! That is class ruling.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: The report has made recommendations for the increase in personnel generally. It has also asked for the regrading of one post — I think it is the post of Matron to Assistant Superintendent or whatever you call it — and it has also recommended that a number of more senior posts be established in the institution.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Supplementary No. 1, Sir. Would the Minister state the level of morale among the staff at the Prison, specifically as it relates to the report?

Hon. L. R. TULL: I have at no time during my tenure as Minister responsible for Prisons found the morale of the staff at the Prisons to be low. I have always found that the morale was high; — they work under extremely difficult and tense conditions, so I have always been amazed at the level of the morale.

I do not think that the report has anything to do with that one way or the other, because it has always been high and I have found it no different.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Supplementary No. 2, Sir. If it would not infringe national security and/or public morality, would the honourable Minister be able to tell us the extent to which, from the report, there is evidence of incidence of narcotics in the Prison, Sir.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The report does not deal with the question of narcotics in the Prison. Indeed, it was not set up to investigate that and, as a result, it has not come up with any findings, or data in relation to narcotics. That was not part of the terms of reference for the Commission.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no more supplementaries to this question, that brings us to the end of Question Time for the day.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I think that Government Business should now be resumed, and I beg to move that Order No. 2 be the instant Order of the Day.

ENTERTAINMENT TAX (AMENDMENT)
ACT, 1983

Order No. 2 was called – To resume Committee on a Bill to amend the Entertainment Tax Act, Cap. 69.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 4 was called.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The right honourable Prime Minister was speaking.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Sir, an appropriate amendment has been circulated to Clause 4, and I do now move that the words, "without a certificate of approval" be deleted and the words, "a contravention of paragraph (a) or (b) of subsection (1)" be substituted therefor.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

The question that Clause 4, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 5 and 6 inclusive were called and passed.

Clause 7 was called.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that Clause 7 stand part.

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

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Clause 7 as amended.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I do beg honourable Members' pardon.

Sir, I will not read all this out since it is a long amendment, but it has been circulated. It does contain a new subsection, which will make it necessary to place these Taxing Orders before the Honourable House, as I think should be done.

I beg to move that the present Clause 7 be deleted and the substituted Clause 7 do now stand part in its stead.

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

The question that Clause 7 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 8 to 10 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER the passing of one Bill, as amended, in Committee, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
3.45 p.m.

On separate motions of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE OFF-SHORE BANKING (AMENDMENT)
ACT, 1983

Order No. 4 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Off-Shore Banking Act, 1979.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this amendment arises out of a very narrow point. The general spirit of the regulatory provisions of the Off-Shore Banking Act is that such banks will normally do business only with persons outside of Barbados. But in 1980, it was realised that there may be certain transactions which Barbadians should be allowed to carry out with off-shore banks.

Persons in Barbados do borrow money from overseas, large businesses and Government, and it was considered that, in the interest of maintaining employment of business in the local off-shore banks, since they have supported us by coming to register in Barbados, we should support them by making it possible for them to lend to corporate and other appropriate borrowers within the island.

We passed these amendments, but some ambiguity has arisen due to the language which was used in Sections 16(1) and 16(2) of the Off-Shore Banking Act. Paragraph C of Section 16(1) reads, "The licensee will not knowingly accept or keep a resident of Barbados as a customer for any of its off-shore banking services". Subsection 2, on the other hand, regulates the manner in which the Minister can give permission for certain matters mentioned in Sub-sections 1 and 2. It reads, "Before giving approval to any matter mentioned in sub-sections 1 and 2, the Minister may carry out, such an investigation as specified in Section 12, as he thinks is required".

Now it is intended to permit, for example, the Government and these other businesses to borrow, and when a recent loan, the one in connection with the

assets of Mobil, was being negotiated, it was drawn to our attention by the Royal Bank of Canada of Barbados Off-Shore Branch that it appeared there might be in breach of the section saying that they should not knowingly accept or keep a resident of Barbados as a customer.

We went ahead with that, Sir, but in order to remove any possible doubt, we are seeking to amend the Act, with effect as if it was always amended in this sense, to make it possible for a Minister to allow an off-shore bank to lend to locals.

The Royal Bank of Canada Barbados Limited has indeed participated in a number of loans in the Caribbean area. It has participated in a very large loan to Trinidad, it has also participated in the Euro-dollar loan to Barbados, and, it specifically, as a sole lender, lent the Government \$13 million to buy Mobil, and we are dealing with Barclays Bank International Limited for other off-shore loans. It is therefore fairly urgent, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we realise the position and at least remove the ambiguity. That is the purpose of the Bill.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have some general comments and one or two specific ones to make in relation to this Bill.

Now, Sir, the right honourable Member for St. Thomas (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams) has stated and restated that he attaches considerable importance to the off-shore sector in Barbados in terms of its future development. I myself had taken a different view of the varying sectors that constitute the off-shore sector and have identified off-shore banking as perhaps the most dangerous area, the one least likely to be a significant generator of employment and, of course, the one that has the greatest economic dangers for this country.

However, let us assume that the honourable Member for St. Thomas is correct, and let us further assume, Sir, that there is an obligation on Government, if his assessment of the role of the off-shore banking in the Barbadian community is correct. Then I should bring to his attention that he is doing probably the worse possible thing in relation to the community.

It is essential that there should be confidence in the legislation under which offshore companies operate. We have had a substantive Bill in 1979. We have had at least three amendments to that Bill, and this is the fourth amendment. When you get repeated amendments to a Bill of this kind, it creates lack of confidence in the minds of potential customers in the off-shore sector.

Let me give you an example. Let us assume that an attorney in Barbados is dealing with customers abroad in the offshore business, and let us say you are dealing with an agent in New York City, or an agent in Canada, or in the United Kingdom, who would be placing business with the offshore sector in Barbados. It would mean that that attorney would be constantly forwarding various amendments to the particular agent in that country.
3.55 p.m.

Eventually, people tend to lose confidence and get the general feeling that the people in Barbados do not know what they are doing in relation to offshore business. That is the general word that is going abroad. I can tell you that Barbados has lost a considerable amount of offshore business because of problems relating to the changes in the law and certain other administrative problems.

It has been brought to my attention, Sir, that the way how our Bill is constructed makes it very difficult for the offshore sector of the banks to attract people to Barbados who are really knowledgeable about offshore business. The net result of this is that it is very difficult to place, for example, a deposit on a 24 hour call here in Barbados. This is an essential element in offshore business.

Apparently, it takes about 48 hours before you can handle a deposit through an offshore bank in Barbados rather than deal with it within the 24 hour period in which it will be dealt with in other offshore centres. Or to place a deposit on call for seven days would probably require two days prior to the seven days, and two days after the end of the seven days, involving a loss of interest of four days out of eleven days because of the way in which the sector is operating at the moment. Money has actually been sent to Barbados to an offshore bank — I know of one case — and that money had to be returned to the customer because of the problems relating to the legislation.

The point I want to make, Sir, is that if the Government is serious about offshore banking, then what they have to do is to abandon this piecemeal approach to legislation, not only in relation to offshore banking, but the entire offshore sector, and let the lawyers sit down and look through all the amendments that are necessary to existing legislation so that you can come to Parliament one time with a series of amendments, and in that way avoid the confusion and the lack of confidence that might be generated by this kind of activity.

Sir, the Government does not seem to recognise that since the passing of the Offshore Act, the substantive Act in 1979, there have been some serious developments in the area of offshore banking, directed particularly to the Caribbean area, where there is a strong effort within

the United States to put a dampening on this kind of activity within the Caribbean and to retain more of this kind of activity within the United States as a consequence of legislation that has been passed since 1979.

I understand, Sir, that in order for this Act, or in order for many pieces of the offshore legislation to function effectively, you really need to bring a new Companies Bill into operation, particularly the section relating to that area which would allow one individual to form a company. I understand that that is a very important part of the whole package, and although it is a Companies Bill that deals with domestic matters, that particular amendment is necessary. There are also certain related amendments in the International Business Companies Act that must be carried out if there is going to be any harmonisation between the various sections of the legislation dealing with the separate offshore activities.

There is a question which needs to be dealt with, that is the question of the extent of capitalisation of trust companies. I gather that at the moment we are losing a lot of money in the offshore activity because of certain factors relating to the legal requirements for the capitalisation of trust companies when compared with other offshore areas within this particular region.

Now, Sir, I gather, too, that there are also implications consequential on the double taxation treaties that we have with the United States, which would mean that the existing legislation will have to be looked at if it is going to function properly. So we cannot afford to have this kind of piecemeal legislation coming in. It is unhealthy, and in the long run it is going to damage your image as an efficient offshore centre.

There is another major area that I want to look at. The purpose and intent of that original clause, which is being amended now, was to deal with what has always been identified by major international economic and financial institutions, experts in this field, results of various studies relating to the impact of offshore banking in small economies like Barbados, that is, the effects of contamination of the local financial situation.

The reasons given have been clear. In respect of Government borrowings, the World Bank itself, the International Monetary Fund, various research institutions in the United States, and indeed, Sir, I think there is a December 1979 publication either by the World Bank or by one of its sister organisations, makes the specific point that the greatest economic danger facing a small country that gets into offshore banking is where it relaxes its legislation to allow domestic participation. I will tell you the reasons for this.

In terms of Government, Sir, Government has a ready source of foreign borrowings that can prove quite

detrimental in the long run. If, for example, Sir the purchase of Mobil was subjected to the kind of scrutiny that the Morgan Guaranty Trust Company had subjected it to, or if it was subjected to the kind of scrutiny which a long term lending agency would have subjected it to, then Government would never have had access to that loan and would not have the consequential problems relating to that transaction.

Similarly, Sir, in relation to the hard currency loan to Barbados Sugar Factories Limited, I doubt very much whether, in the absence of a well organised financial institution to deal with sugar agriculture, that Government would have been able to attract that loan from a well organised international lending institution, which would subject the purpose of the loan to the kind of scrutiny that could only ultimately be of benefit to the country, to the Government and to everybody, lender and borrower.

This is a third point, Sir. Capital in the offshore sector, almost by definition, is subject to sudden movements. That, perhaps, is one of the reasons why people make use of an offshore centre. Significant dislocations can take place in terms of the management of your domestic financial affairs if you find yourself committed heavily, either at Government level or at private sector level, in the area of loans from offshore banks.
4.05 p.m.

So, Sir, there is a lot to be done in the area of offshore banking and other related areas, and it is my view that if we had not been fooling around over the past five or six years, we would not be in this situation. Once the decision had been taken to go ahead in this area, then the best thing you could have done is to try to be as efficient as possible and do it as decisively as you can. If we had done that, much more business could have been attracted to Barbados during that period.

Sir, there is also a very fundamental administrative problem which one sees as underlining the need to come to Parliament repeatedly for these kinds of amendments, and the failure to identify the need to harmonize the various other related Acts all at the same time. That is because Government, in its wisdom, has not seen the need to set up a separate institution which can develop the expertise and handle the whole question dealing with the Government's administrative aspect of the offshore centre.

I, myself, believe that initially, you need someone who is an expert in that area to be the Head of such a division of Government. Whether it should be an independent statutory corporation, I do not know, but if you expect the kinds of benefits to flow from the off-shore sector, those which are predicted by the right honourable Prime Minister, I believe it justifies that kind of treatment.

He, himself, has said that he believes that a full-grown offshore centre in Barbados can probably bring more benefits to Barbados than 2 million tourists. I do not agree with him. But let us assume that it is remotely possible that he is correct. Then it emphasizes the need to set up some kind of administrative body to deal with the whole offshore sector in this country to make sure that it functions properly.

This situation would never have arisen if we had had an expert here, probably as manager or head of a corporation, who, by now, would have had three or four people in training, or at least another person in training, to take over this particular area of the promotion of the economic development of Barbados.

The need is present. Every day that passes, you are losing more and more business. The amount of money that is available for offshore lending is diminishing, relatively. It is not growing at the same rate at which it was growing over the past 15 years. Even if the volume of money may be more from year to year, the kind of explosion which you had between 1976 and 1979 or thereabout, is no longer there. So it is important for the Government to decide that if it is going to have an off-shore centre, it must do so as efficiently as possible.

I do not think, for example, that having someone in the Central Bank to deal with this particular problem is satisfactory. I do not think that having someone in the Ministry of Finance dealing with it is satisfactory. I think that it requires a separate body which can deal with the day-to-day problems that arise in the off-shore banking sector.

Who are they dealing with, Sir? Such a person would have to be dealing with the problems that the banks themselves would be encountering daily. When a banker, Sir, is faced with a request from a client, say in Canada, probably by a tested telex or something like that in respect of a deposit, and he is uncertain on some aspect of the law or some administrative aspect, there must be somebody to whom he can get on a phone and call and get an immediate answer. The alternate is that he has to say, "I cannot accept this money on deposit;" or "Hold on for two days;" or "Send the money and I will reply to you in two or three days," or something like that.

That kind of thing cannot work in an offshore sector, because you know that in an offshore sector, very often up to 20 per cent of the free-flow of money through an offshore centre may be largely for 24 hour deposits in relation to a tax problem that a given depositor might have in the particular country in which he is domiciled. So it cannot work. It cannot work efficiently the way it is set up in Barbados at present, and, therefore, I think it is absolutely essential that we set about looking at the problem.

Sir, since we passed the Off-Shore Banking Act in Barbados in 1979, it is my understanding that the Government of Antigua has been able to set up a comprehensive set of instruments dealing with the off-shore segment and harmonizing with their own Companies Act. And particularly as there is no Income Tax present, so that it would not be a deterrent for the attraction of top-class staff in the off-shore banking sector there, they are probably now better poised than Barbados is to take advantage of what offshore business comes their way.

This is a classic example, Sir, of persons making statements, persons coming to Parliament and bringing little bits of legislation from time to time and not being able to sit down and look at the management structure that is needed in order to ensure that the legislation passed can be translated into action in relation to Barbados.

There are many lawyers in Barbados, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who are faced with endless confusion and endless embarrassment every time an amendment comes into this Honourable House. I know of two situations where lawyers have given opinions of off-shore banking and where an effort was made to promote Barbados as an off-shore centre by other persons abroad involved in the off-shore business - and then, all of a sudden, another amendment comes. The lawyer finds himself in an awkward position. This means that when this is passed, tomorrow, that same lawyer will have to be sending off this as another amendment to the same Act.

It cannot work this way in an area as delicate as off-shore banking. Confidence in the institutions, confidence in the country, confidence in the integrity of the legal system in the country - these are things that are of vital importance. And I will say that in the way the Government is handling the relevant legislation, and the way the Government has pursued the matter over the past three to four years, they have done as much as they possibly could, innocent though it may be, to undermine what, perhaps, were the advantages which they identified when they started off in the off-shore business.

4.15 p.m.

Therefore, Sir, I will strongly recommend to those responsible to look at the management structure right away. Like tomorrow or so, you start setting up a proper management and institutional structure to handle the off-shore business. Look at all the legislation once again, and with your permission, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to recite the ones which have come to my attention, either through clients wishing to use Barbados or by other means.

Look at your double taxation treaties and the implications thereof. As a matter of fact, Sir, I believe there was one particular incident involving a Norwegian country. I am not sure if we have a double taxation treaty with them, but the point is that the person was not in a position to advise the client in relation to a substantial amount of money that could have passed through Barbados, because the advice would have been contingent on the relation between the various Acts and the existing tax treaty.

Look and see where the relevant amendments must be made in relation to the International Business Companies Act. Look and see how that can harmonise with the other legislation and see what amendment you may have to bring to other legislation in order to make sure that you take the fullest advantage of a potential client who wishes to use Barbados as an offshore sector, not only in the area of offshore banking, but probably in the area of international business activity as well.

Thirdly, Sir, look again and see how soon you can bring the new Companies Act into operation so that the concept of one man being able to form a company can be brought into operation, because that has a tremendous impact on the activities of these related Acts and the amount of money that you can attract.

Look, Sir, again at this particular Act you have been looking at. This Act is going to have to be looked at again in relation to the capitalisation requirements in relation to trust companies, because I gather we are losing a lot of business in that particular area as well.

Sir, my contribution is not intended to be an endorsement of the enthusiasm with which the Government has gone into the offshore area. I do not share the happy expectation that they have, but as Barbadians, we have gone in and we have taken that decision in this Parliament, and therefore we all have a duty when these matters come before Parliament to look at these areas and see where errors are being made. I believe that all the errors can all be corrected if Government recognises immediately that it needs a management component to the offshore section, because Sir, one of the key factors is not only image, but a question of opportunity costs, the question of promotion, promotion that has to be done on a continuous basis.

How is promotion done in the offshore sector? It is not by putting an ad. You can put as many ads as you like in the *New York Times* or in a Toronto newspaper and so on, but that has not got the same kind of impact as if you were able to have a management team, to have someone in charge of your offshore sector, who can go to these business meetings, whether they are in the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands or in Switzerland, and meet with accountants and businessmen. In this way you will be

able to establish the presence of Barbados in the business community.

You have to have someone there who is knowledgeable about international financing, about offshore banking, about captive insurance business and this kind of thing. And that cannot be left to anyone who has one or two vague ideas, because when they go to these conferences, they are dealing with experts in the field and they are projecting the image of Barbados, and maybe, out of contacts made at two or three conferences a year, you might find that Barbados could well attract \$20 million or \$30 million in business. If I am not mistaken, Sir, I believe we had a conference here some time ago at Sandy Lane or Sam Lords Castle in relation to the offshore sector. It would not surprise me if some business did not come to Barbados arising out of that.

I believe, Sir, that these criticisms must be taken seriously. They were seriously thought out, they were the result not of any malicious search on my part, but they were the result of information and conversations which I have had with people, and also problems which clients themselves have raised in relation to dealing with Barbados.

I do not know what can be done about attracting highly qualified personnel to work within the banks, because, as I understand it, even within the commercial banks' offshore sector itself the banks themselves are having problems in recruiting personnel to come to Barbados. They say that the problems that they have are that they may have a man working, let us say in the Cayman Islands, who is getting US\$120 000 a year tax free, and if he comes to Barbados at the same level for US\$120 000 — I just picked that figure out of my head — then he is faced with a significant tax component, not the crippling tax that the Barbadian would have to pay, but a significant tax. So the banks have been unable, even from within their own ranks, to get the most capable and the most experienced people they have to deal with offshore business and getting them here into Barbados.

These are some of the problems that I have seen in relation to the functioning of the Act. I think the offshore sector is suffering as a consequence of it. I think that we are not moving at the sort of pace, with the solidity and with the confidence which our basic resources in Barbados should have ensured would redound to the benefit of an effort of this kind to generate an offshore sector.

Finally, Sir, I would like to re-emphasise that the Government should avoid the temptation to keep running to the offshore banks to borrow money, because they must know what the ultimate problems will be. The taxpayers are always there in the long run to pay for it, but

at the same time, easy borrowing is not necessarily in the best interest of a Government, just as it is not necessarily in the best interest of an individual. Always remember that.

Indeed, I am concerned about this amendment because one of the things we were all agreed on in 1979 is that one of the stronger points of this Act was that it prevented significant contamination of the local financial scene with the offshore sector. There was virtually a total separation. That was agreed on in the debate as one of the strong features of this Act, and what I have detected is that you are having a series of amendments which are gradually weakening the strength of the original Act, and that these amendments are a response to specific problems which are arising in the administration of the offshore sector.

4.25 p.m.

As a matter of fact, I believe the right honourable Member for St. Thomas himself confessed on the Floor of the Honourable House that this amendment really has come about because of a problem encountered by the Government when it sought to get the Mobil loan from the Royal Bank of Canada. But that is not the way. You cannot keep reacting to events that way. You have to be up front, and if there is any area in which you have to be up front and you have to go out there really well-equipped, it is in that off-shore area.

There is some money to be made in it; no big lot of employment to be generated. There is some money for the Government. Fair enough. We have always accepted that. Now that I have mentioned money for the Government, another point has been brought to my attention; that the local tax regime in off-shore banking is probably higher than existing competitors and, probably, potential competitors. This makes it all the more necessary where you have an inhibiting factor like that, the inhibiting factor of not having a total Income Tax free environment, or lack of Income Tax being charged on the salaries of employees. In other words, you have a higher tax on off-shore transactions, and people employed in the off-shore sector will be paying more tax than they will be paying elsewhere.

When you have those two things operating against you, you have to look at what is operating for you, and what is operating for you is the historic strength of Barbados, in terms of its administrative capacity, the fact that Barbados has a fairly well-developed financial structure existing already. Therefore, it demands of the Government even greater efficiency than other competitors if they are going to make this off-shore centre work.

It is no longer a situation where you can sit down and hope that business will come; it is a situation where

you have to go out there looking for business. I believe, Sir, I saw in a recent newspaper report that the Prime Minister of an off-shore centre was in Hong Kong or somewhere like that himself going out to recruit business. I am not particularly sure which off-shore centre he was dealing with. I just give an example of what is happening.

There has been a very dramatic increase in the competition in this area, a dramatic demand in the need for promotion and a dramatic demand for efficiency, because there are no longer any significant flows to those countries who are just prepared to sit idle and get their domestic situation in order, in order to capture a significant part of the market.

We can get our share. I am sure we can get our share, because people very often move from one destination in the off shore area to another destination for no good reason. Perhaps, it is part of the whole exercise of secrecy that you do not want to remain in one place for too long. You just move your money around. So when that money is moved around, Barbados can pick up some of it, but you cannot do it the way in which we are doing it now!

And there is no point coming in here and saying that the assets of the offshore sector exceed the assets of all the other commercial banks in Barbados. You have to ask yourself, "What does it mean to Barbados?" "What kind of revenue is consequential on that?" "What kind of employment is generated as a consequence of that?"

So, such a statement really means nothing. It is a propagandist's statement, and it is that kind of reliance on propagandist's policy statements, rather than getting down to the management nitty-gritty, that I suspect has resulted in a lot of problems facing the Government and facing the country today.

Sir, I have identified about six areas which I think need administrative strengthening. I have tried to identify how I see the international problems in relation to offshore banking and I believe that it is time that the Government does something about it, because they have every single person working in the off-shore sector of Barbados totally confused and, in many cases, it is causing embarrassment to a lot of people.

You take the statement made by the right honourable Prime Minister that the Royal Bank of Canada called him and told him that this might not be in accordance with the Act — but, nevertheless, he went ahead. Okay. You are dealing with a Government, you are dealing with a Prime Minister, so, perhaps, the Royal Bank went ahead and did the deal with the Government. Would they have gone ahead, Sir, and done the deal if

they were dealing with somebody else where there was some question, some marginal question, on the legality of the matter? I suspect, Sir, knowing the Royal Bank, and knowing the history of banks in Barbados, that they would not have done so. They would not have done so! They would have said when you bring the amendment to Parliament, we will consider the matter.

We do not want to have this kind of thing in Parliament again. I do not want to see another amendment to the Off-Shore Banking Act or to any of the related legislation unless the Minister of Finance can come in here and say, "The situation has been analysed by our experts, we have encountered this range of problems and we have sought to amend and harmonise all the existing legislation this way in order to have the desired result in the long term." If you continue handling the matter in this way, you are doing injury to something which you seem to believe in very devotedly.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. A. TRUSS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise in support of this Bill to amend the Off-Shore Banking Act, 1979.

Sir, there are three off-shore banks in Barbados that have total assets of one billion dollars which have been accumulated over the last three years. When one checks with off-shore banks throughout the world, I mean in the very best areas—Grand Cayman, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Panama, Bahrain—places which have been in the off-shore banking business for many, many years, you will see that Barbados has not done very badly at all. As a matter of fact, I think we have done very well to have accumulated assets of over one billion dollars in less than three years.

We have a tremendous amount of competition, Sir. No one said it was going to be easy. International financing, off-shore banks, the confidence that people would have in a country—everything is based on the long term. It takes time for people to begin to understand that Barbados can be as good, as far as servicing any off-shore facility, as the main competitors in the international market.

We also have to face the problems with the International Reserve Board in the United States, since they formed the International Business Facility, the IBF, as it is called. This essentially is the same thing as an American off-shore bank. So apart from the fact that we have to fight against the traditional markets of off-shore banking, we now have to fight against the American established IBF, the International Banking Facility, which offers the same facilities as an international off-shore bank.

To get these things in train, the Government has had to do a number of things. There are double taxation treaties which have to be taken into consideration. My understanding is that the Central Bank, the agency through which Government controls off-shore banks in Barbados, they have been diligently at work trying to negotiate double taxation treaties in an attempt to stimulate Barbados as an off-shore centre.

Barbados has a direct agreement with the UK and a double taxation agreement but we do not as yet have one with the United States of America. The US agreement is based on an extension of the UK/Barbados agreement, but at present, we are negotiating with the US for a direct agreement.

4.35 p.m.

Double taxation agreements at present exist between Barbados and the United Kingdom, like I have said, and Barbados and some Scandinavian countries and a lot of work is being done to ensure that treaties will be negotiated with countries like Venezuela and other South American countries, and a serious look is being taken at the possibility of a treaty between West Germany and Barbados. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes) knows of these things. As shadow Minister of Finance, he knows only too well that these things take time. It is a question of confidence.

The meeting, to which he referred, that was held in Barbados on November 10, 1981 by the International Tax Planners Association. For them to have held that meeting in Barbados was indicative of the fact that they had some confidence in Barbados as an offshore facility, with some potential for substantial growth.

So in three years we have come a long way. We have been able to develop a certain amount of confidence. We have been able to establish the assets of the three off-shore banks which exceed \$1 billion, in spite of the fact that there are terms and conditions under which other countries operate pertaining to their Off-shore Act. These are quite different from the ones which we were faced with.

For example, Bermuda and Bahamas never had a direct taxation policy, so automatically they drew to the shores of these islands a tax haven for offshore banks. Countries like Singapore and Bahrain deliberately set out to establish themselves as major financial centres and threw their hat into the ring of international financing to try to establish themselves as competent, capable and efficient offshore banks.

Barbados falls in the category of the latter. We are like Singapore and Bahrain. We are deliberately trying to solicit the market to promote ourselves as capable and

competent to deal with offshore banking facilities. Bahrain was an exception because they happen to be in the middle of all of that money in the Middle-East oil-producing countries. So these are the circumstances which one must take into consideration.

Barbados has an excellent record of political stability. As a matter of fact, it was stated that Barbados applied for independence from Great Britain 100 years before the Americans. It was refused, but nevertheless we applied. We have 350 years of parliamentary democracy. We have a fine infrastructure of public utilities. You can instantly dial anywhere in the world. Soon they will be able to introduce a system where a computer will be linked up so that the same-day transfer of funds from Barbados to any part of the world can be done. So the country is gearing itself to be able to be in a position to facilitate as much business as it can in the offshore facility, and we have to go out and promote it.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said that the Prime Minister should not be out there promoting it. Singapore was one of the countries which did it. Bahrain did it. The precedent has already been established. If this is an area of international finance that you want to get into, and you are well aware that the competition is so stiff in the area — Grand Cayman, Panama, Bermuda and Bahamas — and you want to get a piece of the market, it is obvious that it is the product which you have to sell, Sir.

You have to sell your country. You have to sell the intelligence of the people. You have to be able to tell the world that we have the resources as far as the human resources are concerned, we have the basic infrastructure, we have an excellent record of political stability and we have a reliable and expeditious, judicial system. These are three very fundamental things when a country has to consider whether or not if they should enter into the area of offshore banking.

More recently, Sir, as a result of the passage of the International Business Act, corporations have started to locate their head offices in Barbados. Shell Antilles, plus several other international institutions — The Pan American Health Organisation, United Nations Development Programme, International Development Bank — all of them have their main offices right here in Barbados. The International Monetary Fund, as I understand it, will be opening a regional office here in Barbados.

Now this is the credit to the people and to the country. When international institutions select tiny little Barbados, the most easterly island in the Caribbean, to establish their headquarters and reputable financial institutions such as I have mentioned — UNDP, IDB, Shell Antilles, PAHO

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can we have some order on the Government benches? The reporter is complaining that she is finding difficulty in hearing.

Mr. A. TRUSS: ... it means, Sir, that we are heading in the right direction, and I still support the first view initially set out when we established the Off-Shore Banking Act. I still support the view that it is a good thing for Barbados, and I still believe that we as an island have to sell to the world the fact that, in spite of the fact that other islands have been in this long before us, meaning a decade before we can still offer the services. When the Euro-dollar was growing 10 years ago, the Grand Caymans, Bermuda and Bahamas were involved in off-shore banking, so they became firmly established within a decade. We only started three years ago, and we have to try and make serious inroads into the competition at large. I think, Sir, if I may repeat myself under the circumstances, we have done very well and I would like to compliment the honourable Prime Minister, who is responsible for initiating the Off-Shore Banking Act in Barbados.

I thank you.

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

On the motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.
4.45 p.m.

Clause 2 was called.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that Clause 2 stand part.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I think that when the honourable Member (Rt. Hon. J.M.G.M. Adams) introduced the Bill on the Second Reading he not only identified this amendment as facilitating borrowing by Government within the law from offshore banks, but he also referred to the possibility of other private companies borrowing from the offshore sector.

I wonder whether or not that is right, and whether we would be permitting a situation where private companies and individuals can borrow from the offshore sector, that is, borrow hard currency from the offshore

sector, and whether or not the Central Bank would be keeping some sort of control of those activities in relation to private companies and private individuals; whether or not the wider relationship being developed between the domestic economy and the offshore banking rather than the more closed relationship could lead to a situation where residents of Barbados could be making deposits in offshore banks.

I do not see any distinction here between a depositor and a borrower. It may be elsewhere in the Act. It simply says "by deleting the words" "or knowingly accept or keep a resident of Barbados as a customer for any of its offshore banking services." How far does the Prime Minister envisage that this would go, and what kind of local borrowers from the offshore banking area would he envisage would be permitted to participate in this kind of activity, apart from Government? If he cares to answer.

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

Clause 3 was called and passed.

On the motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

RESOLUTION TO FURTHER ORDER SPEECHES FOR THE
BETTER ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF
DEBATE ON THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATE-
MENT AND BUDGETARY PROPOSALS

Order No. 5 was called – To move the passing of the above resolution.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, a few things involved with the procedure of the House have caused great difficulty in the last six years as procedure upon the Budget. I say six years, I could say ten or fifteen. We have had Lloyd Smith cutting the wire, we have had Peter Morgan jumping up from his seat on the front bench and telling Mr. Gladstone Holder to cut me off the air, to stop the television cameras from continuing to film me.

We have had the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), then the honourable Member for St. Michael South West, winding up in the Opposition and running out of material and hoping to be called home by the Speaker, forgetting that there was an informal agreement that the Member who spoke last for the Opposition could speak for an hour, or indeed longer, if he felt it necessary. Perhaps it was not indicated to the honourable Member, but all those who saw his distress when 35 or 40 minutes passed and the Speaker had still

not said to him come in out of the sun, my boy, will recall his discomfiture on that occasion.

Mr. Speaker, I speak figuratively. Nobody who occupies your Chair would use such a colloquial expression as "come in out of the sun." He would, I think, have said, and did say, that the honourable Member had five minutes remaining.

The Opposition has made all kinds of fuss over these procedures in the past. I think, I am not playing politics, that the reason for the fuss, and why nearly all Budget debates have been a fiasco after the two opening speeches, is that on that first occasion when the Opposition followed the rules that we worked out, it did not show itself at its best. We tried to be fair on that occasion.

Necessarily, you have to give people speaking time during the middle of the afternoon when there may not be so many people watching television. We divided that as equally as possible between the Government and the Opposition. But you could not have equality between 18 members on one side and six on the other, and 17 and 7, any more than you can really have equality between 17 and 10, so necessarily there are going to be occasions when two Government speakers speak to one Opposition and so on.

Necessary also, from the point of view of the structure of a Budget, the opening of a Budget must have at least two out of the first three speakers speaking for the Government, and if you have a choice between two out of three and two out of four, or two out of three and three out of four – a Government was put there to govern; we were put there because we have the most seats – the Government considers that it is entitled to decide that we are going to run the speeches a certain way.

Now, this has broken down in the last two, perhaps the last three Budgets, because Opposition speakers are unwilling to speak when, immediately, they are going to be followed by Government speakers, followed ultimately with a wind up by two Government speakers out of the last three.
4.55 p.m.

I can only tell the Opposition that this is in the nature of being a minority. There have to be an overlap some time. We are not going to put our majority to speak on the afternoon of the third day and let the Opposition speak at prime time every day. This is a matter of commonsense. The Opposition will have its share of prime time and we will have our share of prime time. The Government will have its share of down time and the Opposition will have its share of down time.

There is one unfortunate error in the Resolution which I will seek to correct. In paragraph 12 of the Resolution, the words "for one hour" have been omitted. "The Minister of Finance or another Minister shall be entitled to speak." It should be "for one hour".

I voluntarily give up my right to speak for an unlimited time in reply, in return, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for nothing but abuse, even from such decent people such as the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford). I wonder why we ever give anything to the Opposition! You try to arrange a fair division of the speeches and a man gets in the market-square and tells an outright lie, saying that we are planning that every Government Minister should speak as long as he wants in the debate. An outright lie was published in the *Nation*. It said that the honourable Member for St. Michael South said so.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: He never said that).

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Well, I am glad to hear that.

The honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow) is mistaken. He has nothing else to do but listen to reports of what people on the Government side say all day. I regret that except where grossly, wicked, false, dangerous, malicious and irresponsible statements are made damaging to the credit of Barbados, I cannot undertake to listen to tapes or read transcripts. I really cannot do it!

I have said in here before that if Vernon Smith speaks, I will listen and — I did not have to say it — the right honourable Member for St. John said, "That is in my economic interest so to do". Or his brother. But I am not going to sit down and read a speech, even by the honourable Member for St. Michael South.

If he did not say it, he should have corrected it, because he is in *The Nation* put forward as telling a lie.

The timetable which the Government proposes is really very simple. The Budget will have to start earlier because there are three more Members in the House, and in terms of time, in order to accommodate the number of speakers we now have, we will have to have a little more debating time on the second day. There is only one way that that debating time on the second day can be achieved, and that is by starting the Budget earlier.

The Government thinks that for one person on the Government side and one person on the Opposition side, other than the protagonist and the antagonist, there should be slightly more time to speak than half an hour. Therefore, we are proposing that the person

who speaks first on behalf of the Government and last on behalf of the Opposition, other than the Minister of Finance and whoever replies, should speak for one hour. We are not saying that because we have 17 and you have 10 that the two of us must speak for an hour and one of them. We are saying that one of us and one of them should speak for an hour.

Because prolixity of speeches is offensive in my opinion to the general public, the Minister of Finance proposes to limit his final reply, which would at present be unlimited, to one hour. All other Members will speak for half an hour.

Now, I am aware of one serious complaint about the timetable as drawn. It is too generous to the Opposition, because provision is made for all 10 Opposition Members to speak, but not for all 15 Government Members. I do not know what can be done about that. If honourable Members wish, we can start a little earlier in the second day. I suppose I can start the Budget earlier again. I would have no objections to start the Budget early enough to allow the missing Members of the Government side to speak.

Honourable Members may not want the timetable at all, in which case we will just have to divide the House and proceed with it. But dealing with the timetable as it stands, the situation beginning on the second day, because the first day is the Budget, is that an Opposition Member will reply for a period of time not exceeding that used by the Minister of Finance.

I really cannot see that this is unfair. Technically, it is a limitation, but it has never, except the one year when, I think, the Budget was short and Mr. Morgan told Mr. Holder not to allow me to be heard any longer, except that one year. I can never recall an Opposition spokesman speaking for longer than a Minister of Finance. And, indeed, in realistic terms, how could he?

The Minister of Finance has long proposals to deal with, which takes up some time. How could a man feel in this day and age speaking on a Budget for three hours without repeating himself? Let us be realistic. It is done. I have done it, probably, but how can it really be done without repetition?

I do not think that anybody, and if he is honest, least of all the Opposition spokesman on Finance, will seek to enshrine a right to speak for two days on the part of the person who replies to the Budget? The Government obviously is not going to give way on that point. As a matter of practicality, it has always been observed — always, barring for one occasion when I think the Budget lasted only for 37 minutes because the first half of it was not read.

The next speaker would be a Government Member, seconding the motion and speaking for one hour. Then, on the second day, we propose that Government and Opposition can have equal time. That is a very important point to note and one, perhaps, that, deliberately or otherwise, was glossed over by the honourable Member for St. Michael South. We propose that on the second day that it will go -- Opposition spokesman on Finance, Government Minister, Opposition Member, Government Member, Opposition Member, Government Member. In other words, three and three on the second day.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: That is what I have written down here in front of me. The honourable Member for St. Michael South is alleged to have said that out of the first four speakers, three will be for the Government. He is alleged to have said that! What I see here is, technically, you could say that on the second day, out of the first three speakers two will be for the Opposition. You could just as well say that.
5.05 p.m.

What you said is wrong. Out of the first four speakers, two will be from the Government, not three. Out of the first five speakers, three will be from the Government. Look at the Resolution again. And even to say that out of the first four speakers two will be from the Government, that means you are referring to me. I am the first speaker.

But as far as the debate is concerned, we have gone out of our way to divide the speeches equally between the Government and the Opposition on the first day. As I said, I do not know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why we do these things, because all we get for it is abuse. If the adversary principle, if the confrontation is so well developed in our country, and if a lie can gain currency so much more easily than the truth, perhaps we had better start getting into the confrontation and adversary business, too -- although I will not be getting into the lying.

On the second day, the present provisions do eliminate a certain number of Government speakers. Two speakers are eliminated, so there are fifteen. Two persons are not going to speak automatically, so that leaves fifteen. We have made provision, I believe, for only 23 speakers in all, so it is implicit that unless the speeches are short, the Government will give up two speakers.

I must say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I may have been prepared to do this before the Opposition started telling lies on us, but in view of all the outright lies I have had to hear, I do not really think we should ask any Member on the Government side to surrender his right to make a

speech on television for the benefit of a pack of untruthful persons who cannot give credit where credit is due, or cannot see an attempt to be honest and fair in the best interest of the people of Barbados, or in Parliament, for what it is. If an appropriate amendment is made, I am perfectly ready to begin the Budget half an hour earlier.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker: it is being suggested that I have been indulging in lies and that is certainly contrary to the Standing Orders. My understanding of the Order as set out, and you can correct me if I am wrong -- and if I made an error it was a genuine error -- is that the Minister of Finance speaks, then a Minister of Government seconds the motion...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am showing where there is reference to my lying, and in order to do that, if you will bear with me for just a little while, I am showing where the Minister speaks for an hour and then a Government Member for thirty minutes with an Opposition Member coming in. That is how I understood what I read before me.

If there is a genuine misunderstanding, I will apologise for that later in my speech, but it appears to me at this stage that to accuse me, as a Member of this Honourable House, of lying is contrary to the Standing Orders, and I would be glad if the honourable Member would withdraw the imputation.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not rule so unless the honourable Member wants me to accept that his performance in the Market Square also influences his non-speech in here. I listened rather carefully to the honourable Member for St. Thomas and I thought he was talking about persons out in the Market Square, certainly not in this Chamber.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I thank Your Honour for the ruling, but I must say I am very pleased to hear the submission by the honourable Member to the effect that he has made a mistake, because I do not associate that honourable Member with telling lies and I was very disappointed when I read in the *Nation* what he was supposed to have said -- and what I imagined he did say, based upon the fact that he now says he is going to apologise for it.

If the honourable Member had read the Resolution, this is what he would see:

"The Minister will then move for the adoption of the Budgetary Proposals, a Minister will second the motion and reserve his speech. There shall be no further debate on the motion on that day."

Now on the next day a member of the Opposition shall have the right to speak first in the debate, and the duration of his speech shall not exceed that made by the Honourable Minister of Finance. The Minister who seconded the motion shall then be entitled to speak for one hour. There is no mention that another Government member is then to speak.

Asides

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I tell you there are mistakes here. Look at paragraph 12. Do not get on any high horse with me. There are mistakes here, but that is not one of them. There is no necessary corollary running from 8 to 9. If you had done your homework and added up the time, you would see there is no room for the extra hour. Paragraph 12 contains a mistake; there is no other mistake. If you add up the amount of time you cannot support two speeches of an hour and then nineteen speeches of half an hour, plus the presumed length of time that the Budget and the Reply will take. If honourable Members, perhaps, instead of anticipating what is going to be in the House of Assembly would come in the House of Assembly and hear the facts, they would be saved a lot of embarrassment when they go outside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): The honourable Member by his statement suggests that honourable Members were anticipating contrary to the Rules of the House. This Resolution, in a typed form, was handed out to honourable Members before today. This Resolution which is being read now, the printed Resolution, it is the first time we have seen it. A typed Resolution was handed out to honourable Members. He cannot make that imputation.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Of course if the Clerk had.... I cannot help it if it is not the same as the typed Resolution. All I can say is that if honourable Members had misunderstood, then it is because a fundamental preference for confrontation. That is all I can say. Even this, as it is given out, cannot be actually correct.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all that I can say is that after all the accusations of the Government's bad faith, about muzzling the Opposition and so on, I will just have to deal with this exactly as it is, even if it works out that before dinner there is a speech by a Government member and after dinner there is a speech by a Government member. Even if that worked out like that, it will have to stay like that.

It would not be three speakers out of four, it will be two speakers out of three; but even if it works out like that, it will have to stay like that, because if an amendment is moved to accommodate the remaining two members of Government, I will start the Budget half an hour earlier, and we will find a space on the time-table for them if necessary, on a division of the House. If you do not co-operate, you do not co-operate! You are not accustomed to co-operating!
5.15 p.m.

Our party was put at a disadvantage by this. No speaker cares to draw that to anybody's attention.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): On a point of order, Sir.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): I beg to second this Resolution, Sir....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: And you reserve your right to speak, right?

Mr. A. TRUSS: Can I not speak now, Sir?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I do not think so.

Laughter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have two honourable Members on their feet.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Who did you see first.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I would like to speak, Sir, but if the right honourable Member would like me to give way, I would give way to him.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I would have adumbrated my point of order in my speech, but if he is going to interrupt me, I want to make my point of order.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I reserve my right to speak, Sir.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that I should deal with my point of order first, but I am making a speech on the Resolution.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I have it clear? What are you on at this minute?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I indicated, Sir, that I have risen on a point of order. After I got up on a point of order, the honourable Member who just sat down rose to speak and seconded the motion, but before the

right honourable Prime Minister sat down, I had risen on a point of order. I then said, well, I would adumbrate my point of order in my speech on the Resolution.

So, in the first opening, twilight zone of my speech, I will make my point of order, and then, in the broad light of day, I will deal with the Resolution.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Oh, the right honourable Member wants to make a point of order.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, Sir, I want to make a point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: and then speak on the Resolution.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I wanted to make a point of order. You ruled. I sat down and then I got back up again; but unfortunately, the Member seconded the Resolution after I said I was rising on a point of order.

You do not have to rule because the Standing Orders are there. And this is a real, genuine stunt, anything on the Standing Orders is a point of order.

The right honourable Member for St. Thomas said that he got himself in a tail spin and the Leader of the House did not get up to save him, like he saved the Minister earlier today, by calling for the adjournment appealing for light. If the right honourable Member said that he would extend his speech by starting thirty minutes earlier, that is directly contrary to Standing Orders, because Standing Order 31 says:

"DEBATE ON FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND BUDGETARY PROPOSALS"

....."two sitting days"....."shall immediately follow the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals and shall be allotted to debate thereon."

There are only two short rules and I intend to deal with Rule 31 of the Standing Orders in the main part of my speech. It says:

"The total debating time shall not exceed, on either of these days, the maximum debating time allotted by Standing Order No. 6 for a day's sitting."

So how can he extend it on two days by thirty minutes. That is the point I would have wanted to make before I sat down.

I will now launch in like R. C. Robertson-Glasgow said once speaking to the late, great Sir Frank Worrell

that an innings by Sir Frank Worrell has no dawn, it breaks into high noon. I will now break into high noon.

The Minister of Finance spent a lot of time speaking about.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir. Has the right honourable Member observed that we propose to suspend Standing Order 31 by this Resolution? And, therefore, that referring to Standing Order 31 is irrelevant to the debate? We propose to suspend it.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is the main gravamen of my statement here this afternoon. We draw up Standing Orders and then we come in now to demolish Standing Orders, demolish all the rules of Parliament, all of the accepted parliamentary practices — throw your Standing Orders out of the window.

The most important Standing Order in this Book is Standing Order 31, as far as I am concerned which not only specifically allots two sitting days after the Financial Statement to a Budget debate, but specifically states that:

"The total debating time shall not exceed, on either of these days, the maximum debating time allotted for a day's sitting."

When we go about tinkering around with the Rules of the Honourable House like this, we are going to run into trouble.

I would like to give a background to the whole thing. There was never a Budget in the history of Barbados until I become the first Minister of Finance of Barbados. I introduced Budget Speeches in this Honourable Chamber for the first time in the 350-year history of Parliament.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Thank Jah for that. The only one in the Caribbean. Push off now, Jah.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Right. Now, let us get it straight. A lot of people do not understand what a Budget Speech is for. They think it is some honky-tonk parade, in the words of the immortal King Cole, and it is sometimes a charade.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Especially on television.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The purpose of a Government is to manage the affairs of a country. They manage the affairs of a country not only by social engineering, but by fiscal and financial measures for the good government of the country.

Now, let us go back to first principles, the Constitution of Barbados. The next thing, they are going to suspend the Constitution because when you get suspending

the most sacrosanct of Standing Orders, the next step is that you are going to suspend the Constitution. I have heard all kinds of peculiar suspensions of Standing Orders which should not be tampered with.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Sir, if the right honourable Member would give way on a point of order: The right honourable Member is talking about the suspension of Standing Orders. This is a practice which has been going on from the time.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two honourable Members on their feet. Would the honourable Member.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: But he was not on a point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: please take his seat. He said, "On a point of order."

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Oh no, he never did! He said if.....

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Do not argue with the Chair. Try and sit down.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I would give way.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please do not argue with me.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Do you want to tell me that I am a lunatic, that he did not ask me to give way and I did not give way?

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Do not overdo it.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the right honourable Member for St. John please take his seat.

I am listening to the point of order by the honourable Member for St. James North.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, on a point of order: The right honourable Member for St. John is dwelling on the point that we are suspending Standing Orders and then we are going to suspend the Constitution.

Only today, we have suspended Standing Orders. It is a regular feature of Parliament that you suspend Standing Orders because the Government would like to handle their business to suit us. This is standing practice. This is nothing new.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The honourable Member for St. James North can take his seat.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You allowed him to waste time to find out what you knew from the beginning was not going to be a point of order.

There is some quotation - I am not very good at quotations - about something clad in brief authority. I cannot remember the quotation.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: If I get up and treat you bad, you would not like it, and you know I am very capable of doing this.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Can I get on with my speech, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the right honourable Member for St. John making a speech?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I wish to submit that there are certain Standing Orders which we have to regard almost as entrenched Standing Orders, which cannot even be suspended, or should not be suspended, even by a majority or unanimous decision of the Honourable House.

I do not think that Standing Orders like this were meant to be abrogated and treated as trivialities. But this is only on the point of the introducer of the Resolution, the right honourable Member for St. Thomas, suggesting that the way he would adjust it and tinker around with it, he will start thirty minutes early, because the Standing Orders directly says that this should not be done.

The reason why these Standing Orders were enshrined in the Rules of this Honourable House was to protect the workers and the employees of Parliament who frequently were called upon to extend their normal working hours and work long beyond the statutory limits and the limits which are recognised in industrial relations. I believe that even at the time representations were made on behalf of the workers in this regard. But I would put that aside.

I want to give Your Honour a background to this thing. We introduced Financial Statements and Budgetary Proposals as a means of regularising the business of running the finances of this country.

What used to happen before was - and I have been in here thirty-one years now and I am proud of it. I do not think they have been thirty-one happy years because I have seen a gradual deterioration in respect of parliamentary democracy, especially in recent times. But that is only parenthetically speaking.
5.25 p.m.

I will go on to say that in order to regularize and systematize the presentation of the country's accounts, as

it were, we did not just come in with Estimates and say that we expect to get so much revenue and we expect to spend so much money. You got a deficit and then, in a rather sporadic and desultory way throughout the year, introduced taxation measures, because it meant that people were kept in a state of suspended animation right through the financial year, not knowing when or where the axe was going to fall as far as taxation was concerned. I know, because I was a member of a party that practised that kind of financial militarism. For five years in this House I was a member of this party. We tried to get the whole system changed in bringing it more in line with civilized practices in other democratic societies, or particularly those within the Commonwealth.

In 1962, I introduced the first Budget. Now I want to say this. There was never any question of a person being allowed to speak. This is Parliament. Parliament is the place where you talk, where you discuss the people's business, and the most important aspect of the people's business is what is their responsibility going to be in support of the Government of the country and its support of the services which the people as a generality expect you to provide for them. This is Parliament!

Before these Rules here came off the printing press in 1973 — our first Budget was in 1962 — a Member could speak for as long as he liked on anything, whether it was a Budgetary Statement of Financial Proposals or whether it was a debate on amending the Consumption Tax, or whether it was a non-taxation measure. A Member could get up and speak at any time.

There was no special Standing Order dealing with Financial Proposals, because there were never any Financial Proposals. They came eleven years later. There was never any problem except for the adjournments for tea, lunch, and dinner. Any Member on either side could speak, whether it was on the Appropriation Bill, or whether it was a Bill to deal with a social measure, or to provide for severance payments — anything. Any Member could get up and speak.

In 1972, I think it was, we appointed a Joint Committee from both sides of the House in order to tidy up the Rules. I was not a member of the committee. I did not think it was appropriate that I should be a member of the committee. We had many other people in the House on both sides who were capable of sitting down and analysing and so on.

For the first time, the question of limitation of speeches was introduced so that the person introducing a motion or Resolution on the Government side could speak for as long as he liked and so could the first person on the Opposition side. But a limitation was placed on the length of time for which a floor Member on either side could speak. Such a Member could speak for 30

minutes in an ordinary debate and 15 minutes in the Committee on any Bill after the Second Reading, except that it was recognized that in moving the various clauses of the Bill, a Member could get up and speak more than once for 15 minutes in the Committee stage.

Parliament therefore imposed a restriction on the length of time that a Member could speak on any motion or Resolution, either in the Committee of the House or on the Floor of the House in a Second Reading or Resolution itself. Parliament accepted the recommendation made by the committee, of which the honourable Member for St. Thomas, who is now the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, was a very active member.

We did not demur on the limitation, because here in the Caribbean, parliamentarians, let us face it, tend to be rather garrulous, verbose. They feel that every speech made is like the doxology, which has to be sung three times in order to get your point over. Therefore, recognizing the propensity of parliamentarians to speak at inordinate lengths of time, we accepted the recommendations.

I have the record for speaking on any one motion. I spoke from three o'clock one afternoon until a quarter past six the next morning on one particular occasion. And that was not being garrulous at all, that was being educated. There was also a tactical reason for that particular speech. It was a measure to which we were inordinately opposed. So when the citizens went to sleep at 9 or 10 o'clock that night and woke the next morning, your humble servant was still on his feet. I was only frustrated in having a marathon speech because the question was put while I was on my feet, and before I had finished.

But despite the fact that I probably spoke longer than anyone, I do welcome the idea that speeches should be limited because I feel that a Member can get over his point when he is replying to the principle introducer or speaker. A Member should be able to get over his points in a succinct and clear manner within the space of a half hour. One of his colleagues can pick up from where he stopped.

What I want to draw to the honourable Member's attention is that if you go back and study the law and customs of all the great Parliaments of the world, there is no policing of Members. This is Parliament! Lord Obstinate, I think his name is, an Antiguan calypsonian sings, "I am coming down to talk today." When we come here and we feel strongly about a thing, we are coming down to talk. Our right to speak is curtailed by the Standing Orders to a half hour for ordinary Members, and we accept that. What we do not accept since we are parliamentarians is that any Government should get up

and say that I am not going to say how long you can speak according to Standing Orders, but I can tell you who is to speak and in what order you are to speak — if you are to speak at all!

5.35 p.m.

As a matter of fact, the Resolution goes further. It implies that every Member of Parliament here has something to say on a Budget, which I do not accept. If they have a spokesman on financial matters on one side or the other, that spokesman has unlimited time, certainly the first spokesman, to put forward the Government's proposals, and in our dispensation we said that the Member on the other side first replying for the Opposition should have equal time in order to do it, but we did not say — and I want you to get this straight, Mr. Deputy Speaker — we did not say that a Member could not go on speaking in accordance with the Standing Orders.

We said that you could go on speaking, but not in front of the television. We wanted to bring and draw the general public into the knowledge of what was taking place and what would affect them from the time when the Minister of Finance makes his statement. We also said that the person on the other side should be given equal time on television. But this did not frustrate Standing Orders in that it said that a Member could only speak for such and such a time.

The Standing Orders remained inviolate. When Members asked for the televising of debates, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance spoke, the Leader of the Opposition or the person responsible for the portfolio of Finance on the Opposition side was then given the right to spend as much time replying to the Budget and Financial Proposals as the time spent by the introducer, who would be the Minister of Finance, and that was the end of the matter.

Now, I will go back and give you a little history. At one time in this Chamber we had the Government, which was the Democratic Labour Party, we had two main Opposition parties, which were kind of balanced in numbers — either four each or five each, I cannot remember which — and we had two Independents. There was a great caucus meeting as to how this time on television would be allocated between two Opposition parties and two Independents, and we said that it was a matter for the two parties to decide how long they could each speak, paying due consideration to the fact that an Opposition member like Mr. Lloyd Smith, the former incumbent in your constituency, people like Mr. Lloyd Smith would be allowed to speak as well. So the first television debate went off on that basis.

Let us say that the Minister of Finance spoke for an hour and a half, the two Opposition parties then spoke

and Mr. Lloyd Smith came in as "the tail end; Charlie." That is a term from the Air Force when we had a rear gun. He came in, but they gave him a very short time, and the time for the Opposition expired on television. The time expired when Mr. Lloyd Smith had just started off, and I got up and said that he was the first person beginning to make some sense in the reply to the Budget, let him continue. I was not like that famous fisherman who said let them gather, let them gather, and destroyed the fish with dynamite. I said, "Let Mr. Lloyd Smith continue on television."

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I do not know why the leader of the House is interrupting me so, or why he is so perturbed.

After Mr. Lloyd Smith had spoken for nearly as long as the Opposition party representatives, he said that he had concluded. So in that debate the Opposition had more than equal time with the Government, because the combined forces of the Opposition spoke for longer than the Government.

The introducer of the Resolution, who is the Minister of Finance, always has, according to our Standing Orders, the right to reply. And since as on one famous occasion it was felt that there were things which had to be answered to the kind of audience, then I replied, probably for longer than I usually did, which was 15 to 20 minutes, because I had to deal with some very serious and insidious allegations which were made at the time which had absolutely nothing to do with the Financial Proposals which I put forward.

Having given that very brief background, what I want to draw to your attention, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is this. On the question of conducting a charade with your standing up like a traffic policeman and saying one of this and two of that, like you are making a rum punch, one of sour, two of sweet, and that kind of thing, I say that the right to speak in this Parliament is a fundamental right. It is one of the privileges which we claimed for the best construction to be put upon your statements, and furthermore, it is so fundamental it is enshrined in the freedom of speech and the freedom of association which are enshrined in the Constitution of Barbados.

The point I am making is that we are not school children on this side, and in my 31 years in here I have never been confronted with the spectacle of a Speaker saying your turn next, because it is fundamental in a parliamentary system such as ours that the person who first catches the eye of the Speaker has the right to speak.

This whole thing is a complete subversion of all that we have stood for in Parliament, because after I, as Leader of the Opposition, or the person who is responsible for financial matters on our side, has spoken, none of us may want to speak, or all of us may want to speak. It is a question of who catches your eye. There is no traffic going through here where you are going to have one, and two, and then the Prime Minister, so he will start a few minutes early so that somebody can get a hand before stumps. That is a lot of nonsense!

This debate should proceed on this basis, as we introduced it. We allot time on television. With the consent of the House we have television now. The Prime Minister and Minister of Finance gets up and makes his speech on the understanding, since there is only one Opposition party, that the Opposition spokesman on television will not speak for longer than the Minister. But if the Opposition spokesman wants to go on in complete darkness without microphones, but while the House is still in session, for another three or four hours, that is in the Standing Orders. After that, it is a free for all. I do not mean everybody jumping in and cuffing and fighting and kicking, what I mean by a free for all is that whoever likes, either on the Government side or on this side, once he catches your eye, can get up and speak. We do not need any television cameras.

What is happening now is that everybody is pompasetting, going to the hairdresser, getting cosmetics, because they say, "I am getting a hand on television." If you want to go on television, go up to CBC and pay for some advertising time on TV, providing it is not political. We do not need that kind of charade inside here.

The debate on the Budget should proceed for the next two days, the Government having stated its proposals and the spokesman for the Opposition having stated his views, as we used to, and that should be the end of the matter. We are not going to be regimented! I am making a positive statement now — Her Majesty's loyal Opposition is not going to be regimented into any traffic flow being directed by the Deputy Speaker or whoever is occupying the Chair, like an undignified policeman. All you need now is a big pair of white gloves and stand up when you are in uniform.
5.45 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to draw the Hon. Member's attention to Standing Order 30(2).

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Do you want me to read it Sir? It says, "No Member may interrupt....." Who am I am interrupting, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Standing Order 30(2).

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Oh, 30(2)! But I read it already. That is not anything that I do not know or that I have not stated here. Let me read it and see if I can see the relevance:

"In a debate on the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, each Member may speak for 30 minutes, provided that this time limit shall not apply to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Leader of the Opposition or the Member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition."

Well, this is what we have been saying all along! The Prime Minister will speak as long as he likes, and the combined forces of the Opposition, that is the persons cited, can speak as long as that time. But he can speak for the recording time and sit down, and that is the end of the Budget debate on television as far as I am concerned.

What I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that it is completely outrageous to invite you in advance to break the Rules of the House by saying I do not care who stands up, order and direct, counsel and procure, expressed or implied, that you should put yourself in the position, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of throwing the Rules of the House through the window and say, "No, I am not going to recognize the person if he wants to speak."

Suppose at the end of the Budget speech nobody wants to speak. What is the position then? But we have put everybody in a straight jacket in here. This is the only occasion in Parliament, in Parliaments of the world, that everybody has a pre-arranged slot, that he is going to speak in a particular order. I am saying that that is a monkey waste of time, and it is in keeping with the general public point of view.

There are certain programmes. We do not know when the Budget Debate is going to be. People pay a licence for television. When certain politicians go on television, their children get up and turn off the television.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am not calling any names. That is against the Rules of the House, and you know it, too!

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I will not be provoked. Certain people get up and turn off their televisions. That is only when one politician goes on television.

How do you think they feel, night after night, when they want to watch "Different Strokes" for Different

Folks, "Days of Our Lives", right down the line, and then all night, right into 10 p.m. you are getting one ugly politician after the other and the little children running and turning off the television. People are out there with licences for entertainment, and there is no entertainment in that.

There is only one good-looking politician in here and that one is on the opposite side.

Laughter

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Give that Member, the Member for the City, (Hon. B. A. Miller) the right to make the presentation of the Budget Speech so that all the Queen's College girls will see her and that is that. Do not even put on the doctor. I am very serious. The people in Barbados are being deprived of one of their fundamental rights to look at what kind of programme they want to look at. For two days we are denying them the right of doing that!

There is no reason why all the discussion on Finance could not take place for as long as the Rules allow Members to speak without the benefit of any television at all. Then, people would watch the programmes that they want to watch. The next morning you get up and read the newspapers and you would be able to study in more detail what the Government's proposals are, and what the reaction of the Opposition might be as presented by the spokesman or from the opposite side. We do not need any more than that.

I think it is a complete subversion of the whole atmosphere of Parliament for us today that we are being directed and then you are telling us — I cannot remember the expression used in here by the honourable Prime Minister this evening — that we are telling a lot of lies. And then when the Member for St. Michael South read the Resolution, he said, "oh, that is a mistake," yet, that is all that the Member said. We do not need it.

All that we need to say is already prepared, and there is no need for 10 of us to get up and repeat it. We will go and tell it on the mountains when we are ready. We will go out to our wider constituencies. We are not interested in cosmetics. We are not interested in hairdressers. We are not interested in fashionable tailors and we do not have anybody to impress on anybody at the high-ball level out there. We do not need to do it on television. We do not need to take away from the people of Barbados the right to watch what kinds of programmes they like, subject to being informed where the axe and when the axe is going to fall in so far as taxation is concerned.

People have said that a Budget can always be used to adumbrate the overall strategy of the Government and

that kind of thing. Yes, that is true, but, you see, a political party can have an ongoing programme. You do not have to wait for a particular time like April 1, All Fools' Day, or any other time soon after the close of the financial year, in order to inform the people what your economic strategy is. And the chances are that we are not going to be told what the economic strategies are, because they themselves do not know anyhow!

Since I have been in this House, I used Budgetary Proposals to show how the Government basically intended to bridge the gap between revenue and expenditure. A Budget is not a development plan. A Budget has a certain amount of engineering in it, because you either believe in deficit financing or you believe in supply economics. The President of the United States does not believe in deficit financing but he is now running the biggest deficits that the United States has ever had in its history. And he believes in taxing the poor, like the government does here in Barbados in these days, and relieving the rich from taxation. But you do not need a big long Budget Speech for that.

It is a honky tonk parade and I remember the other words of the immortal King Cole, "It is a melody played on a penny arcade."

(Mr. TAITT: Go a little slower so that the Reporter can get it).

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It is a paper moon constructed by a paper tiger. All of this business of parading before cameras, I am saying, is a considerable waste of the taxpayers' money.

To sum it up, we are not concerned about whether we have misread, whether he is going to allow three of the Government members to speak to one of us, or only two of the Government to speak to one of us. We are not interested in that, because we think this is unconstitutional. We are not interested in that at all. We are not interested in tinkering around with time and calling this person and calling the other person and that kind of thing. We are interested in bringing a certain amount of realities into the direction that the country is taking. That is all we are interested in.
5.55 p.m.

It is not an occasion for getting up and abusing people and waving about bits of paper saying that they have these. Ask the Leader of the House. If it came to waving about cheques, I could wave about more cheques than him. I have got two or three bounced ones there in my office right now that I could get in the Budget Speech and wave, but we do not go in for that kind of cheap exhibitionism. We could bring judgments in the Supreme Court and wave in here; we could ask how it is that a Trinidad company can pay off all the debts of

politicians in this country, but the public purpose is not being served by that kind of exhibitionism and cheap vulgarity.

It is a serious, it is almost a solemn occasion when you know the country is in trouble and when you get up to explain what measures you are going to take, usually at the expense of the taxpayers to get the country out of trouble. That is all it is.

We are not interested in this exercise. As a matter of fact, we could go home now because we are not voting for it, but other Members may want to dot the I's and cross the T's and probably fill in the whenever the honourable Minister of Health (Hon. B. A. Miller) looks at me some hifalutin, word comes to my mind — lacuna which might exist on the hiatuses which have been adumbrated, if we can adumbrate the hiatus, I would have to ask the honourable Minister of Health.

Apart from that, as I have already pointed out, there is nothing more to the whole exercise. It is a complete derogation of parliamentary practice: it puts the Speaker in an awkward position; it unnecessarily exposes the public to an unlimited amount of verbiage on a facility which they are paying for by their T.V. licences; it is preventing the children from doing their homework and school work at an important time in the academic year. It is a waste of time.

If we do not go on television at all, it would be all right with me, because television is no part of any Parliament. Television only comes in here on sufferance, but there is a kind of myth that you are going to get support by getting up and abusing people on television and letting every Member allot certain targets to certain Members. As the programme says, different strokes for different folks. You have got to abuse the two from the left coming this way, and then the other Minister has to abuse the people in the middle and someone else will say: "Leave the Leader of the Opposition to me." That is the kind of philosophy that this whole exercise has degenerated into, a slanging match.

And I will tell you something: Members are doing themselves a great disservice because some of the general public are interested in what is going on, not because they are persuaded by what takes place, but members are lowering themselves in the eyes of the general public. Go right ahead; it is all right with me, because I know that whenever the exercise is completed, far from getting votes they have lowered themselves more in the estimation of the people upon whom they will be calling for support in the future.

Therefore, there is no way that I, personally, will be able to support the Resolution, which I consider to be detrimental to the order and custom of Parliament, and

which is in derogation of all that we have stood for all of these years.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I listened quite carefully to the Leader of the Opposition (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow) and all that he had to say in what I consider to be a rather lighthearted speech. I think what came across was the good looks of the honourable Member for the City (Hon. B. A. Miller), going to the hairdresser, "tail gunner Charlie," lighthearted even for a grand, gracious old man, and I admire him for that, but I must clear up a few points which he drew to the attention of this House.

He was very critical of the Standing Orders. As far as the honourable Member for St. John is concerned, we treat these Standing Orders as though they can be thrown through the window when we come in here and suspend the Standing Orders when it is not necessary.

I have with me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Order Paper for Tuesday, July 17, 1973. At that time, Sir, the committee that drew up these Standing Orders which we are operating under today was appointed in 1971. It had His Honour the Speaker at the time as Chairman, Honourable C. E. Talma, Honourable P. M. Greaves, Honourable L. E. Sandiford, Honourable G. G. Fergusson, Messrs. J. B. Springer, J. M. G. M. Adams, W. C. B. Hinds, H. deB. Forde and the late E. D. Mottley. This was 1973. It was appointed on November 9, 1971.

Asides.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am sorry not the late E. D. Mottley, his son Elliot Mottley. Late of our party, bought by you all.

Sir, when the honourable Member for St. John gave the House the impression, and probably to people outside, that it was not necessary to suspend Standing Orders, in the very Standing Orders which were introduced out of the Select Committee by the members whom I have just made reference to, Standing Order No. 71 provides for the suspension of the very Standing Orders of which the Member is critical and is saying that we should not suspend them.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, I do not know if the honourable Member was a member of the House. I think I nominated that committee. I have never said that the Standing Orders should not be suspended. We suspend Standing Orders nearly every Tuesday inside here when we want to run over the lunch time or give notice of things which were not given notice of and so on.

What I said is that there are certain Standing Orders which, like the entrenched provisions of our Constitution,

should be regarded as entrenched, and since there are only two Standing Orders dealing with the debate on Financial proposals, I am saying that those Standing Orders should be regarded as entrenched and not be lightly cast aside, or extended, or suspended.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The point which I am making is that the Government of any day, as long as there is provision in the Standing Orders for the suspension of any Standing Order, is then within its right to suspend whichever Standing Order they so desire, and that is exactly what we are doing on this occasion. But you want to be on that side over there and tell us over here what we are to suspend and when we are to suspend them. The time is not yet here.

We are going to suspend Standing Order No. 31. The Select Committee reported and they recommended that, in the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly, there shall be a provision under Standing Order No. 71 that you may suspend any Standing Order whenever you deem it fit, and on this occasion we deem it fit on the Budget Day.

Then, there is the order of speaking. I must make reference to this. You know the honourable Member for St. John said quite a number of true things. I agree with him. This party that I am a member of seems to think that, within a very short time, we can correct or regularise every single thing that may appear to be wrong. And at the end of it, we get the worst of it, because all this Resolution is doing is giving the Opposition an opportunity to have more members speak. That is what it is doing, Sir.

6.05 p.m.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You keep it.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Now, Sir, there are 27 Members of Parliament, with Mr. Speaker out, unfortunately. You have, Sir, seventeen Government members, taking out Mr. Speaker who is not with us. You, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will therefore be occupying the Chair, leaving us with fifteen. We have fifteen persons to speak, you have ten.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will let your fifteen speak.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: But look what you are having here. Eleven members from the Government out of fifteen will speak on this side and eight out of ten on that side — and this evening, there is an argument as to how it should be.

Sir, I agree with the right honourable Leader of the Opposition. It should be catch as catch can, because I would direct from this side. I would time the clock and look at it carefully; and the Leader of the Opposition

would not be able to speak, because as soon as I see the time, I would be poking them and telling them, "Get up and speak." That is what I should be doing.

But I sat down and gave you eight out of ten and we are taking eleven out of fifteen. I cannot understand the argument. What are you complaining about? As far as I am concerned, it should be the Minister of Finance, the chief spokesman for the Opposition, and let the demolition job start there.

(Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is alright.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is how it should be, because, according to the Standing Orders, a Minister may move a motion and then he has the right to wind up. But we are giving you a whole hour. Any Member on the other side who did not speak has the right to reply for one whole hour.

Now, Sir, I hear about how a police should be directing, and how you do not want to be regimented. The whole idea was discussed. This is nothing new. From the time we came into office, the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Frederick Smith, had consultations with us.

He was the temporary Leader of the Opposition at the time, because at that time, the now Leader of the Opposition told this country that he was not going to sit down in the Honourable House of Assembly as a member of the Opposition. He told the country that, Not in here!

At that time, you were telling the people how you must have it and when you must have it. Now you are over there, you are telling us how we must do it. It cannot work that way. No way! If we are to govern, we have to govern.

The honourable Member said, in response to the idea of calling on a Member to speak as it is submitted to you, that the only place it has ever happened is in Barbados.

At White Hall, in the House of Commons, a name is submitted to the Speaker and the Speaker then indicates to the Member and call him by name — by name, not by constituency — to rise and address the Commons. Now, we are hearing this evening that Barbados is the only place.

(Aside: Where did you get that from?)

We heard that the longest speech ever made in here is by the right honourable Member for St. John. That is not true. Lloyd Ethelbert Smith made the longest speech in here on the Constitution Debate, when he

asked for a glass of water and you told him to drink his blood. Do you think you were a sweet Prime Minister?

I sat down here and saw E.D. Mottley bring a glass of water for him, and you told him to drink his blood. The man spoke for almost nine hours. Do you think you were a sweet Prime Minister? Now, you are the Leader of the Opposition, in the evening of your years, and you are now telling this side how to do it and when to do it. You can tell Taitt and Haynes, who should be Shadow Minister of Finance. You cannot tell us over here anything.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no Taitts and Hayneses in here.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Neither am I referring to any Taitt or Haynes. Sir, I am not referring to any Taitts or Hayneses in here. I am talking about the Taitts and the Hayneses in the Democratic Labour Party at the Auditorium and in George Street; not in here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we heard about TV coming in here on sufferance. But who brought the television cameras in here? Who brought them in here?

You introduced them in here, and you used to pompasett and parade in your dark glasses before them. Are you vexed because somebody is going to bring them now?

You used to be in your dark glasses like the Hulk. You were the political Hulk, taxing the poor that you now complain about. You said we tax the poor. You taxed them, too, from the time you became Minister of Finance. Now, all of a sudden, you are hearing that you are going to have somebody on this side dressed up with lipstick and a hairstyle to come and tax the poor as if you never imposed a burden of tax on the poor.

You have treated them worst than anybody else in this country because you had no heart for the aged in this country. I recall that on one occasion you brought a Budget Speech down here and at a particular page, when they looked, they had something tacked on behind — ten shillings a week more. Nothing concrete, nothing laid out!

Sir, we are being criticised. I agree with your criticism, that you should never be allowed to have any eight out of ten speaking on your side. It should be catch as catch can and you would see how I would have this side jumping, fifteen of them, that you would not even have a chance to speak.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North, (Mr. P. M. Greaves) what would he have to tell somebody on a television? Really, tell me!

What would he really say? That he is a political invalid, that he lost his seat before?

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: What a buffoon you are.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: This evening being criticised for giving them the opportunity to address the country. Eight out of ten and, when you look at it, eleven persons out of fifteen. But I agree with you. I support the idea that it should never be all of these people on television, as you say, so that people cannot watch their favourite programmes. There is only one channel, so you have to watch what CBC brings.

We used to have it that way on radio and television, too. All we are trying to do, Sir, is regularise it, give you an opportunity to use an additional or two speakers while we have eleven out of fifteen. I have some members on my side who are saying that it should not be so, and I agree with them.

Sir, I really see no reason why there should be any great objection to the Resolution. It says:

"A Member of the Opposition who has not already spoken in the debate shall be entitled to speak for 1 hour in reply to the debate."

The right honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance who is going to make probably the final reply is going to get one hour. He has not got unlimited time — he has one hour.

6.15 p.m.

It should be the other way around; the Minister of Finance should be able to speak for an unlimited time after reply for one hour. But we do not see it that way. We try to be reasonable. The Member who did not speak in the debate will have one hour to wind up, and the Minister of Finance will have one hour to reply.

The Prime Minister has to reply to all the speeches made on the other side by the Shadow Minister of Finance, the Members of St. John, St. Michael South, (Mr. L. E. Sandiford), St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes), St. Philip North, (Mr. W. O. Franklin) St. Philip South, (Mr. H. A. Blackman), St. Michael North, St. James South (Mr. N. K. Simmons) and St. Michael South West (Mr. L. A. Weekes), I think it is and the Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King). He has to reply to all of those speakers in one hour.

After the Prime Minister has presented his proposals, and we have heard the attacks on the Ministry of Finance — because that is where the attack is going

to be coming -- he has to take one hour in reply to try to defend the Government and his Proposals, and we are giving you one hour to wind up. It should be unlimited time, then you would not be complaining.

All we set out to do this evening is to give you an opportunity, eight out of ten Members can address the Chamber and the country, while on our side eleven out of fifteen, taking out Mr. Speaker, who is not in his place because of illness, and the Deputy Speaker, who at that time will be occupying the Chair. This is what we are being taken to task for.

And because of that, we have had a whole background of what went on in Parliament and what did not go on, and how we are abusing the Standing Orders -- the very Standing Orders that were brought in by the Democratic Labour Party Government in 1971, the very Standing Orders that we are still operating under, the very suspension of the Standing Order No. 71. We suspend Standing Orders in here every Tuesday, whenever the Government sees fit, and we see fit on this occasion to suspend this Standing Order.

Asides.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, the Resolution has to be amended anyhow, because paragraph 12 says:

"The Minister of Finance or another Minister shall be entitled to speak in final reply to the debate." That should be "entitled to speak for one hour in final reply to the debate." So it has to be amended. Something has been left out in that paragraph.

I thought the Prime Minister should have the right to come and bring his Budgetary Proposals, if he so desires, at 9 o'clock in the morning, at 10 o'clock in the morning, at 9.30 in the morning or at 10.30 in the morning. Now because he feels that he should bring it at 3.30 p.m., there is a criticism again. But it is his prerogative to bring it when he feels to bring it, at whatever time.

I read in the newspaper that the reason the Budget is coming late is because the IMF has an argument with the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; all of this garbage. Sometimes it really sickens me, and I wonder if it is really worthwhile. The IMF and the Minister of Finance have an argument and therefore the Budgetary Proposals are coming late!

On one occasion, the now Leader of the Opposition had the Budgetary Proposals on television, and he called it a fireside chat. That is how he treated the people of Barbados -- with the fireside chat! A little time one evening on television he told the people what the position

was at the time! Now we hear that the IMF is involved and that is why our Budget is late. Sir, I know that it is going to be this month. I know that for sure.

Sir, I support the Resolution, outside of the amendment, and I personally do not see the argument of the Opposition, as they said in Independence Square, that because of this Resolution we are going to be muzzling them. I do not really see any muzzling of the Opposition in a place where you are free to speak. You get muzzled in Grenada or Cuba. You do not get muzzled in Barbados.

I can walk down the stairs now and hear anybody out there curse me, saying, "loud-mouth Craig" or "big belly Craig", and all of these nice things they say about me. Then you hear somebody say, "Skipper, how are you? How is the family? You mix the bitter with the sweet. You hear about big, ugly King," all that sort of nonsense, "invalid Greaves", "ignorant Blackman", "up-and-down Barrow", "tricky Sandiford," "arrogant Haynes".

Asides.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You do not hear them? I hear them, I know what they call you. Tricky dick, you cannot trust him.

Sir, I can tell you of a certain lady who comes in the Gallery, and when a Member on this side gets up to speak, she "steupes" and throws about her hands. You hear about how sour I look; you hear all these things as if we have not got friends in the Gallery, too.

This is politics, and when we are finished, I have always told the supporters to come in the dining hall and see what is going on, see how we are hugging up and kissing in there, while they are outside cutting each other throats. That is what I dislike, the hypocrisy in public life. The players drinking champagne, Nutrament, and brandy, and the followers, the supporters, are cutting each other throats and burning down houses. That is what I dislike about public life.

You can go outside and hear the most vile things said about you and the family, and in the meantime, the Member for St. Michael West is behind there offering me a cigarette and we are talking about old times. This is how it is, Sir.

I do not see why there should be any argument about the Resolution, and I give it my wholehearted support.

Mr. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I gave way to the right honourable Member for St. John (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow) on a point of order, and, very cleverly, he sneaked in his contribution.

Asides.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I am just saying what my intention was I am not reflecting on the Chair.

I would have given way to the right honourable Member for St. John in any event, Sir, because I respect him. If he has something to say and we happen to get up together, I would value his contribution as being more worthy than mine, so I would take my seat and listen to what he has to say. I also have the advantage of coming back, and if he had made a mistake, I would be able to pick up on it. And, indeed, he did make a couple of mistakes, Sir.

In dealing with this Resolution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Standing Order 31, which has been suspended, refers you to the Standing Order No. 6, "Sittings of the House". In paragraphs 2, 3, and 4, Standing Order No. 6 states the times that Parliament must meet, when they must stop for lunch, when they must stop for dinner, and when they must stop at the end of the evening.

But these Standing Orders, in my view, based on what the honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig) stated, were designed for a Parliament of 24 in 1973. We now have a Parliament of 27, so it stands to reason that if the other three Members represented by both parties are to get an opportunity to make a contribution to the Budgetary Proposals, then certain adjustments will have to be made.

Standing Order 10, Sir, relates to the order of business on the agenda every Tuesday. Standing Order 10 states:

"Unless the House otherwise directs" — those are the operative words — "the business of each sitting day shall be transacted in the following order:...."
6.25 p.m.

Parliament has the power to organise its business as it sees fit, and if we on this occasion see it fit to organise the debate on the Budgetary Proposals in such a way as to give every member of the Opposition an opportunity to speak that is our right.

Indeed, I dare say I would not vote for the Resolution, because it favours the Opposition too much: it leaves out two Members on the Government side. The people of Barbados voted for 17 Members on this side and 10 Members on that side. If two Members on this side are expected to remain silent, then I think it is only fair that two Members on that side should be expected to remain silent. If all the Members on that side should be

allowed to speak, then I stand convinced that all the Members on this side should be able to speak.

This Resolution therefore, in my view, favours the Opposition more than the Government, and I sometimes wonder why it is that the right honourable Prime Minister (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams) goes out of his way to please the Opposition in what I consider to be a very fair Resolution.

When I read the remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) as reported in the *Nation*, I knew it had to be a misrepresentation of what he would have said, because it is quite clear here how the speeches will go down after the Budgetary Proposals.

Sir, when the Minister of Finance delivers his Budget, the Minister seconding the motion will speak for an hour, but not on that day. We come back the following day, and the Opposition spokesman on Finance will speak for as long as the Minister introducing the Budgetary Proposal. Immediately thereafter, the Minister seconding the motion will speak for an hour, and immediately thereafter every other Member will speak for half an hour, and two Members on this side will be left out.

You cannot have it any other way, you cannot have the Members on that side speaking 17 times if we on this side have 17 Members. Excluding yourself, Sir, and the Speaker, we have 15 Members who can speak. We cannot expect that if the 15 of us will speak, equal time will be given to members of the Opposition in terms of them making 15 speeches, but we will give them equal time in terms of each individual Member, a half hour to make his or her contribution.

I find that to be extremely fair. Let me repeat. What I do not find fair is that two Government members on this side will be left out of the debate, and I propose an amendment to this Resolution. I beg to move the following amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

In paragraph 9 at line 3, insert "two Government members."

In paragraph 9 at line 19, insert "two Government members".

So we will have one Government member speaking on the first day and an additional Government member speaking on the second day, which will mean that all 15 Government members will be entitled to speak.

Further, to that, Sir, that the Addendum be amended in paragraph 3, that the time "22.45 hours" be

amended to "23.15 hours" and at paragraph 4 "22.15 hours" be amended to "22.45 hours". This should accommodate Members of Parliament on both sides — all 27 Members of Parliament will be entitled to make their contributions fairly and no one would be left out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in a moment I will repeat the amendment I proposed. Before I do that, let me just point out that in my view the Government has been extremely fair. Last year during the debate on the Budgetary Proposals every member on that side spoke, all ten, and on this side the honourable Members for St. George South (Hon. L. R. Tull), St. George North (Mr. J. G. Odle), the City of Bridgetown (Hon. B. A. Miller), and St. Lucy (Mr. R. E. Brathwaite) did not speak. We were prepared to co-operate. Last year four Members on our side gave up the opportunity to speak. That is how far we went, Sir.

This year, we are asking that two Members on this side should give up the opportunity to speak, and I am saying that is not fair. I would be taking the same stand. Mr. Deputy Speaker, if an attempt were made to silence two Members on the other side. I believe that every Member should be given the opportunity to speak if that Member so desires.

I proposed an amendment, Sir, to this Resolution. I beg to move the following amendment:

In paragraph 9, at line 3, insert "two Government members".

In paragraph 9, at line 19, insert "two Government members".

That the Addendum be amended as well, at paragraph 3, the time "22.45 hours" be changed to "23.15 hours" and at paragraph 4 the time "22.15 hours" should be changed to the time "22.45 hours". This will give an opportunity for all 25 Members, excluding yourself and the Speaker, to make a contribution if they so desire.

The point which the honourable Member for St. James North made in relation to the Westminster model is a fact. I do believe that the honourable Member for St. John is fully aware of the Commonwealth rules. In Westminster, which is the mother Parliament, there exists a Speaker's list from time to time in order to regulate debate. It happens in the Commonwealth, Barbados is not the first place to do it, and we are doing it because we think that if it is properly regulated, then everyone on that side will have an opportunity to prepare, who should speak first, second, third, fourth, right down to the last speaker, and we on this side would have an opportunity to decide who should follow after the Minister seconds the motion.

I think that is very fair, Sir, and in the spirit of co-operation I trust that Members on the other side will see this in the light in which it is meant. We are not in any way trying to stifle or direct traffic in this Honourable Chamber, as the honourable Member for St. John has stated.

6.35 p.m.

Perhaps, Sir, once spoken, twice shy. The honourable Member for St. John, when he was Prime Minister, had a programme on television "The Cabinet Minister speaks" and night after night, week after week, a Cabinet Minister would come on television and speak and this happened to be just before the 1976 General Election. So maybe he is right that the people of Barbados would prefer to see "Days of Our Lives" rather than to see or to hear Budgetary Proposals by the Minister of Finance and to see and hear their parliamentary representatives making a meaningful contribution to this country.

I think, Sir, that the people of Barbados would be interested to hear what the Members on both sides, who they voted for, would have to say on the Budgetary Proposals. I think it is important. It is not the first time in the Commonwealth that debates have been televised. Whenever I travel overseas, I watch the Federal Parliament in Canada on television. I watch debates in the States. Indeed, in the U.K. it is televised. It is nothing new.

We on this side have a powerful story to tell. We are aware only too well that there comes a saturation point and if you overuse that media, the television, it could be as detrimental to you as it can be good. We are convinced that the fifteen Members on this side can handle any argument that the ten Members on that side would have to offer in relation to the Budgetary Proposals.

I now beg to move, Sir, that the proposed amendment be considered.

Mr. J. G. ODLE (St. George North): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I assume that the amendment is in order. I have heard no comment from you in that respect.

In this respect, Sir, I rise to second the amendment in view of the fact that it certainly gives all honourable Members a chance to speak should any honourable Member so wish. I think, Sir, it should deflate the argument which tends to suggest that this Government would want to muzzle the Opposition or to prevent other people from having their say in Parliament.

In a way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is a bit regrettable that this had to come before the House, because it is my view that this is the sort of matter which

both sides could comfortably have sat down and decided and not even have this debate today to the extreme to which it has gone.

Nonetheless, Sir, we all recognize that Parliament is indeed not a Sunday School. We expect these things. It is my view that Parliament has the right and the duty to organize itself and its business. Indeed, the whole basis of parliamentary democracy rests on the fact that Parliament has the power to regulate its business and all that we are doing is seeking to regulate our business.

With those remarks, Sir, I beg to second the amendment.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Resolution starts out by saying that

"Whereas it is appropriate and expedient that This Honourable House should further order speeches for the better organization and administration of debate on the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals....."

I may agree that it is expedient for the Government to do this in defence of its own interest, but I do not believe that expediency should be the sole or guiding principle in determining matters of this nature.

I believe that in matters of this sort, we should be able to rise above party political expediency and look at the total national situation and the position of Parliament as an institution. So the very wording of this Resolution on the question of expediency is certainly putting the matter in terms which would invite the Opposition to be opposed to the proposal, because we are opposed to expediency.

I do not believe, either, that the Resolution is appropriate in the present form. First of all, I believe that it is an affront to the presiding officer of this Honourable Chamber in setting out the matter in this particular way.

Let us understand what is happening. We have a Deputy Speaker in the Chair. It is the first occasion on which he will be presiding over a debate on television relating to the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals; and this is the particular occasion which the Government has taken to introduce rules and regulations and proposals which will take away from the presiding officer the kinds of powers and functions that the presiding officer normally exercises in Parliament. I think this is an affront to the presiding officer, and one which I do not think any presiding officer could accept lightly.

In terms of the Standing Orders, we understand that there is a provision for suspending Standing Orders and

it has been quoted by the Leader of the House, the Member for St. James North.

Standing Order 71 states:

"A motion may be made at any sitting of the House by any Member to suspend any of these Standing Orders;" — this is the part that was not read —

"..... but such a motion may be made only with the leave of the Speaker who must not allow the motion if it appears to him to be an abuse of the rules of the House or an infringement of the rights of a minority of the Members."

We on this side are arguing that the proposals in this Resolution constitute an infringement of the rights of the Members on this side. It appears now, from the speech of the Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. A. Truss) that it is not only an infringement of the rights of the Members on this side, but he considers it — and the Member for St. George North (Mr. J. G. Odle) agrees with him by seconding it — that it is also an infringement of the rights of certain Members over there. So when we say that there is a muzzling, it is a muzzling not only of the Members over here.

Mr. J. G. ODLE: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: But they have just said that it is a muzzling of two Members over there as well.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two Members are on their feet.

Mr. J. G. ODLE: On a point of order. I would want to know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we are debating the amendment or the original Resolution.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Debate is now on the amended Resolution.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We do not have any amendment before us.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: An amendment has been proposed and seconded.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: And circulated? We do not even know what are the terms, just some words read out. How can we deal with it? What is the House coming to? Where is the amendment? You know something? In the debate that is pending, do you know, according to the Resolution, no Member over here can speak on that kind of amendment? That is where the muzzling comes in. You cannot even speak on your own amendment, but I will await the amendment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You cannot speak on any amendment to the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals.
6.45 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member for St. Michael South aware of the amendment which was made by the honourable Member for St. Michael Central?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I heard the honourable Member make an amendment. He proposed an amendment and it was seconded by the honourable Member for St. George North. It is customary in this House for the amendment to be circulated so that we can have the exact terms of the amendment and so that we can see what we are debating. That is normal.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are having a lot of contradictions in terms and behaviour. It is customary for amendments to be circulated, and it is also customary for Budgetary Proposals to be regulated before the appropriate day. I have seen that as well. If the honourable Member is now saying that he cannot deal with the amendment unless it is circulated, then we will have to take the appropriate action to have that amendment circulated before we continue. We can either do that or we can ask the honourable Member for St. Michael Central to repeat the amendment which was proposed and seconded. If the honourable Member will continue, we will circulate the necessary amendment.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in order to speak on the amended Resolution, it is necessary for me to have the words in front of me. I do not see how this House can proceed unless the actual text of the amendment is available to honourable Members. We must have the text of the amendment if that is what is before the House.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be suspended until 7.50 p.m.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

On resumption:

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the honourable Member for St. Michael South was speaking.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am grateful to you, Sir. I now have in my hands the proposed amendment to the Resolution, and from

my observation, it is now clear that the purport of this amendment confirms one of the major points that I have made about this Resolution to the effect that it was muzzling members of Parliament, because this Resolution in itself now, I was speaking on behalf of members of the Opposition, in effect says that certain members of the Government side were also being muzzled and that they should now be given the right to speak.

So when the Prime Minister comes in and makes all kinds of wild charges in relation to statements that I have made, and then his own members come in and propose amendments corroborative of what I have been saying, it only shows and confirms the validity of the points made by Members over here, and in this particular instance, by myself.

I was making the point specifically that it appears to be an infringement on the rights of Members to speak not merely on those grounds, but on the ground that the Resolution specifically states that if a Member moves an amendment, that Member will not be entitled to speak on it.

Let me be accurate in this regard, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At Clause 10 of Section 10 of this Resolution, it reads:

"No motion for an amendment shall entitle any Member to a second speech in the debate".

If a Member speaks on the Resolution dealing with the points raised by the Minister of Finance and also with other points made by Members during the debate, and then believes that the Proposals made should be amended in order to provide better services or a better economic or financial environment for the people of Barbados then what this amendment says is that a Member cannot speak to that amendment.

That is taking away a right that is enshrined in the Standing Orders of this Honourable House, because a Member is not only permitted to speak on his amendment, he is also permitted as the mover of an amendment to have the final word on that amendment. And what this particular Resolution does is to deprive a Member of that right to speak on an amendment specifically, and to that extent, it is muzzling members and depriving them of the right of free speech, which is guaranteed to them under the Constitution of this country and under the law and custom and privileges of Parliament.

I view this very seriously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it appears to strike at one of the fundamental rights of Members of this Honourable Chamber. And when we make these points from over here, they are not made in any effort to be contentious, or not made out of the spirit of the politics of confrontation — they are made from the point of view of recognising that Parliamentary democracy in this country depends on respect

for the law as well as the spirit of democracy. And because the Prime Minister and any other Member gets up over there and makes charges against Members from over here, that is not going to deter us from making the kinds of points that we want to make.

I am one of the Members of this Parliament who believes that if the Government makes a proposal that is beneficial to the people of this country, I can get up and say that, in my view, it is beneficial. If they make what I consider to be an error, I will get up and say so; and the Prime Minister from his eminence can get up and say I am telling lies or whatever kind of charges he may wish to make! That will not deter me! It may cow certain members of his own Cabinet, but that will not deter me from making the point that I wish to make.
8.00 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what was circulated to me, as a Member of Parliament, was a Resolution which indicates that the Minister of Finance will make his Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals and that there will be no time limit on his speech. That is the first speech in relation to these matters.

Speech No. 2 is by the Shadow Minister on this side, who speaks for the same time as the Minister of Finance.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: If he can make it.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Speech No. 3, according to this Resolution that was circulated to me, is the speech by the Minister who seconded the motion, and he speaks for one hour. And then, according to Section No. 9, a Government Member speaks for thirty minutes. That is speech No. 4.

The point that I made was that three out of the first four speeches of the debate are by Members of the Government side, and only one is by the Opposition side. Any two to one defeat in cricket is an embarrassment. Two....

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Two out of five.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Three to one! Three to one! Three Members from the Government side and one from the Opposition. And you are getting over there and saying how fair you are to the Opposition!

I did another scenario. Assume that the right honourable Prime Minister spoke for forty-five minutes in making his presentation. Then, you have the Member of the Opposition limited to forty-five minutes. Then, you could have a Government Member speaking for one hour and then, on top of that, another Government Member speaking for half an hour. So out of those first four speeches, you can get the Government presenting a case

for two hours and fifteen minutes and on the Opposition side it will only be forty-five minutes.

I hear all of this generosity on the Government side, saying how very kind and generous and understanding they are to the Opposition, and the Members over there swallowing it as though it is the Gospel — Matthew, Mark, Luke, John — even Revelation thrown in for it! They are accepting that! How very generous they are to the Opposition!

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we reject that kind of generosity. The first point I want to make is that the Standing Orders right now provide for unlimited speech by the right honourable Minister of Finance and unlimited speech by the person speaking first for the Opposition.

What this particular Resolution does is to limit the speech of the person speaking first for the Opposition. However you look at it, it is limited, and limited to the time that the Member for the Government side speaks.

There is no such limitation now in the Standing Orders. So, far from giving freedom, or more freedom to the Opposition, it is taking away the right of that unlimited speech which is now in the present Standing Orders. And I know that, because, as the honourable Leader of the Honourable House (Hon. L. S. Craig) said, I was a member of that Standing Orders Committee, and so was my colleague, the Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves), Mr. Deputy Speaker. So, when we view this matter, we are looking at it impartially.

There is another importation into this particular debate and it is this, and we ask the question, "Why is it that after the Minister of Finance has made his presentation and the Member speaking first for the Opposition has made his presentation, necessary to create an entirely new situation in which a Minister is given specifically one hour in which to speak?" That particular Minister is given specifically one hour in which to speak.

This is the first time in these kinds of Standing Orders, or in any Parliament that I know of, that this kind of provision is made....that one Minister is given a specific time. But, you know, it is clear; it is clear now to me that the Government is afraid of the presentation that will be made by the Shadow Minister of Finance and is doing everything in its power to try to ensure that the Government attempts to deal with full impact of, that speech,.....which arises out of cowardice.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I may use the hour and make a good speech too.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir. I would like to disassociate myself from the remarks made by the Member, that Members on this side are afraid of the presentation by the Shadow Minister of Finance in the light that we are containing him. I do not believe that at all. I would not associate myself with any political organisation that would be afraid of the Shadow Minister of Finance's reply to the Budgetary Proposals.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not know who is going to get the one hour. I have a feeling that it is the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He has not spoken for so long, they can give him two.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: But then again, it could be the honourable Deputy Prime Minister. I do not know. Seeing what is going on out there now, I am not certain who is going to get it.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I would like to give the hour to Mr. Taitt, with Mr. Speaker in the Chair.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are very serious on this particular matter, and there is a lot more that will be said about it.

An additional point which I wish to make relates to this question of the actual presentation of the speeches. We have a situation in which the Minister of Finance gets up, and if he speaks for forty-five minutes...

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the honourable Members over there are trying to distract me. I do not understand. I mean....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not heard the Members on the Government side saying anything.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Sir.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sandy, the match draw. The cricket match draw, come in out of the sun.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am saying that if we wanted to make any changes in respect of the procedures and arrangements for the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, one particular change that we could consider relates to the delivery of speeches, because the Minister of Finance gets up and reads his speech. He reads his speech.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Minister of Agriculture, too.)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: All other Members are prevented from reading their speeches. And I would suggest that if it is absolutely necessary for the Minister of Finance to read his speech and then to get up and say what a lovely speech and so on it was, there is absolutely no reason, on grounds of fair play and equity and whatever, that any other Member who wishes to read his speech should not be able to do that, too.
8.10 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member suggesting that the custom and the Standing Order of this House be now changed?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am just following the Government, Sir. That is what they are suggesting, and I am saying that if

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Has it not been the custom that the Minister of Finance in delivering his Budgetary Proposals reads his speech and all other honourable Members must speak in accordance with the Standing Orders?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, but they are suspending them.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Has that not been the custom?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you not want to stick to the custom?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: They are changing the laws on the custom. I am saying that if they want to change them, this is an area in which they can be changed. You can suspend this particular Standing Order.

The other matter is one which I feel very deeply about, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is that these particular arrangements strike at the very heart of the way in which parliamentary business should be done. Normally, these matters are arranged through what is called "the usual channels", behind the Speaker's Chair, in which the Leaders of Government Business and of Opposition Business discuss the arrangements, come to some kind of conclusion, and then matters proceed on that basis. Those who have gone on parliamentary courses to Britain, or those who have gathered their information from other sources, are aware that this is how business is done.

In this particular instance, a matter which should be settled, or certainly discussed, between the Government side and the Opposition side is just brought in here, just hot and sweaty like that, and no attempt is

made at discussion or consultation between the leadership on the Government side and the leadership of the Opposition in respect of this particular Resolution.

If I am wrong on this, since I was absent from the House last Tuesday, and maybe the discussions took place last Tuesday - I am not aware of that, but I have not been brought into these particular discussions. I am prepared, if the Leader of the House says that discussion took place, to say that I apologise for that statement, that I was wrong on them! But as the person on this side responsible for parliamentary business and Parliamentary Affairs, I am unaware of any discussions that have taken place in this regard. I think that that is destructive. It is destructive of the kinds of arrangements and relationships that have developed between myself, as the person on this side responsible for Parliamentary Affairs, and the Leader of Government Business and Parliamentary Affairs over there, the Member for St. James North. We have tried to discuss these matters, but in this particular instance, I find that that is destructive.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation, I wonder if the honourable Member is aware that the Leader of the House wrote to the Leader of the Opposition about the matter, and indeed if he is unaware that I have since then held discussions with the Leader of the Opposition about the matter and we have had no response?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I do not know. You all can speak on that. I do not know anything about it, so I am not speaking on that. You all know about a letter? I do not know about any letter! I say that I am speaking about what I know about. That is what I am speaking about and I do not know. Sir, I do not know! The Prime Minister can say when he had his discussions with the Leader of the Opposition! I do not know when those discussions took place! For all I know, that could be tonight or could have been an hour ago! I do not know!

The final point that I am making Sir.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has already exceeded the 30 minutes allocated to him. But I will allow him two minutes to complete his speech.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes Sir. The final point I am making is that I consider that the whole machinery of Parliament has broken down, because we have a Standing Orders Committee and we have this particular assault on the existing Standing Orders, and the Standing Orders Committee set up by this Honourable Chamber has not been called into consultation to consider these particular matters. I find, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is really making a mockery of the whole parliamentary

machinery and mechanisms that we have in here when matters can be handled in this particular manner.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make my contribution on this very important matter, which to me strikes at the very heart of the parliamentary democracy process in this country.

First of all, I would like to advert to the question of a letter being sent to the Leader of the Opposition. To the best of my knowledge, that letter was delivered to the office of the Opposition last Tuesday, when the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) was absent from the House due to illness.

In point and fact, notice of the Resolution was given in this Parliament before the Leader of the Opposition actually reached the House of Assembly on that particular morning. Notice of this Resolution was already given in this Parliament, so there is no question of bringing into this debate any possibility that there was any consultation whether with the Leader of the Opposition or with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, either by letter or by verbal communication, prior to notice given of this Resolution in this Parliament.

I would like to say that it is a testimony to bad organisation, bad administration, that the Resolution is before Parliament at all. I myself, Sir, feel that a Budget debate is such an important debate that no effort should be spared to go through the usual consultative machinery in order to bring some kind of discipline and order to bear on it, provided that it is clearly understood that the objective of the debate is not to score cheap points, but to give Parliament an opportunity for an indepth analysis of the problems facing the country and the extent to which the Financial Statement and the Budgetary Proposals constitute an adequate analysis and an appropriate address to, or redress of, the problems facing the country.
8.20 p.m.

If we allow ourselves to be guided by that single objective, there would be no need whatsoever to come in Parliament with this kind of Resolution at all. It just should not be here!

Sir, about four weeks ago, I heard through the grape vine that certain persons thought it would be a marvellous idea for the Minister of Finance to present his Proposals around 3.00 or 3.30 in the afternoon when people are at work or travelling home, and finish around 5 o'clock, and play back his speech on CBC Television the same night after the news; the entire speech. I heard about four weeks ago that this was the plan, in order that the following day, when I am limited to the same amount of time, and also would have to speak at the same time,

the debate will continue and, since there is only one television channel in Barbados, there would be no opportunity for CBC to replay my speech at prime time.

That is no big thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If that is the kind of game that the government wants to play, let them play it. At the end of the day, they will be judged as severely or as leniently by the population, depending on their performance as a Government, not by what they say, but by the content of the Budget, by the impact of the Budget on the welfare and the lives of the people of Barbados — not by the fact that they have tried to cramp the style of a member of the Opposition.

Sir, that is very interesting. I recall in 1980, when I had to be away from this country on urgent professional business, to appear before the courts in the United States, to give evidence in a matter that had been postponed on three occasions because I could not be there, they made a big thing and said I ran away from the debate. In 1981, it was the boy upon the burning deck all alone, and now in 1983, look how things have changed, the Government is running away from a reply.

Let me tell you something. You have nothing to be afraid of, because if these things stand as they are, I will speak. As a matter of fact, I will go further and say that if it is time you are worried about, I will volunteer now on the Floor of this House to reply to the Budgetary Proposals immediately on the same day on which they are delivered, because the parameters are all there, it is only a matter of whether you tax ketchup or you tax tomatoes. I will reply immediately, without delay, no problem at all, and you will save that two hours or whatever time it is. I offer to do that in 1983, 1984, 1985, and 1986. I am not afraid to face the Government. I do my homework and I know what must be the parameters of any Budget at any given time.

If you think the Minister of Agriculture (Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM) or the Minister of Tourism (Hon. H. B. St. John) will be able to give an effective reply, because they are the only two people who could speak first in the hour allocated, I will lambast them to such an extent that they will have to get up and spend all the time defending their portfolios, so you can stand by for tourism and agriculture getting some powerful lashes.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member will not be allowed to lambast anybody in this Chamber as long as I am sitting in the Chair.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am sorry. I will deal with their portfolios.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will request that the honourable Member then withdraw that word and substitute a word that is more parliamentary in character.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Thank you very much, I will withdraw those remarks. I will say that I will concentrate on a detailed attack on tourism and agriculture, so that one or other of them will have to get up and defend their own performance and leave the Minister of Finance high and dry. That is what I will do!

To continue, Sir, to get back to this Resolution, I believe that one of the positive things I can say about the honourable Minister of Finance and Planning (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams), a lawyer, is that from time to time he shows some respect for parliamentary traditions. But he must recognise that it is not good when you have a situation where you, by a Resolution of Parliament, obliterate the existing traditions of Parliament, and where you tie the speech of the main spokesman for the Opposition to the amount of time allotted to him, when in point of fact it is perfectly possible for him to come in here and say, "Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to lay before Parliament the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals. The taxes are contained in the schedules attached thereto," and take his seat.

He can do that, there is nothing wrong with that! It may not be in the best interest of the country, but he can do that, so that this Resolution starts off by being a bad Resolution in that you cannot have in it a situation where you limit a reply on behalf of the Opposition to the time taken by the Minister of Finance and Planning.

It is okay, Sir, if you want to limit the television time. There is nothing wrong with that, television has nothing to do with Parliament. You can limit the television time and make the television time equal time. But the point is you cannot limit parliamentary time in that way, because if you do so, what you are doing is in fact depriving the Opposition's main spokesman on Finance, or the person speaking first, from putting the case on financial matters for the Opposition.

Sir, I would never be party to any proposal in this Parliament which would limit a Minister of Finance, who carries a heavy responsibility in Barbados, to limit his presentation to Parliament on any financial matter, far less a Budget. I could never be party to that! I do not think it would be fair or just to the country.

So if you believe that the Opposition has a role to play, then you must concede that it is critically important that the principle of unlimited time as far as parliamentary time is concerned remains when the first spokesman for the Opposition replies.
8.30 p.m.

Otherwise, we will find ourselves in a situation where if you brought a Bill before this Parliament to move a dust-bin from one side of Independence Square to

another, the first spokesman from the Government has unlimited time, the spokesman for the Opposition has unlimited time, but in the Budgetary Proposals, the most important debate in this Parliament, in any given year, then you find a limitation being placed on the first spokesman for the Opposition.

We have to be clear about these things. Either we believe in parliamentary democracy or we do not. Either we are going to do down the road towards an executive dictatorship or we are going to try and preserve the supremacy of Parliament. Let us look very clearly at this matter. Let us not get confused about it, because if we allow ourselves to be confused, we may not realize that what we are doing is that, by this Resolution, we may be undermining the whole democratic spirit of Parliament itself.

You might do these things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to suit a given Government in a given situation, but I am a great believer in the principle. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Parliament must remain supreme.

We have had over the years, and I think for the betterment of Parliament, the evolution in this Parliament of an element of specialization where persons concentrate in various fields of activities: you have Ministers on that side holding portfolios and you have shadow portfolios on this side. This has helped parliamentary debates considerably, and the general principle on which we operate on this side is that whoever speaks first for the Opposition, because he has unlimited time, puts together a synthesis of the views of all the Members on this side, all of whom will have an input into his presentation, just as, hopefully, the Members on that side will have some opportunity to make some input into the presentation of the honourable Minister of Finance and Planning.

I presume that Members over there have the opportunity to have that kind of input, so therefore I think that it would be undermining, totally undermining the entire spirit of Parliament, the spirit of a Budget debate and the purpose of a Budget debate if you were to introduce these constraints and also introduce a situation where there can be abuse.

Let us say that the honourable Minister of Finance has the best intentions in the world. Let us say he intends to speak for 2½ hours or 3 hours, or 1½ hours, or something like that. Once this precedent is established, one can recognise that this is likely to continue in the future, and therefore it is necessary for us at all times when we pass legislation not to look at the persons holding office at the given time, but to look and see the extent to which the particular piece of legislation could be abused in the future. That is absolutely important, and that limitation on the first speech, in my view, is pregnant with the possibility of abuse.

Sir, I wish to go a bit further on this one. In this Parliament, Sir, over the years we have had debates in which a lot of people have spoken. The basic fact with which I have been concerned from time to time is that people on that side have been dragged into debate, in order to fill in time; who did not particularly want to speak — and at no time did they address themselves to problems or matters of a budgetary nature. I suspect that there are many Members on that side who would not be motivated to speak in a Budget unless they were forced to do so. That is my suspicion. That is a matter of fact. Let us face it.

A Budgetary Proposal deals, essentially, with economic matters, fiscal matters and monetary matters, and the basic fact is that if I were to look over that side, now, I would see only two people competent even to get up and speak on a Budget. I can see only two at the moment, that is the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite) and the hon. Member for the City (Hon. B. A. Miller). That is why I feel that if you seriously want to reform the whole process of a Budget debate, and if your guiding principle is to get the best possible debate, there are other dimensions that have to be looked into in greater detail and this is a matter where the Debates Committee and the Leaders of the political parties should sit down and trash out this matter, have it properly discussed, come to an arrangement and withdraw this Resolution. This Resolution should not be before Parliament and my feeling is, Sir, that the Resolution should be withdrawn.

I honestly do not feel that the honourable Member for St. Thomas really has his heart in this Resolution. When he was introducing the Resolution, you could see a considerable amount of difficulty and, later on in his speech, an element of confusion as to exactly what were the implications of the Resolution itself. I really do not believe that he would want to proceed on this basis in Parliament, a basis which we on this side consider to be ultimately in breach of the Standing Orders of this House.

Those Standing Orders are made, if I remember, Sir, under Section 50, Subsection 1 of the Constitution of Barbados, and I would like to support the view that there are certain Standing Orders under which we operate which should not be suspended, should not be tampered with. Those Standing Orders that go directly to the freedom of speech and the freedom of Members to speak in Parliament should not be tampered with. That is my own feeling.

I believe that the Government should certainly give a second thought to this Resolution. Think not of today. Think of tomorrow and think way down the line and see if you are doing any justice to the parliamentary process, see whether you are enhancing the democratic process in this way.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there was ever a year in Barbados when this House should have an adequate debate on the Budgetary Proposals and the Financial Statement, I believe that this year is, perhaps, the most important year. The decisions taken in Barbados this year will have long-lasting effects on this community. The Government itself should welcome an opportunity where there can be a fully informed debate on its own Proposals and see in what way it might wish to modify them or otherwise, based on what has been said by members of the Opposition, and by members on their side who participate in the debate.

8.40 p.m.

This is not a time, Sir, to try to put the shackles on free speech in Parliament by means of this Resolution. This is not the time to provide for a contraction of debating period on the Budget. This is not a time to provide for suppression of time for speaking by the Opposition. This is the time when the Government should welcome an expansion of time, an expansive debate by the Opposition.

I do not know whether this is part of the overall adjustment policy throwing the total burden on the Opposition as representatives of the wage earners in the society. The honourable Member for St. Michael South has a very fertile imagination and he sees that as part of the demand management of Parliament. I would not like to go that far, but to make the point, I believe that a detailed examination of the Budgetary Proposals this year would be in the interest of the honourable Minister of Finance.

If I were in his position, I would make sure that the Opposition would have maximum time to speak, because I know there would come a time during the reply or the replies when they would have to stop criticising and come up with constructive proposals or, in the alternate, be damned by the public. I would put the Opposition on the spot not only to criticise, but to tell us what is wrong and tell us what the solutions are.

This is an opportunity. This is the way I would approach it because I believe in Parliament, I believe in the democratic process and, as I said before, the day there is a disappearance of the democratic process in Barbados is the day I will cease to be involved in public life in this country. That is my position in politics and that is why I strive at all times to do my best, that is why I spend so much time trying to do my best in Parliament.

I feel that words spoken in Parliament, although people may rise and try to rebut them, would stick somewhere along the line and when the decision-makers are faced with a particular option, somebody remembers

somewhere along the line, if not by name, that somebody in Parliament did make this point or that point or that point. That is why Parliament is so important.

There is another area, which is an even more flagrant violation of all traditions of every Parliament. As I understand Sir, when an amendment is put before Parliament, Members thereafter are speaking to the amendment until such time as the amendment is disposed of. As a matter of fact, Sir, when the final motions are put, they are worded in such a way that if you are not careful, you might vote the wrong way. But they word it in such a way to make sure that the amendment is disposed of before the substantive motion is put; so what you are speaking to is the amendment.

How can you by Resolution erase, wipe out, destroy, virtually remove from the traditions of this House a system and a principle that have been enshrined over the years, a principle, Sir, which has given rise over the years to opportunities for substantial changes to motions in order to improve motions on many occasions? How can you remove them by a simple Resolution in Parliament like this? You cannot do it! When you have made an amendment to a Resolution, the amended Resolution is what is before Parliament, and therefore you have a right to speak to that amendment. You can reserve your right, but you have a right to speak to the amendment.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has just one more minute to conclude his speech.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Time really flies, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: In one minute's time the honourable Member would have had 31 minutes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I agree with you, but I am batting so nicely and the time is flying.

The situation, Sir, is that as far as I am concerned, if this Resolution is passed in its present form, I will have no further role to play in the debate apart from coming in here and speaking on the second day. I do not see any point coming back in here the day after because I would have no further role to play.

I cannot move an amendment and there is nothing more I can do. We do not usually interrupt on points of order, we do not usually interrupt on points of elucidation, so in point of fact, what you are doing is that the person who should be responsible on this side for the organisation of the whole debating process no longer has any right to speak. When there is a matter of defence and security and we speak, we speak in association with

the person responsible for defence and security and the debate is organised by him, and I am deprived of the right to organise the debate on this side.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government holds out this amendment as worthwhile in that, according to them, it gives more time for the Opposition to speak. There is an old saying, "beware of the Greeks when they bring gifts." I have taken the trouble to look at some of the rules which the amendment seeks to suspend and I start by looking at Rule 30(2) which says:

"In a debate on the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, each Member may speak for 30 minutes provided that this time limit shall not apply to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Leader of the Opposition or the Member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition."

When I look at that rule, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on an objective analysis of it, it seems to say that there is no time limit on the speech made by a Prime Minister, no time limit on a speech made by the Minister of Finance, no time limit on a speech made by the Leader of the Opposition and no time limit on the speech of the Member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition. I would just read it again to make sure I am understanding correctly:

"Provided that the time limit shall not apply to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, the Leader of the Opposition or the member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition."

We have had a position in this country where the person who holds the office of Prime Minister is usually the person holding the office of Minister of Finance, so that when the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in this country makes his Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals, he is speaking once in both roles.

If there is a situation where the Prime Minister is not the Minister of Finance, according to these Rules the Minister of Finance is not bound by the 30 minute time limit, he has unlimited time. The Prime Minister has unlimited time as well, the member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition, who would presumably be the Opposition member with responsibility for Finance, has unlimited time, and, according to these Rules, the Leader of the Opposition as well has unlimited time.

So the first thing which the Resolution seeks to do is to remove the right of the Leader of the Opposition, if he is not the first speaker for the Opposition, to unlimited time. That is a serious curtailment, I suggest, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, a serious abridgement of the right of the Leader of the Opposition in this Parliament.
8.55 p.m.

The office of the Leader of the Opposition is one of the offices which has constitutional recognition in this country, and, it is but right that the Leader of the Opposition should not be restricted in his contribution on such an important debate as the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member is probably not aware that this Section has been construed by the Chair before.

I do not offhand see anybody in the House, except I think, the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) — I am not sure, maybe the honourable Members for St. Michael South and North (Mr. P. M. Greaves) on that side, who were present when it was construed.

The "or" construed disjunctively. The Chair ruled that the expression in 30(1) and 30(2), "Leader of the Opposition or the Member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition" meant one person.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: That is correct.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: That has already been ruled in here. Both cannot speak for an unlimited time.

Take it from me. I was the sufferer. I was the sufferer, because on one occasion, I allowed another Member to speak first, in the belief that I — I wrote these Rules, too — knew what they meant. I was a Member of the Standing Orders Committee that wrote them and the Chair deceived me. It has already been ruled in here....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The right honourable Member cannot say that the Chair deceived him.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Chair put me right, Sir.

Laughter.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I thought I knew what the Rules meant. I argued that the, "or" should be construed conjunctively. As a matter of fact, the honourable Members for St. Michael North and South must have been in the House, because Mr. Peter Morgan revealed, convincingly, that he did not know what

disjunctive and conjunctive meant, because he purported to reply to me without understanding.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: We cannot remember that.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Members would not remember that. They remember it in their hearts, but they do not want to remember it actively.

But I would say this, Sir. If it is considered that the Leader of the Opposition should be subjected to a special time regime, if he had replied to our letter, we would have taken a look at these matters.

I am still open on some of these matters. I do not believe in the middle of the debate, you could give the Leader of the Opposition, any Leader of the Opposition, an unlimited time for a television debate, but it is something we would consider.

If honourable Members would accept the point of order on the basis of my memory and that of other honourable Members, I do assure you that, "Leader of the Opposition or the person speaking first on behalf of the Opposition" does not, according to the interpretation of the Rules of this House, give them both unlimited time. It only gives one of them unlimited time.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: He is right. He is right on that one.)

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I take the word of the right honourable Member for St. Thomas. It seems that the honourable Member for St. Michael North has confirmed that. But I must confess that it does seem a strange interpretation of the Rule as it stands. And that shows the prime necessity for the Standing Orders Committee of this Parliament, and this Parliament itself, to get down to the business of dealing with these Rules in a proper manner.

I do not know, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Parenthetically, I heard the honourable Member for St. Michael South ask if you are bound by these Rulings. He did not put it in that form. He said something else, which I do not think I can repeat at this stage.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Tradition has it that Rulings made by the Chair must be followed until such time as it is deemed necessary to have a new ruling.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am inviting Your Honour, at this time, to feel it necessary to make a different ruling on this matter, because objectively on analysis, when one looks at the Rule as it stands, clearly, as it is written, it does give the Leader of the Opposi-

tion, as well as the Member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition, unlimited time.

A lot of my argument would have been addressed to that matter because I would have gone on to contend that when one looks at Section 71, which deals with suspension of Standing Orders and which states in essence that:

"A motion".....

for suspension

..... "may be made only with leave of the Speaker who must not allow the motion, if it appears to him to be an abuse of the rules of the House or an infringement of the rights of a minority of Members."

If that rule could be interpreted — and as I submit, it should have been interpreted — to read that the Member speaking first on behalf of the Opposition as well as the Leader of the Opposition had unlimited time, then it would clearly have been an abuse of the Rules of the House and an infringement of the rights of a very important functionary in Parliament in the person of the Leader of the Opposition.

I go back to my premise that the Government's point is that the Opposition is given more time as a result of the motion now before this Honourable House. Mr. Deputy Speaker, on closer analysis, that is not necessarily so, because what you are doing in fact is limiting the right, and you are in fact limiting the right of the principal member of the Opposition who speaks first on the motion.

So although you provide for an extra half hour at the end of the debate — you provide for an extra half hour because you are giving the person speaking last on behalf of the Opposition, the right to speak for one hour; so, in fact, you are giving the Opposition an additional half hour — you do this by limiting the right of the principal spokesman for the Opposition at the beginning. He may speak for more than half an hour, and we have a spokesman on this side who is capable of speaking for much longer than that.

So you are not giving the Opposition any more time in that, at best, you can say that the Opposition would be in at least no better position by having more time. But it is in fact restrictive in that the principal spokesman is circumscribed in his right to spend as much time as he wishes in his reply.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, if the honourable Member would give way — I am on a point of elucidation. Perhaps, I did not entirely make it clear in

my speech, but I would like to elucidate. I will have just to stretch my point out a little bit, Sir.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, with his well known, deep and pervasive interest in himself, did pick out this point as the only point which seemed to be worthy of mention, plus the possibility, evidently, that he will be deprived of a second speech. He mentioned it to me personally with others present in the dining room.

Since I did suffer once from what he described as "the action of an unscrupulous Minister of Finance," his speaking for a very short time and then sitting down, I indicated then, remembering the occasion on which the Budget lasted for only thirty-seven minutes, that we would concede some minimum time which he would be allowed to use, an hour, two hours, three hours, whatever he thinks desirable.

If the honourable Member wants to move an amendment to say, "shall speak for not longer than the speech of the Minister of Finance or for three hours, whichever is longer," whatever he thinks necessary.....

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: You will have a problem there.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: No, I am not drafting the amendment, but I believe the Government will accept an amendment to give permission to the first speaker on behalf of the Opposition to speak, in any event, not less than three hours, whatever it is.

I am obliged to the honourable Member for St. Michael North.

I believe the Government would accept such an amendment, having been put under the lash, because that is the occasion on which Mr. Peter Morgan turned to Mr. Gladstone Holder and told him to switch off the cameras. I continued to speak after the 37 minutes were over. He said to stop the cameras running, and he tried to stop me from speaking.
9.00 p.m.

Since I have suffered at the lash, and I use the words of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, an "unscrupulous action", I am quite willing to protect future Opposition leaders from this. I do not expect to be in that position. I believe that I am going to retire as Prime Minister. I certainly and fully intend to, but we can accept that point.

But what we cannot accept is anybody speaking twice because an amendment is moved. That has never happened in here. I have never known anybody to speak

twice in here. In other words, an amendment moved and everybody who have spoken already speaks all over again. I have never known that and it will not happen, not while we have a majority here.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member must have forgotten that last year I moved an amendment which was seconded by the honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The honourable Member for St. Thomas was elucidating a part of his speech because of the matter raised by the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central. The honourable Member is now trying to make a second speech under the pretext on a point of order.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If the honourable Member will allow me to elucidate further, this is in the direction of an accommodation. If he looks at paragraph 11, it says:

A member of the Opposition who has not already spoken in the debate shall be entitled to speak for one hour in reply." If you want to remove the words "who has not already spoken in the debate", I do not mind that, because that would accommodate the point.

What I am trying to say is that we are not going to have a repetition of a situation that led to a breakdown of law and order in Guyana, when at the end of four or five days of debate an amendment was moved and the whole Opposition proposed to speak a second time. In the uproar that followed, the Speaker expelled Dr. Jagan and three of his members from the House, which were sufficient to give Burnham a majority and overthrow the Government, which led to the situation today. That is exactly what happened in Guyana on a Budget Speech. An amendment was moved and everybody proposed to speak all over again, and so great was the uproar that the Speaker had the opportunity to chase out the majority and put the minority into power.

If the honourable Member wishes to change, that, in my view it will hamper the Honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) or the Leader of the Opposition (Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow), but it is no part of our duty to help the Democratic Labour Party promote persons other than the honourable Member for St. Michael South. You know what happened two weeks ago!

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am obliged to the right honourable Member for St. Thomas for presenting us with the opportunity to move an amendment

to the Resolution, but let me assure the right honourable Member that I have no intention of moving any amendments to the Resolution. The only amendment that I would in fact move is that the Resolution be abandoned entirely. That is the amendment that I would move!

But the point of importance which I want to make is that we are not concerned about amending this Resolution before this Honourable House because we do not believe on this side that the order of speeches should be regulated, or that any attempt should be made to regiment the order of speeches in the way in which this Resolution seeks to do it.

I would like to ask the right honourable Member for St. Thomas what is the mischief, so to speak, that the Resolution is directed to curing? What is the problem? What confusion has existed in previous debates on the Budget? What problems have arisen which are problems which do not arise on every occasion that we debate matters? Are there any problems that are so pressing and so critical that we need a Resolution to regularise and regiment the order of speeches?

The essence of Parliamentary debate is that there should be a free flow of debate between Government and Opposition. Strategic considerations can come in for one reason or another, and a member of the Government side or on the Opposition may not want to make a contribution at a particular time. We on this side believe very strongly that that freedom of debate should continue, freedom to employ whatever strategy you choose to employ from time to time, and we feel that to regiment the debate in the way it is now sought to regiment it would detract considerably from the whole thrust of parliamentary debate.

So what the Resolution in its present form does is to effectively control the Opposition. From the very beginning, the Opposition is controlled, because the Opposition has to be limited and directed by what the Government does. The point of reference is the Minister of Finance. Everything centres on him. As the Chairman of the Duffus Commission said, "All roads lead to the Prime Minister." So once the Minister of Finance has made his statement, immediately the principal spokesman for the Opposition is subject to control, because he cannot exceed the Prime Minister. He is limited by that! From there on, the Minister who speaks next on behalf of the Government is being given additional time. So that additional half hour which the Minister who is speaking first after the Prime Minister is given effectively, neutralises the extra half hour which the last spokesman for the Opposition has at the end of the debate. So there is no additional time.

Aside

Mr. M. A. KING: So what? You said, "so what?" So why not leave it exactly as it is and let us carry on with the debate? There are no major problems as far as I am concerned with the debate on the Budget. The debates on the Budget have not been dogged with any major problems over the last two years, and I do not see why the same procedure which existed in relation to those debates cannot continue in this present debate.

With those few comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I conclude by once again reiterating that we on this side find it extremely difficult to support this Resolution as it stands.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that you will permit me, as I join in this debate, to quote from a document which has been familiar to parliamentarians for centuries. I have in my hands, Sir, a copy of Erskine May's *Parliamentary Practice*, the 18th Edition. At page 70, under Privilege of Freedom of Speech, it says:

"Necessity of Freedom of Speech:

Freedom of speech is a privilege essential to every council or legislature. Its principle was well stated by the Commons, at a conference on 11 December 1667, the conference which resulted in the reversal of the conviction in 1629 of Sir John Eliot and others: and there is a sub-quote "No man can doubt," they said, "but whatever is once enacted is lawful, but nothing can come into an Act of Parliament, but it must first be affirmed or propounded by somebody so that if the Act can wrong nobody, no more can the first propounder. The members must be as free as the houses; an Act of Parliament cannot disturb the state; therefore the debate that tends to it cannot; for it must be propounded and debated before it can be enacted."

I may quote from that document again later, Sir, but I think it is necessary in this Parliament to remind honourable Members that what we on this side are seeking to re-establish in their minds is nothing short of the very basis on which this whole parliamentary system exists.

I wish to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that any attempt, however remote, however minute, on the part of a majority of this Parliament to erode or to seek to erode what may be perceived by the rest as a privilege of Parliament, is the beginning of a breakdown of our total democracy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the risk of boring Your Honour, and at the risk of stating what is trite science, no democracy can exist if the persons in that democracy, who are supposed to be the leaders in the propounding of that democracy, find, themselves, that they themselves

cannot operate freely, democratically or in a system in which each single person in the group feels that he has rights and that those rights are being protected; and that he has freedom and that that freedom is being protected.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Honourable Chamber has been in existence since 1639, and one of the fundamental aspects of its existence, as has been adumbrated recently in a decision by another Deputy Speaker, was that it had the right to regulate its own procedures. Inherent in that right, Sir, has been a concept of parliamentary privilege that has aped the British parliamentary system in its entirety.

It has been the pattern that, whenever difficulties arise, finally those responsible for the business of the majority would get together with those responsible for the business of the minority, and together they would solve whatever was the problem perceived through the usual channels.

Time and time again in this Honourable Chamber, we have heard His Honour the Speaker saying that we must not waste the time of this Honourable House, these are matters which ought to have been discussed and debated and decided behind the Speaker's Chair. Suddenly in the year 1983, it has become necessary for Parliament to seek to legislate how Parliament will speak in a debate concerning the Budgetary Proposals.

The preambular paragraph of this Resolution is in many ways embarrassing. It begins:

"Whereas it is appropriate and expedient that this Honourable House should further order speeches for the better organisation and administration of the debate on the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when was it determined? Where did it happen? How did it happen that we need better organisation and administration of the debate on the Annual Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals? Is the administration of that debate falling down at the point of the presiding officer? So far as I know, Sir, except for one personal experience, which the thrust of this speech does not require me to elaborate on, I am totally unaware of any difficulty which has arisen at the level of the presiding officer during the annual debate.

I am aware that on one occasion I raised the question as to whether it is desirable that this Honourable Chamber be transformed on those two days to nothing more than a television studio. I am aware that, on more than one occasion, I have raised the question whether it is desirable at all for us to suspend the normal operation of Parliament during those two days.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it is that all 27 of us must make a speech on television to the people of this country, why do we not arrange for a series of broadcasts from the studios of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation? Why do we not agree that we will fix the times, the Prime Minister can start in prime time and each of us would book a time at CBC, we would go up to the studios and we would make a speech for half hour to the nation?

But for the people whom we are trying to enlighten, and for all the young people in this country who we would hope would aspire to replace us in this Place at some time in the future, when they come face to face with Parliament through the television channels, what we are showing them, I submit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a sham. During those two days we are not Parliament any more, we become a television studio, and, unfortunately, the rules of Parliament had tended to be seen on those occasions as secondary to the points of view propounded especially by the Government.

For those reasons, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it may have been in the minds of the Prime Minister and his majority that since on the last two or three occasions we have had televised debates in this Chamber, the ten members of the Opposition had been seen by the public as having been superior to the 17 Members on the other side, it may very well be in his perception that there is need for better regulation. If what is proposed is not regulation of speech in the classic sense of the word, then there has never been regulation of speech!

It cannot be that we who go to the hustings and tell the people that we wish to represent their interest, when the people see the cameras turned on Parliament all they see is 26 persons, maybe 24 and a lady, who are sitting watching while one other person is delivering a speech. There is no cut and thrust of debate, there is no attempt if one honourable Member makes an error to put that error straight at the time it occurs, because we are under heavy manners.

But even as that has occurred, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have tended to constrain ourselves and restrain ourselves because we feel that an accommodation has been reached between the two sides. Never has any honourable Member, certainly on this side, come to feel that he was under an obligation thrust upon him by a Resolution of this House. Now, Sir, we hear that it is appropriate and expedient for this Honourable House to further order its speeches. Expedient for whom, Sir? What do we mean by expedient?

9.20 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when first I met the word "expedient", it was as a young boy learning the Catechism. When one was learning the Catechism in the

Anglican Church one came across the word "expedient" and when one examined the word one discovered that it meant "imminently convenient".

It is convenient for us to further order speeches? Is it that the presiding officer does not have control of the House anymore, Sir? When they say "to order speeches" is it that we are such an unruly bunch and we have been so ill-mannered in respect of the presiding officer that it has become necessary for us to legislate? What exactly do these words mean? For whom is it expedient that speeches to be further ordered?

Is it expedient for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation? Are we trying to avoid the spectacle when the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, which was supposed to have been turned off, was turned off during a similar exercise and yet the people of Barbados were able to hear the then Leader of the Opposition, believing that he was speaking to Parliament, speaking to the nation at large making an apology to Parliament? Is that the expediency that we are dealing with, Sir, to ensure that the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation or the Government Information Service can operate effectively?

It cannot have anything to do with Parliament. Parliament is here to do the people's business. We hear that so often, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that sometimes we wonder if there are not persons who believe that no business is done in this Honourable Chamber.

I heard the Prime Minister say something towards the end of what he claimed to be a point of elucidation, which has led me to wonder if at the back of this Resolution is not something which is more fundamental to the political life of this country. He talks about four honourable Members in Guyana being dealt with in a particular way so that there could be an overthrow of the Jagan Government and so that Burnham could get a majority.

Now, my experience with the Prime Minister leads me to believe that that particular matter finding a level in his head is indicative of some thought process concerning the disarray in his own party. I believe that this Resolution has something to do with the Prime Minister's own thoughts as to the degree of reliability which he might be able to put on any motion which might arise during the course of this Budget this year.

Since there have been revelations of a certain kind, which have taken Government members by storm and by surprise, the Prime Minister may very well be wondering if there may be further revelations which may be coming, which may lead some of his members to join with the 10 from this side and finally bring the Government down. That is the only reason one can explain this clause which seeks to make sure that during that particular debate,

which is being televised to the people at large, there shall be no other introduction of anything which would allow a member to speak other than on the Budget. How can anyone explain that?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, they cannot be serious when they expect us to accept that we would straight-jacket ourselves to the point where, during the course of a legitimate sitting of this Honourable Chamber, we could not raise any matters whatsoever, except what is encompassed in this Resolution. This Resolution seeks to make sure that only that which is ordained by the Prime Minister is dealt with on that day.

I would like also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to ask what is the special consideration which has informed the Prime Minister that his Deputy Leader must have an hour? What is it? We have had Standing Orders in this House let me speak of the ones I know. These Standing Orders have been in existence for at least 10 years. They have made provision for all Members other than the principal speakers to speak for half an hour. Is it that the Deputy Prime Minister has been so badgered by the Prime Minister in more recent activity that he feels constrained to throw a special spot to the Deputy Prime Minister?

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But you have not written me any letters. If you had written me any letters you would have sent them directly to me, because you could not send them to anybody connected with me.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Your lawyer is going to write me? You have to come in here now and see if you can put me off, because I am on a line that you particularly do not like.

I have sought to find the philosophy behind this extra hour which is being given to the seconder of the Resolution and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can only find any kind of rationale for this hour in the concept that it is the Prime Minister wish to demonstrate beyond a shadow of doubt that the Deputy Prime Minister is more equal than other Members on his side. If he does that, like an equation if you change one side you have to change the other side that accounts for the offer of an extra hour to the last speaker over here.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do not wish any extra hour over here. What has to be said about that Government during a Budget debate can be said in 15 minutes. Indeed, it can be said in five minutes. It is so well-known to the entire population that the Government is such a failure, Sir, that it does not now require anyone to speak

for an hour or two hours to drive home the fact of what the problem is in the Government.

One has only to observe the Government in action and one can recognize that the Government has problems. The Government is in trouble, the Government is in disarray, so let him keep the extra half an hour which he seeks to give us. Let him not add an extra half hour to the seconder of the Resolution over there.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member talks about 1977. I have never said it on the Floor of this House, Sir, but what the honourable Member, perhaps, would not wish to say is that I was perfectly well until I had a glass of water just before I went to deliver that particular speech. I never said it in here, but I wish to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and I will go no further at this time — that I was perfectly well until I had a glass of water before I made that particular speech. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can tell you now, Sir, that I made that speech hardly able to recognize the Speaker in the Chair — and I was only a few yards away! This was my physical condition and no point of order can change that.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order: Is he accusing his colleagues who may have brought the water for him? Is he accusing the Marshal who may have brought the water for him. Or is he accusing the caterer of putting something in the water which he used that made him ill? Now, this is a very serious accusation. I am amazed to hear this.

9.30 p.m.

It is either (a) the Marshal of the House who normally would bring a glass of water, — I know he has brought soda and gin with lime for the Prime Minister — or (b) the caterer or the caterer's staff, or (c), one of his colleagues, and I must confess I am very surprised and amazed to hear the accusation made that after taking a glass of water he became ill. My perception of that is that somebody put something in the water for him. That is a very serious thing.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am telling you about my condition. I really am totally disinterested in his perception. I am telling you as a matter of fact. I have never said this on the Floor of this House. I said it to one of my colleagues and I will say for your information.

I did not get the water from my colleagues or from the Marshal, but that is immaterial. Since the Prime Minister chooses to talk in terms of 1977, I believe it was, I am saying that I was perfectly well. I had gone through an entire day and then I had a glass of water just before I spoke, and during that particular speech, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, I could hardly recognise the Speaker. I do not have to prove anything.

(A VOICE: It isn't fair!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It isn't fair? It happened to me. It is nothing to do with fairness. I am telling you it happened to me in this Honourable Chamber. Do not tell me about fairness! I had a glass of water and after that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for about the next 45 minutes I could not tell what was going on, but I weathered the storm. I remember very well.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If they did not succeed then, they cannot succeed now.

The Prime Minister has never felt constrained to make a spectacle of it, and therefore I am saying it for his information so that he will understand and know exactly what happened to me.

Furthermore, I will say this in response to the Prime Minister. He said that arrangement had been made for an hour's speech. It is not true. In 1977, no arrangement was made for an hour's speech for the last person responding. But if he says arrangements were made, let me tell him now that I never was told about any hour's speech, and the Speaker gave me the same half an hour; so nobody told the Speaker either. You can check this.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation, the honourable Member knows that the Speaker never called him home at all. He started to look at the Speaker after about forty minutes. I am sorry if he was not told about the hour.

In fact, our experiences on that occasion are part of what has led to the Resolution now, because we were quite willing, informally, to allow Government, Opposition, Government, Government, Opposition and so on, and allow the last speaker on behalf of the Opposition to have his say. We were perfectly ready.

I am sorry if he did not know that he was supposed to have an hour. It was even written down on a handwritten piece of paper which the Leader of the Opposition saw, because it was in my hand-writing. That piece of paper was bandied about here.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I stick to what I say. The honourable Member has confused himself with the following year perhaps, but in 1977 when Frederick Gladstone Smith was Leader of the Opposition, there was no extra hour given to anybody at the end of any debate, and the Record will show that the Speaker himself told me during that debate that I have to wind up.

Let him send for the Record. It would show that the Speaker himself said that I had two minutes to wind up. I recall that very vividly, so I would not allow the Prime Minister's faulty memory - I will put it down to faulty memory - to let the Record in here show that during that debate somehow I had an hour and could not last through the hour.

Furthermore, I well remember that the Prime Minister himself, the honourable Member for St. James and a whole line of the front bench at the time barracked me from the beginning of that speech. It was my impression, but then I was not well, Sir, that the Speaker was getting tired by that time. I will leave it at that. I well recall that, so let not the Prime Minister in this moment seek to suggest that something special happened on that occasion.

The point I am trying to make is this: even during that time the debate was done on informal lines, and since that time we have had informal arrangements for the debate. On one occasion, the Opposition was not satisfied with something and the Opposition walked out. On another occasion, the Opposition allowed the question to be put and the Prime Minister had to be sent for, and there was a situation in which it was said that the only speech that would be allowed thereafter was the Prime Minister's speech which came late in the evening. All of these things happened, but we went to the people after that and the people made decisions concerning the Barbados Labour Party and the Democratic Labour Party.

I make this point to say this: there was no need for legislation at that time. All of these things happened. The Opposition felt aggrieved, the Opposition felt that they had been unfaired on one occasion, but no one sought to have legislation. I am making the point, as I started, that this is an area of operation which ought to be dealt with in the traditions of Parliament.

Now I am disappointed, and I say this genuinely, because whatever else I have said about the Prime Minister - and I have said some very mean things about the Prime Minister inside and outside of Parliament - I have always said that he is a parliamentarian. I have always said that the right honourable Member for St. Thomas is one of the members who has indicated that (a) he understands Parliament, (b) that he likes it and (c) that he will

seek to uphold the traditions of Parliament. I am disappointed that it is that right honourable Member who now finds it expedient and appropriate to move a Resolution to control debate of the Budgetary Proposals in this Honourable Chamber.

There has to be some reason. It is different in pattern from what we have known. We have heard the honourable Member in here on more than one occasion saying that he wants to see us uphold the traditions of Parliament. There must be some reason why on this occasion the Government finds it expedient and appropriate to pass a Resolution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, under no circumstances can I agree to a Resolution of Parliament regulating the procedure of Parliament in this Budgetary debate in this way. I could not possibly agree to it, and I am grateful that none of my colleagues on this side will find it possible to agree to it, because, Sir, we feel that if we, just once, agree to this, next week or four weeks from now there will be another Resolution on some other matter concerning Parliament.

We are not supposed to debate the other place. What happens up there is their business, but what happens to us as a Parliament, not only this House, is of concern to us as a political party. We have noted that when the Democratic Labour Party perfected a tactic that had been initiated by the Barbados Labour Party when they were in Opposition in the Other Place, the Barbados Labour Party perfected the particular tactic; the Democratic Labour Party used the tactic effectively - and the Prime Minister was heard to say to his Senators how they could allow two members to out-manoeuvre all nineteen of them, we see that they regulated themselves into a position where speeches that were unlimited were suddenly reduced to two hours.

What the Prime Minister should bear in mind is that if, perhaps, the Minority Leader in the Other Place had not been restricted to two hours, he might not have felt restrained to zero in on that famous letter, which the Prime Minister demonstrated his capacity for invective, his capacity to interfere in other Ministries, his capacity to humiliate the Deputy Prime Minister, and a number of other capacities which, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this debate does not call for at this time.

But let there be no hurricane in this Chamber. The Prime Minister cannot bring any Resolution into this Chamber and do the kind of work, the devastation, akin to a hurricane. We in this honourable Chamber have got to make sure that we protect those ancient rights which the Speaker asks for every time a Session of this Parliament begins.

9.40 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am of the view that despite all of the difficulties we have had on both sides of the House from time to time, this will be a signal to the people of Barbados that we, as a Parliament are incapable of discussing matters concerning ourselves in a proficient and humane way and coming to a conclusion. This will be a sad part of the history of Parliament if this Resolution, because of the numbers on the other side, is passed.

I can only say that, as a matter of conviction and as a matter of political commitment, I could not support it, and I am grateful that none of my colleagues on this side will be able to support it either.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. P. M. GREAVES rose.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, if the honourable Member would just give way, I beg to move, Sir, that further consideration on this Resolution be now postponed.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move, Sir, that this House do now stand adjourned until Tuesday, April 9, 1983 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
8.45 p.m.

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