
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, April 16, 1985

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

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Speaker)
His Honour R. E. Brathwaite, (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. S. Craig, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House)
Hon. H. B. St. John, Q.C., LL.B., (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance, Planning and International Transport)
Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, (Minister of Education)
Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, (Minister of Housing and Lands and Minister of Trade and Industry)
Mr. J. G. Odle, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. V. L. Johnson, M.A., (Minister of Transport and Works)
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, Sport and Community Services)
Mr. L. L. Sisnett, (Parliamentary Secretary Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of International Transport)
Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, M.A., M.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs)
Hon. A. Truss, (Minister of Tourism and the Environment)
Mr. O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.), (Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office)

Prayers were read by Mr. R. E. Brathwaite.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Monday, March 18, 1985.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the Minutes of the meeting of Monday, March 18, 1985 be taken as read.

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

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I am in receipt of Accounts and Statements for the Months of January and February, 1985, as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On behalf of the Prime Minister I am commanded to lay the following:

The Leave Passages (Amendment) Order, 1985.

The Landlord and Tenant (Registration of Tenancies) (Amendment) Regulations, 1985.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I am commanded to lay the following:

The Road Traffic (International Circulation of Motor Vehicles) (Fee for International Drivers' Licence) Order, 1985.

The Road Traffic (Fee for Driving Licence and Learner's Permit) Order 1985.

The Road Traffic (Road Tax, Registration Fee and Permits) (Amendment) Order, 1985.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On behalf of the Minister of Labour, Social Security and Sport, I am commanded to lay:

The National Insurance and Social Security (Non-Contributory Old Age Pensions) (Amendment) Regulations, 1985.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

The Leave Passages (Amendment) Order, 1985.

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at St. Lawrence, Christ Church.

A Bill to amend the Customs Act.

A Bill to amend the Pensions (Prime Minister) Act.

A Bill to amend the Retiring Allowances (Legislative Service) Act.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

On separate motions of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN the following Bills were read a first time.

A Bill to amend the Customs Act.

A Bill to amend the Pensions (Prime Minister) Act.

A Bill to amend the Retiring Allowances (Legislative Service) Act.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to give notice that the Reply to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 10, 17 and 21 are now ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

PUBLIC ENTERTAINMENT ACT, 1985 – CONTINUED

Order No. 1 was called – To move that the House resolve itself into Committee on the Bill to consolidate and revise the laws relating to the keeping of places of public entertainment and relating to the imposition of tax on entertainment to which the public is admitted on payment of money.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. 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.

Clauses 1 to 16 inclusive were called and passed.

Mr. B. M. TAITT and Dr. R. C. HAYNES entered the Chamber and took their seats.

Clause 17 was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move, Sir, that Clause 17 do now stand part.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is..... The honourable Member for St. Michael West. Clause 17.

Aside

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: You had better take Clause 18.)

Aside

Laughter

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Why do you not wait for the other Clause?

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, my entry into the House was by a very circular route. That accounts for our getting in at the hour we did.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Call the Clause!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If you shut off the House and do not tell anybody you are going to shut off the House, how do you expect me to come up?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that..... Please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: "The Minister responsible for Finance may make regulations

- (a) specifying the records to be kept and the returns to be made to the Commissioner in respect of the collection of entertainment tax;"

It is clear that the Government is not going to recommit any of the clauses that have gone, and I am wondering if the Prime Minister is going to make regulations to allow all of the small dance keepers to be exempted from the nuisance, or the apparent nuisance, which this

Bill will bring. You will recall that we raised this question. I am not aware whether the Minister responsible for Finance has responded to it, and I am asking him, on this clause, whether he is going to be making regulations relating to all of those hundreds of small dance keepers and other such entertainment in the country. I wonder if he could respond to that.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Clause 19, as soon as you are ready, Sir.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Clause 17. Yes. Mr. Chairman.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: We are at Clause 18, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, no. We are at Clause 17.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: We are at Clause 17. The honourable Member does not know what is going on.

Aside.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, Clause 17 is the clause we are dealing with.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Clause 17 is the clause I am going to speak to, whether the honourable Member for St. James North.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES:.....likes it or not.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:.....proceed to make his contribution on this.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.
12.25 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I find it very difficult to understand how this Government, which seems to be bent on taxing every single activity that takes place in Barbados.....

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I cannot make a Seconding Reading speech, because I was not here for the Second Reading speech. That is straightforward common sense. There is no point in saying that. The point I am trying to make is that this Government is so bent on squeezing every single cent out of the poor that they are not prepared to look at this clause.....

Asides.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Clause 17 does not relate to squeezing every cent out of the poor.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Order!

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It seems impossible for me to even develop my case in addressing a particular clause. That is all I am trying to do.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please, just a minute.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES:..... to set the framework in which I am going to suggest that certain types of activities should be excluded from this clause.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No, you cannot. The honourable Member must understand that we are in Committee, and the honourable Member must understand that we will not be entertaining any Second Reading speech at all.

All other members must know that we will deal with the clauses one after the other. Please do not interrupt, the Chairman must hear in silence.

The honourable Member may make his contribution, which I shall be very pleased to hear, but there will be no Second Reading speeches or attempt to make a Second Reading speech.

Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central were ordered expunged from the Record by the Chairman.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is on a point of order. Please take your seat.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, you have asked the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central to withdraw his remarks, which I understand, have insulted the Chair at the highest level. He said that he withdrew the remarks, but stands his ground. As far as I interpret that, if he withdraws his remarks, but is of the same opinion and he is, he is implying that although you have asked him to withdraw the remarks that he made he sees nothing wrong in saying them. I think it is very unfair and undignified for the honourable Member to impute such motives to Your Honour, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I take the point raised by the Honourable Leader of the House. I would also want to warn honourable Members that they must be careful less they find themselves in breach of the privileges of the House.

Please continue.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I assure you that I will never be in breach of the privileges of this House, and when I say I stand my ground, I simply mean that I continue to speak on my feet as directed and allowed, and permitted by you, Mr. Chairman.

In respect of Clause 17, this clause says that the Minister may make regulations:

- (a) specifying the records to be kept and the returns to be made to the Commissioner in respect of the collection of entertainment tax.

It is to that specific matter that I wish to address myself. What I am saying,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: May I warn the honourable Member that he must not deal with any principle involved.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not dealing with any principle. What I am saying is that these regulations specifying the records to be kept and returns to be made to the Commissioner in respect of the collection of Entertainment Tax should not, under any circumstances, be applied to a person who holds a dance under a roof in their backyard to try to pay the taxes levied on them by the Government, or to try to pay their children's school fees, or to buy shoes for the children to send them to school. I am saying that it is grossly unfair – I am talking about the application of this regulation – and it must be amended.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow myself to be drawn into the debate – I certainly will not – but I believe that I should inform the honourable Member that the Bill deals with places of public entertainment and there are definitions, and I believe it would solve his problem and help greatly in the work of the Committee if he looks at the definitions, reads them and sees what the Bill is all about. It would save a lot of time.

While I agree that Parliament is a talking shop and we must talk and argue things out, I cannot allow the debate to proceed in this manner which, in my view as Chairman, is a waste of our time. Please confine your remarks to the details of the clause. We are dealing with the clauses and what is stated in the clauses. I am not accepting any contribution which borders on matters of principles and thereby a Second Reading speech.

I am very clear on that. Let us all co-operate, honourable Members.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise a question in regard to your ruling, Sir. May I proceed on behalf of the Opposition?

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We will hear the honourable Member with respect to Clause 17. That is what I am going to hear from the honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I thought that it was customary, but if that is out, all right.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To continue, Mr. Chairman, I believe that I have a duty when legislation comes before this Parliament to examine it and see in what way it will affect the public, and no matter what the honourable Members on the opposite side will try to do, I will continue to examine this from the perspective that I see.

I have dealt with (a) of Clause 17, namely that any regulations should exclude all those poor people in these matters. The second point I am trying to make is in respect of Clause 17, (b). It says that the Minister of Finance may make regulations:

- (b) in respect of the supply and use of stamps or stamped tickets.

It would seem to me that if this provision is kept within this clause, it is going to cause many undue burdens on many poor people who seek to use public places for entertainment for the purposes of getting a few extra dollars for essentials. I would suggest that that particular part (b) should be omitted.

I now turn to 17(c), the Minister responsible for Finance may make regulations:

- (c) relating to the use of tickets for the admission of more than one person and to the calculation of the entertainment tax thereon and the payment of the tax on the transfer from one part of an entertainment area to another.

12.35 p.m.

This seems to me to be virtually a regulation which would be virtually impossible to implement. It is going to cause a lot of confusion to people, and people are going to be quite unsure as to whether they are operating within the ambit of the law. Even as it reads, it causes nothing but confusion.

The next regulation, says:

“controlling the use of barriers or other devices for admission to entertainment areas and providing for the keeping of proper records of admission by means of those barriers or other devices;”

What barriers are we talking about? To how many institutions in Barbados would these barriers apply? Why

would these have to be included in regulations? Why does the Minister of Finance have to find himself in a position where he has to determine into regulations in relation to barriers and devices for admission and that kind of foolishness?

I am saying that this is purely an attempt by the Government to harass poor people in the pursuit of leisure activities.

Asides

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I see this clause. I know the Barbados Labour Party exceedingly well, and I know that, in spite of all the words, in the long run the burden of this is going to fall on the poor people of this country, and I am prepared to be sent out of here if necessary today, no matter what you all say.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is not speaking to this clause.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am speaking to this business of barriers and this kind of nonsense that I see in a clause here. I do not think this should be in any legislation and that any Minister of Finance should have this kind of responsibility. I do not see the point behind it. Many people have been thrown out of work by the Barbados Labour Party and could only make a dollar.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): On a point of order, Mr. Chairman: This House is governed by rules. The responsibility for the enforcement of those rules are clearly stated in the Rules. I submit that the honourable Member is out of order, and I expect the rules to be carried out.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You can give them orders when you get to the Cabinet room, not when you get inside here. You are only another honourable Member inside here. You cannot give any orders to anybody in here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The speech of the honourable Member I will have to find irrelevant, and if it continues to be so, I shall have no alternative to rule you out of order and ask you to discontinue your speech. That, please understand, is the position of the Chair.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I think I have made my major points. I think, despite the greatest difficulties, I have managed to make the points on behalf of the disadvantaged in our community, and I look forward to the Government looking very fairly at the submissions that I have made, and making the appropriate amendments to the section in the interest of the broad masses of the people of Barbados.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): I want to make one or two very brief points to put into perspective something that the last speaker has commented on. I know he is very sensitive and likes to run to people to defend him.

Chapter 69 of the Laws of Barbados, dealing with Entertainment Tax, which is the Entertainment Tax Act, sets out in the regulations that the Minister of Finance may make regulations for securing the payment of entertainment tax and generally for carrying out that Act. In subsection (2) it says:

"Regulations may in particular provide for all or any of the following matters —

- (a) the supply and use of stamps or stamped tickets sent to be stamped and for securing the defacement of stamps when used;"

which is exactly what the honourable Member got up and criticised. That is the existing law of Barbados.

We have the honourable Member also saying that we are trying to impost a lot of nonsense on poor people. But subsection (2)(b) of the existing laws of Barbados under the Entertainment Tax Act says that the regulations may.....

"for the use of tickets covering the admission of more than one person and the calculation of the entertainment tax thereon and for the payment of entertainment tax on the transfer from one part of a place of entertainment and another;"

the identical words in this Bill that the honourable Member just gets up and says are a lot of nonsense, that the Government is now imposing against poor people.

He gets up and he criticises the power given to the Minister to make regulations for the controlling of the use of barriers and other mechanic contrivances. He does not even know that it is the law of Barbados. It is very easy for people like the honourable Member, who just wants to make a lot of noise over nothing, put out a lot of foolish statements, make a lot of arrogant comments, a lot of threats in here, to get up and open his mouth. But he has a lot of people in here to deal with, principally me.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I draw Your Honour's attention to Your Honour's ruling just a few moments ago concerning the latitude within the context of the clauses, and I draw Your Honour's attention to the fact that the honourable Member is now off on a frolic of his own, in my opinion.

Mr. Chairman, that is why I was seeking guidance from you. I wish to know the parameters within which this debate is going to take place.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must thank the honourable Member, and I must also thank the Honourable Attorney General for enlightening the Committee on these details.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, the Entertainment Tax Act has been the law of Barbados since 1953. For all the years the Democratic Labour Party was the Government of this country this was the law, the very points being criticised by the honourable Member today.

If the Opposition understood and could read what the Bill says, some of the statements I heard made would not have been made. In fact, it is possible that they understand, but they have a reason for saying other than what they understand.

What this Bill seeks to do is to consolidate two pieces of legislation. In respect of Section 7, dealing with the regulations, it is to consolidate the position of the Entertainment Tax Act to Barbados and the Licensed Place of Entertainment Act. That is all it is doing, and the identical words are lifted out of one Act and put into the new Act. That is all that has happened in respect of Section 17.

Asides

Hon. L. R. TULL: They can bark as much as they like, Sir. They started, you gave them great latitude and I am travelling the same road they travelled.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have no doubt in my mind whatever that the honourable Member for St. Michael West knows and appreciates everything that is being said.

Hon. L. R. TULL: You still have to educate him, Sir. He is not always very bright.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get ahead with Clause 17.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Clause 17 deals with the power to make regulations. The identical power that is being given to the Minister under this Bill before Parliament today is the identical power that was given to Ministers of Finance for the last 32 years in this country, and the honourable Member comes in here today.....

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: So what? It is still nonsense).

Hon. L. R. TULL: He says it is still nonsense. That is worth mentioning. The Minister of Finance will be able to make regulations governing the conduct at places of public entertainment is nonsense, according to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, because he believes in anarchy. He does not believe that Government should set regulations for the conduct of people in public places so he says it is nonsense. It is

consistent with everything the honourable Member says inside and outside of this House.

12.45 p.m.

Asides

Hon. L. R. TULL: The Government has suffered through all the things they say in relation to a simple section of the Bill providing for this.

Mr. Chairman, you must be generous. I must not be put in a position to respond to things that were said in the Other Place.

The honourable Member said something about the provisions of this Bill will work some hardship on poor people. I challenge the honourable Member to get up and point out in this section or any part of the Bill where there are new provisions that will work any burden on any poor people in this country. He does not understand either the words or the import of the legislation. I am interested to see the Opposition's point about which particular section represents a change in the law that would work any hardship on the poor people in this country.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the sections are there, but he knows that you are not going to allow us to go back to them. There are sections in this Bill that are contrary and completely different from anything that has ever been in the law in the 32 years, so for him to get up and say so, is a travesty of truth. For 32 years.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up. You are on a point of order.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member is saying that for me to get up and say that there is nothing in this Bill other than what is in existing law is a travesty of truth. I have never said that this Bill contains anything other than consideration of the two Bills, and I would like the honourable Member, if he has any decency, to get up and withdraw that, because I did not say that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what he wants me to withdraw. I will withdraw whatever it is that will make him happy because I do not know what he wants me to withdraw.

He said that he challenged any Member on this side to get up and show any clause in this Bill that will be a hardship on poor people. I am pointing out that we are on Clause 17 and he knows that you will not allow us to go back. Give me permission, let me show him! I beg permission, Sir, to show the honourable Member!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I beg all honourable Members to let us get along with Clause 17. I believe, quite frankly, that debate on this clause has been extensive. If there are any other comments on Clause 17, please let us have them.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am going to speak on Clause 17. I asked the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance a simple question relating to Clause 17 and, to my abject surprise and horror, there was no response and the Leader of the House said "move on".

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am going to reply).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Are you going to reply to that question? I will give way and let the Prime Minister reply, Mr. Chairman, to Clause 17. I will speak when he is finished, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other honourable Member who has not already made a contribution wish to make a contribution to Clause 17?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I do not believe in duplicity of any kind. If you were to look at the Entertainment Tax Act, Cap. 69 in the Laws of Barbados, you will see under Section 2 that entertainment was previously defined as any form of entertainment set out in the Schedule to which persons were admitted for payment, and those particular forms of entertainment were specified in a Schedule. The Schedule related to cinemas, the Barbados Turf Club and so on.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir: We are dealing with Section 17 of this Bill, which is purely an empowering section, and my submission to you, Sir, is that Members are not allowed, on either side, to debate the general principles of the Bill. We are purely dealing with a section which empowers regulations to be made subject to a negative Resolution of Parliament. We cannot have a debate on the prospective regulations. We cannot deal with that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Fair enough.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I am not dealing with any prospective.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must warn the honourable Member that he must stick to what is relevant to the debate and, furthermore, I must tell honourable Members — please take your seat, the honourable Member, please take his seat — to address the matters as we go clause by clause. There will be no Second Reading speeches and no replies to Second Reading speeches.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, the records of this House will show that there is a suggestion that I

probably misled the House or misled myself into believing that Section 17, which is now under debate, is exactly the same as Section 17 under the old laws. What I am saying is that the words are the same, but there were other changes within the Act that spread the ambit of the application of that section since the application was specifically limited to those particular areas in the Schedule of the 1953 Act. That is the point I am trying to make, so it is nothing but total duplicity for anyone to get up and say that Section 17 does not differ in intent or interpretation to Section 17 of the 1953 Act.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is out of order. Please take your seat. The honourable Member is not addressing the clause.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am addressing Clause 17.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are out of order. Please take your seat.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In what way, Sir? Could you tell me that a Member can come up here and mislead the House.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: An honourable Member is no ordinary Member in the House. He must not debate the Schedule, I am dealing with Clause 17.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not debating any Schedule.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I, as Chairman, say that, and that is my ruling. The honourable Member please take his seat. The honourable Member must take his seat!

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: There comes a time when fairness must apply to both sides of the House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must ask the honourable Member to sit and discontinue his speech.

Mr. CHAIRMAN stands.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He read those regulations.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member, please take his seat and discontinue!

Clause 17. Any other honourable member.

(Certain remarks made at this stage by the honourable Member for St. Michael West were ordered expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Are you not hearing me, Mr. Chairman? Is that what you are saying?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member obviously has some contribution to make. The Chair is waiting to hear it. Deal with Clause 17.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am drawing to your attention, because obviously there has been so much.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order on the Opposition benches as well as the Government benches.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I was pointing out that I asked the Honourable Prime Minister a question. Then, I gave way when he indicated he would respond, but now you are asking, "Does any other honourable member wish to make a contribution," which would suggest that you are winding up debate on the clause. If the honourable Member responds to the question, it follows that I may have something else to say, so if you raise it on these terms, you put me in a very difficult position. Do you understand what I am saying, Sir?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I understand quite clearly what the honourable Member is seeking. He wants to hear the Prime Minister, then he wants the Committee to entertain him again, and then he wants to hear the Prime Minister again.

12.55 p.m.

I will try and accommodate you with that, if the Prime Minister is prepared to reply at this stage. If not, I will put the question.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am replying. I do not see why we should get into all this difficulty. The Minister of Finance under existing law has powers to make regulations to provide machinery to ensure the collection of Entertainment Tax. That is what this section is empowering the Minister of Finance to do, and obviously since the Act is being passed in 1984, the section must contemplate empowering the regulations to deal with all methods of accounting, whether mechanical, electronic or the simple old-time ticketing system, so I do not see the difficulty. No regulations can be made which are not *intra-vires* the Act, that is obvious. So where we have a philosophic distinction as to what the Act charges and does not charge, there will be a difference in interpretation, and that is my reply. We intend to make no regulations which are not within the power of the Act.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: So that I would understand the Minister more clearly, the Minister will recall that in a previous section there were exemptions. The question I am asking the Minister is, in the light of there being no exemption for what are called dance keepers, in the light of there being no exemption for the political parties, in the light of there being no exemption for any of these categories, will the Minister give this House an assurance that his understanding of the regulations which he will make.....

(Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have not made them yet.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But you gave us an understanding, your understanding of what constitutes *intra-vires* vis-a-vis this Act that we are about to pass.

I wish an assurance from the Minister that by his regulations he will ensure that the people who keep dances in the Liberty will not be visited by a Commissioner or his deputy or his designee at the Liberty to check the tax. When you have a dutch party at home, we want to know that there will be nobody coming to check out the dutch party to see how much money you make. We wish to know that you do not have to respond in seven days, according to this Act, if you had a little dutch party or a bottle party or any of these things. Can the Minister answer the question, bearing these matters in mind?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I have answered the question already. I will make no regulations that the Act does not empower me to make, and I have said from the beginning, if the honourable Member will recall, that we have a philosophical difference as to the interpretation of the Act. The honourable Member alleges that it covers certain situations. We on this side say it does not cover the situations as alleged by the honourable Member.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Since the judges are not permitted to look to this debate, if they have to interpret it, we would hope that the judges will have a philosophical position concomitant with his. As we understand the law, those little people will be caught, but I think the public has a right to know that the Government has today given an undertaking that their understanding of these words will be that the public does not have to pay any taxes for dutch parties and small dances, and political parties will not have to pay any taxes when they have a branch dance. That is the understanding that we have. We will let the Prime Minister and the Attorney General decide that they must save face by not amending the thing and making it comfortable. If they wish to go down that road, let them go.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW (St. Michael South East): It is only fair that I rise from this side and let this Chamber understand how we feel. I have made representations, too, and the concerns which the honourable Member for St. Michael West has expressed were some of the concerns which I had, and I am satisfied that the regulations would not affect the little people, as designated by the honourable member, the dutch parties and the dances that are held not only in the Liberty, because I am very familiar with them, I used to keep them and I have a lot of friends who do. The dutch parties and the dances at Parkinson Community Centre, these are the ones that I was quite clear to enquire about whether these people

would be affected, and I have been given a definite 'no', and I am satisfied now that we need not press any panic button or mislead the public. It must be made quite clear that Members on this side have made representations and have asked for a clear and definitive statement or clarity, and are satisfied that it does not affect them.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have listened very carefully to the debate since I sat down....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what does the honourable Member rise?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To continue to speak on Clause 17 if permitted and allowed to do so, as the people of St. Michael South Central would expect me to be allowed to do.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You can only speak as the Rules of the House permit.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is right, on Clause 17.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And as the Chairman directs.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have listened to the debate and I wish it to be recorded that the Honourable Prime Minister has refused to give a firm assurance that small people will not be affected by this legislation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is not addressing Clause 17. The honourable Member is out of order and I will direct that you discontinue your speech.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: It does not appear that the small people can get representation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member must sit.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I will sit when I am ready to sit.

The question that Clause 17 stand part, was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. D. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. B. A. MILLER, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS — 11.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD; Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS and Mr. M. A. KING — 8.

Clause 18 was called.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 18 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:
1.05 p.m.

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS and Hon. B. A. MILLER (12).

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS and Mr. M. A. KING. (8)

Clause 19 was called and passed.

Clause 20 was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Clause 20 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing itself as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS and Hon. B. A. MILLER. (12).

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS and Mr. M. A. KING. (8)

Clause 21 was called.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that Clause 21 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative the House dividing itself as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. Dr.

R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS and Hon. B. A. MILLER. (12)

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. M. A. KING and Mr. L. A. WEEKES. (9)

Clause 22 was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Clause 22 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS and Hon. B. A. MILLER. (12)

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. M. A. KING and Mr. L. A. WEEKES. (9)

Clause 23 was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Clause 23 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing itself as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS and Hon. B. A. MILLER – 12.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. M. A. KING and Mr. L. A. WEEKES. – 9.

Clause 24 was called.

1.15 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that Clause 24 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Hon. A. TRUSS, Hon. B. A. MILLER, and Hon. V. L. JOHNSON – 12.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. L. A. WEEKES, Mr. M. A. KING – 9.

Clause 25 was called.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that Clause 25 stand part.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Hon. A. TRUSS, Hon. B. A. MILLER, Hon. H. B. St. JOHN – 12.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. L. A. WEEKES, Mr. M. A. KING – 9.

The First Schedule was called.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that the First Schedule be the First Schedule of the Bill.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. R. E.

BRATHWAITE, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Hon. A. TRUSS, Hon. B. A. MILLER — 12.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. L. A. WEEKES, Mr. M. A. KING — 9.

The Second Schedule was called.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that the Second Schedule be the Second Schedule of the Bill.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Hon. A. TRUSS, Hon. B. A. MILLER — 12.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. L. A. WEEKES, Mr. M. A. KING — 9.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill be now read a third time.

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

The question that the Bill be now read a third time was put and resolved in the affirmative the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. B. A. MILLER, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Hon. A. TRUSS, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Mr. J. G. ODLE — 13.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. M. A. KING, Mr. L. A. WEEKES — 9.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg that the Bill do now pass.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.
1.25 p.m.

The question that the Bill do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. J. G. ODLE, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Hon. A. TRUSS and Hon. B. A. MILLER — 13.

Noes: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. W. Q. FRANKLIN, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Dr. R. C. HAYNES, Mr. N. K. SIMMONS, Mr. M. A. KING and Mr. L. A. WEEKES — 9.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, just before I call No. 2, I would like to draw to the attention of Members of the House that the dining hall will not be in use, it is out of order due to repairs to the roof, and that lunch shall be served at Queen's Park.

I draw this to your attention because I heard a query by the Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) across the floor that the Prime Minister did not even let them know that the entrance to Parliament was closed. If this is what the Prime Minister of this great country of ours comes to, that the Prime Minister has to telephone a member to tell him that the entrance to Parliament is closed, well God help us and this country. If this is what is the function of a Prime Minister of this country. I hope he will never be one, because that is all he sees as his function. It is pathetic!

I beg to move that Order No. 2 be the instant order of the day.

THE RETURNABLE CONTAINERS ACT, 1985

Order No. 2 was called — to move the Second Reading of a Bill to provide for the control of the sale of beverages in beverage containers, the payment of a deposit on beverage containers, a refund for the return of those containers and the final disposal of unused or unusable containers.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): This Bill is an attempt by Government to deal with a situation which many countries in the world have to deal with, namely, the public health and environmental problem which arises from the utilisation by beverage manufacturers of modern and new methods of packaging their beverages in aluminum or tin containers, or more recently in plastic containers.

The impact on the environment of the disposal of these types of containers has aroused the attention of many communities. In New York State there is a specific law which deals with this matter and places squarely the

obligation on those who sell the containers at various points of sale to provide facilities for what is known as the redemption of containers. In the Caribbean, it was at a Ministers of Health meeting, and, ironically, at other meetings, that this attention was highlighted by the then Minister of Health in a neighbouring country, and there was a dramatic presentation of the impact on certain communities of the casual and thoughtless disposal of containers, particularly of the new type.

In an effort to deal with this matter in Barbados, particularly in view of the fact that we here have incurred some considerable expenditure in the erection of a pulverisation plant which has not been designed to deal with the particular type of containers which have proven to be mischievous, the tin can, the aluminum can and the plastic bottles, steps were taken to discourage the utilisation of those types of containers as the means of packaging beverages, and the steps involved a differential in the Consumption Tax between glass bottles and other methods of packaging containers for beverages. It was not, and I repeat not restricted to tin cans or to aluminum cans; it always included plastic bottles. A considerable amount of debate was generated and all kinds of allegations were made as to the motivation of the Government in introducing that legislation, but the Government always stood its ground and we always pointed out that the object of the legislation was to provide for disincentive to the utilisation of that method of packaging, pending the resolution of the question after discussion with the relevant interests of a method of disposal of these new methods of packaging.

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

We were able to find a precedent, and that precedent was contained in the New York State Returnable Container Act, which is Chapter 200 of the laws of the State of New York, and it attempts to address this matter. It appeared to us, from reading this law, that it provided a framework for us to have consultations with the private sector and others affected. Accordingly, a draft Bill was drafted and circulated widely, and we have been able to receive comments on the proposed legislation. I may say that this legislation is certainly the forerunner of similar legislation, I anticipate, in other parts of the Caribbean, as soon as the impact on the environment in other countries reaches the point where it has reached in some of the Member States of the Caribbean. So we have had comments not only from the Chamber of Commerce, the retailers in Barbados, but we have also circulated the Bill to the Commonwealth Legal Department. I have had many discussions with the lawyers in the Commonwealth Legal Department in London, and I am pleased to say that the Barbados draft has received very favourable comment.

1.35 p.m.

Now that I have explained the mischief of the Bill, I think one should also recognize that there are certain principles that have been established which have gone a long way to meet some of the fears that have been advanced by the relevant interests. I want to say at the outset that, as usual, since this is a new piece of legislation, in typical Barbadian fashion, because it proposes a change, one would expect that it would receive objection, but we were able to point out that, at the present moment, the beverage trade has in existence a recycling system for bottles which has been so successful, because of the monetary rewards offered for the redemption of the bottles, that no offence has been caused to the environment nor have there been any complaints about undue burden being placed upon the manufacturer, the wholesaler or the retailer. Government, on a point of principle, and as a matter of principle, made it clear to the trade, through their representatives, that if the trade could come up with a recycling scheme or a disposal scheme which would be equally as effective as there is now for glass bottles, the Government would be exceedingly happy to exempt the provisions of the Bill from such a scheme. So one would see in the Bill that, provided there is in existence a recycling scheme of whatever type, the provisions of the Bill would not apply thereto. In short, we are giving the industry an opportunity to assume some of its obligations towards the environment and towards the community which arise from the fact that as new methods of packaging arise, the consequences of the community are paid for by the persons or bodies that create the problems.

I have absolutely no doubt in my mind, having studied all of the relevant legislation and, in particular, having participated in the exercise which introduces the exemption provision for industry recycling schemes, that this Bill will create absolutely no hardship. Already, in respect of a category of bottle which is glass but which hitherto was not part of the recycling scheme, as a result of the inducement offered by this Bill, the proprietors and businessmen in Bridgetown have created a new area of recycling for those bottles, and I refer to the disposable bottles that come with the export of beer from the other territories to Barbados, like ginger beers, malts, Heineken and Red Stripe, and that type of bottle which was not formerly subject to the recycling industry which was run by a Mr. Cheeseman, I believe, opposite the Cathedral. He never took those bottles, but now I see in the paper that a firm has found it worthwhile to introduce a scheme.

It is my opinion that we have already sensitized the Chamber of Commerce and the industrialists to the possibilities of a useful industry in connection with bottle collection, and I cannot accept the suggestion that the mere passage of this Bill, particularly with its exemption provision, is going to create any problem in the industry.

Far from creating problems, it will help to protect the environment and create jobs.

I also notice that in a neighbouring country, a firm has just received incentives to provide a recycling system for cans. I saw in Albany last year some of the mechanisms that they use for dealing with cans. Outside every supermarket there is something like a press in which you put your cans, and it drops down, squashes the cans, they are collected as one solid heap and then they are disposed of like normal industrial waste. So there are other aspects that have dealt with this problem.

All we say is that the Government is acutely conscious of the need to protect the environment of Barbados from being littered with a multiplicity of cans and plastic bottles, which are not capable of being dealt with in our Pulverisation Plant, that we have created incentives in the Bill and that we feel that this is a responsible way to deal with a matter which will create more problems if we run away from it and if you do not face up to it.

The Consumption Tax Act, as was said in the Budget, will be amended to ensure that the provisions of this Bill, when they come into force, will take the place of the temporary provision which was made at the time while we were discussing a solution to this problem with the trade and our partners in CARICOM.

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

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second it and reserve my right to speak.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): First of all, one must welcome the assurance that the appropriate amendment will be made to the Consumption Tax, as indicated by the Honourable Prime Minister.

Secondly, I have no difficulty whatsoever in supporting the position of the Government on this Bill as set out by the Prime Minister. It is important to recognize that this constitutes a major environmental hazard, particularly in the area of plastics. Recent research and developments in relation to health have shown that these plastic containers, if they are not carefully dealt with in the community with respect to their disposal, can have unseen general environmental health hazards, and there is emerging evidence that certain disease processes might well be initiated by these plastics; and not only the plastics themselves, but also any unauthorised procedures that are used to recycle the plastics. Therefore, from a health and an environmental point of view, we on this side should have no difficulty in supporting the legislation. Indeed one would hope that the appropriate instrument and the appropriate department of Government

would act speedily to deal with this matter before it becomes a further problem in Barbados.

1.45 p.m.

As usual, we have no difficulty in supporting measures which we clearly see as being in the public interest, and we are not afraid to say so when necessary. Equally so we oppose measures which we consider not to be in the public interest.

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

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

Clauses 1 to 10 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT CHRIST CHURCH

Order No. 4 was called – to move the passing of the Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Christ Church for the construction of a road known as the Airport to the West Coast Highway.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): The contents of this Resolution are sufficiently canvassed that all honourable Members would be acquainted with its purpose. I do not propose to go into a historical background to this matter since we have been dealing with it for a considerable length of time.

It is well known that the Government has embarked upon an exercise to construct a highway leading from the airport to the West Coast, thereby linking up the seaport and airport.

I do not propose to go into much details at this particular point in time. If questions are asked, I will reply from time to time. As a matter of fact, I have just been reminded, and quite rightly so, that I am just acting on behalf of a client Ministry in this matter, but I am sufficiently seized of the information that I can give any replies which are required.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Mr. Speaker, we are all very acquainted with the aims and objects of this acquisition, but I would just like to invite the appropriate Ministry to consider Parliament. This is a road that stretches from the west coast to the airport and quite obviously it is passing through a lot of virgin country, and it is going to have far-reaching effects on the future physical use of some of these roads. This brings us on to the point of the Physical Development Plan for Barbados.

I must say that as parliamentarians having to deal with matters like this which have an effect on the development pattern of Barbados, I was a little bit surprised to know that up to this present day we have not been issued with any copies of the Physical Development Plan that would allow us to relate to any future proposals by Government as they would affect this new West Coast to Airport Road. For argument sake, I do not know if there is anything in the Physical Development Plan that would adversely affect the roads as presently planned. I do not know if there is anything in the Physical Development Plan that would cause additional expenditure on this road. We do not know if there is anything in the new Physical Development Plan that would cause people to be adversely affected even more than the present path which the road happens to take. I think this is a very serious problem for us parliamentarians, particularly when you have a situation where seminars have already been held by people who have had copies of the Physical Development Plan and we as parliamentarians and legislators do not even know except that it has been written that they exist.

I am therefore not able to comment on this particular area to say if the present routing is going to disadvantage any person as set out in the Physical Development Plan, and I would like to invite the appropriate Ministry to let us have copies available at the earliest possible time so that we can relate any proposals in that Physical Development Plan to any future proposals of road routing. I lodge our strongest protest at the way we have been treated in this particular matter.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): I do not want to in any way disadvantage the honourable Member or in any way attempt to discredit any points he has made. The position is that under the Town Planning Act there is a specific procedure which has to be undertaken in respect of the formulation of development proposals, and the role of the public, the role of the Legislature, the role of the judge is all set out. I now give the honourable Member the assurance that I will see to it

that all Members of the Chamber are circulated with a copy of the Development Plan. But I do so not under any obligation provided by the law, I do so because the honourable Member has raised it and I feel that the more opinions that are canvassed on this matter, the better for us all.

1.55 p.m.

The selection of the site for the road from the Grantley Adams Airport to the Spring Garden Highway was the subject of a detailed study, and one of the parameters of that study was to ensure that as little interference as possible with the usable land for agriculture should take place. Luckily for us, the route that has been chosen traverses an area which is regarded, under the Development Plan, as an area which is of low grade agricultural land. Indeed, for a major part of the first stage of this road, the land affected would be what one would call possibly the most marginal of the agricultural lands that are in agriculture in Barbados today. It is the second crest of the limestone terraces. And honourable Members will know that with the exception of the Gibbons Boggs area, which has water underneath, and certain parts of St. Peter and in St. James, which are within the water table, the lower crest of land in Barbados is the land that is allowed for development together with the sour grass terraces overlooking the valleys. So we should not have any fear.

One of the problems we will have in the future quite frankly, will be the pressure that will naturally arise from planners who would want to use this road as the green belt road. That is a fact. We know that it is happening everywhere in the world. Once you put in a major highway, people feel that that highway ought to be used as the green belt limitation. We anticipate that, so the Government will in the Physical Development Plan bear those factors in mind. And I want to make it clear that the modifications for the Development Plan are only proposals to modify a pre-existing Development Plan which has been in existence for a long period of time, and it is required by the Act.

If honourable Members know the road, they will notice that....

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now 2.00 p.m. Will the honourable Member be able to complete his speech in the next ten minutes?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes Sir. If honourable Members know the road, the areas that will be affected are areas which have already been partially released for development — the areas around Kendall Hill, Warrens, Newton and underneath Graeme Hall — but it has been designed to snake as near to the cliff side as possible. That is what

the consultants were told. We do not anticipate that we are going to lose a large amount of land. In any event, the Town Planner's solution to this kind of thing would be to give planning permission restrictively but put it in the Development Plan as being scheduled for development at some time in the future so as not to throw too much land on the market to depress the market values. Planners have methods of dealing with these. We must understand as a matter of reality that there is going to be tremendous pressure not only this Government but in the future, for this land to be released, because the road is going to be looked upon by the public as a natural cut off point between there and the other side. But you will have to deal with this matter on a Town Planning basis and release it over a phased period of time.

The other point we must bear in mind is that in Barbados, with the limited land use that we have, our aim ought to be to get the maximum value for land, the maximum potential use of the land coming into operation as quickly as possible. In my view, the primary objective ought to be the release of land which is capable of providing jobs. If you release land from agriculture to industry and the industry is a worthwhile industry, I think you are doing the community a service.

Given the position in Barbados and given the fact that the land for foundation is better in the limestone terrace areas, one would know that people do not want to get the really good agricultural land, because they have to dig too deep to get foundations; people want to get the rocky land. We really do not have too much of a problem there in that respect. In any event, there are so many house spots for sale right now in Barbados as a result of planning decisions that the pressure to open new house spots is not as great. It is a question of whether the house spots are the right size to suit the people's pockets. So I do not anticipate that there is going to be any wholesale abandonment of this, because I am sure that the mechanism of the levies that is in place for non-utilization of agricultural land and things like that and the general policy directives that we have will prevent too much land coming on the market to depress the values or create wastage.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I know that we did not suspend the Standing Orders, in the light that we would have gone to 2.45 p.m. for lunch. I have indicated to the Leader of the Opposition, by way of the Acting Clerk, that I propose to suspend the sitting until 3.30 p.m. today due to the fact that we have to go to Queen's Park for lunch. I am told that the Leader of the Opposition has agreed to this, Sir. I hope my argument is correct.
2.05 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I therefore suggest that the honourable Member seek leave of the House now to suspend the relevant Standing Order and then move the necessary Resolution.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I was seeking the advice of the Clerk as to how this has been done. If that is your ruling or suggestion, Sir, I beg to move that we revert to "Orders of the Day" so that I shall be in a position to suspend the Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is there any objection to the Leader of the House moving a Resolution in respect of the Standing Orders at this time? There appears to be no objection, so you may move the Resolution to suspend.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move, Sir, that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended.

Mr. SPEAKER: You only need to suspend the Standing Order No. 6.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, Sir. I beg that Standing Order No. 6 be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting.

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

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

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3.30 p.m. today.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is resumed.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAIN

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Mr. Speaker, with leave of the House, we have been without a Chaplain for a few years, and a name was suggested sometime ago when we had appointed the late Rev. Gilbert Vaughan. Since then we have had an Acting Chaplain who, I would like to on behalf of the Government, and I can safely say on behalf of the Members of the House, has carried us through our spiritual ritual before each sitting of the House. I would like to go on record that we are very appreciative of his spiritual guidance, and I would like to

extend sincere thanks to Rev. Stapleton for so admirably conducting prayers before our sittings on Tuesdays.

On the last occasion when we had nominated the late Rev. Gilbert Vaughan, we also had in mind the Rev. Ivan Harewood. That recommendation came from Members on the other side but we on this side are relatively familiar with the work of Rev. Ivan Harewood.

With this in mind, I beg to move that Rev. Ivan Harewood be appointed Chaplain of this august Chamber, commencing on May 1, 1985.

I sincerely hope that I have the support of Members on the other side.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the nomination that has been made by the Leader of the House. The Opposition will support this particular nomination.

The question that Rev. Ivan Harewood be the Chaplain of the House was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I believe that I would not be asking too much if a letter of thanks can be sent to Rev. Stapleton, which can be drafted in accordance with your supervision. I am quite sure we all are appreciative of his work and look forward to be with him at some future date.

Sir, I have a supplementary Notice Paper, and I would like to revert to that item at this time, with leave of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am particularly worried about the sort of procedure we are following today. We had to postpone one particular Order of the Day, in respect of the break. We have Question Time and Private Members Business, which obviously should have been taken, and then all other matters should have been dealt with after that. I propose to call Question Time at this particular time.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, it may have been overlooked but we can only follow the procedures as you so guide, Mr. Speaker, and you know that both sides will follow your guidance. If it is Question Time, surely we will follow suit because we have only suspended Order No. 6. I think that is why I have overlooked it.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. Question 10 stands in the name of the honourable Member for St. Michael North West.

Question re drainage in St. Michael North.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES (St. Michael North West): Mr. Speaker, Question 10: To ask the Minister of Transport and Works: 1. Is the Minister aware that lack of proper

drainage facilities in 1st Avenue Goodland, Goodland, St. Michael and Brandon Road, Brandon, St. Michael is creating a health hazard and much inconvenience to the public and the residents of the area? 2. Will the Minister state what plans he has for remedying these problems in these areas?

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Speaker, the answer to Question 10 as asked by the honourable Member for St. Michael North West is as follows: 'I am aware of the problems complained of and the problems are being rectified.'

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no supplementaries to this question, we go on to Question 17, asked by the honourable Member for St. James South.

Question re school at CARIFESTA site.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, Question 17:

To ask the Minister of Education:

1. Can the Minister say when the school now under erection at the Carifesta site St. James will be opened?

2. Does the Hon. Minister appreciate the fact that the Oxnards/Husbands Road is a very busy highway and that the section from the school which leads to Haynesville does not have a sidewalk and is therefore a very dangerous road on which to ask children to walk to and from school?

3. Could the Minister say if it is the Government's intention to build a sidewalk and if so how soon?

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Education, I give the following reply to Parliamentary Question 17, asked by the honourable Member for St. James South:

(1) The new school received its first pupils on 4th February, 1985.

(2) The roads in Husbands and Oxnards Developments were constructed by the Urban Development Corporation and no sidewalks were provided at that time, and now the new roads. However, the Ministry of Transport and Works has been requested to construct crossings and foot-paths to facilitate pupils of the school.

3.35 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no supplementaries to this question, we move to Question No. 21 asked by the honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Question re services for areas in St. Michael North.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the question is as follows:

"To ask the Minister of Housing and Lands:

1. Is the Minister aware that there are extremely untidy settlements in the following areas in St. Michael North:— areas off Philips Road in Grazettes, Hinds Hill, Well Road, and Brown Gap in Jackson?

2. Is the Minister aware that persons living in these areas are unable to benefit from the basic services of proper roads, electricity and water?

3. Will the Minister outline Government's programme for improving the living conditions of persons residing in these areas?"

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): Mr. Speaker, the answer is as follows:

"The infrastructure of these areas is indeed in need of improvement which is expected to be done in the course of the programme of tenantry improvement on which the Ministry is engaged. Priority is being given to the areas where the need is greatest."

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no supplementaries to this Question, this then brings us to the end.....

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Can the Minister state whether any provision is made for water for the residents of this area?

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: It is the general policy of the Government, whenever improvements are made to roads, to include water, and that will be looked at.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, to enquire of the Minister, what is the Government's policy on electrification in those remote areas where there are no existing poles?

Mr. SPEAKER: I find that a generalised question which cannot fall under Question No. 21.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no further questions, that then brings us to the end of Question Time. There are no items of Private Members' Business on the Order Paper. We now revert to Government Business.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I now seek the leave of the Chamber to give notice of a supplementary Notice Paper which I have.

On behalf of the Minister responsible for International Transport, I beg to give notice of.

A Resolution to approve the guarantee by the Government of a loan of Bds. \$3,272,000 and interest thereon to be made by the Caribbean Development Bank to LIAT (1974) Ltd.

Mr. SPEAKER: That brings us to the end of Government Notices.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS RESUMED

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT ST. MICHAEL

Order No. 5 was called — to move the passing of the Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at St. Michael for the construction of a road known as the Airport to the West Coast Highway.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is much like the Resolution which we did earlier today, and I do not think there is much I can add or subtract from what I said earlier on. I stand ready to answer any questions which might be asked on this part of the highway.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North): Is the Minister aware of any changes in the water zoning in the Belle area through which this road is likely to pass?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not see how that question affects the acquisition of land to build a road. The primary object of that question is to ask about the changing of the water zone, and that is a substantial matter in itself. If the honourable Member can tell me how it affects this road, I am quite willing to listen.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It is very likely to affect the road, since if zone I is removed and it becomes a zone where you can build residential houses, there is likely to be pressure for this zone to be used for residential purposes.

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not relate to the road.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: The leading road will open up these lands, Mr. Speaker, and with the fact that the zoning will be removed there will be pressure on it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Order No. 3 was called — to move the passing of a Bill to amend the Road Traffic Act, 1981.

THE ROAD TRAFFIC (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1985

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Speaker, the purpose of these amendments to the Road Traffic Act is to give effect to, in the first case, the need to define in the Bill the words "Traffic Warden."

The Traffic Warden Scheme, as it now stands, falls to the Ministry of Transport and Works. Originally, the duties and functions of the traffic warden were contained in the Police Act, but since the amendment to that Act, these duties now fall to the Ministry of Transport and Works.

The traffic warden under MTW is designed to be a person of limited function, who will have jurisdiction in parking areas and other specified parking zones for the purpose of road traffic regulation and assisting at traffic crossings. So the scope of this particular title is limited.

In the second instance, the Traffic Act is being amended in order to provide for a change in the rules governing the issue of special licence plates to employees of foreign missions. As it now stands, it is possible for even the junior categories of workers in the foreign embassies to qualify for free car licences, and we are amending the Act in order to limit the category of person who will be entitled to use the IM and CD designations.

Furthermore, another very important and crucial matter under consideration is the renewal of the driver's Licence by birth month. You will recall that over the years licences became due at a specified time each year and the result of that was always that there was a crush of people rushing to get their licences renewed in that very limited period of time.
3.45 p.m.

Last year we had a particularly disastrous year because of the re-organisation of the duties that formerly fell to the Rates and Taxes Division under the Ministry of Transport and Works, and the consequential reduction in the number of centres at which these licences could be renewed. We, therefore, had a lot of inconvenience occasioned by these changes, and a number of persons had to queue for many long hours in order to get their licences renewed. The crush was also occasioned by the fact that for last year, licences which had been issued for three years all fell due at that same time. So we had a particularly bad year in so far as inconvenience was concerned.

We have decided that in order to eliminate the possibility of that kind of confusion in the future, the

system of rotational renewals, using the birthdate as the time, should be introduced, and this is why this particular amendment is being sought. We believe that the convenience will be quite obvious to those persons who drive. Whereas you would have to wait until June, now, if your birth month falls in January, you renew your licence in January. If it falls in February, you renew your licence in February. This will considerably reduce the number of problems that we have been having in that direction.

We also believe that the safety of our pedestrians and motorists would dictate that we take a critical look at persons who have passed a particular age and who are yet driving. We are requiring persons who reach the age of 70 to be certified fit to drive by medical authority. This will tend to eliminate the potential hazard that might result from persons who, because of age, have some physical impairment that might not be obvious to the casual inspection of the licensing officer.

Section 80 is to be modified in order to give effect to a new device whereby visitors to our island can have temporary drivers licences. As you will recall, that function used to be performed by the police. When the Licensing Authority came into effect, it was transferred to the Ministry of Transport and Works, and we still have responsibility for that. But in order to facilitate the issuing of licences to visitors and to reduce the inconvenience associated with those categories of drivers, we have decided to allow the car rental agencies to purchase the licences in advance and then, in turn, resell them to the visitors to the island so that the tourists and other visitors to Barbados would be accommodated and would no longer have to come to the various centres for that purpose.

These are essentially the import of these amendments. I have been brief in order to solicit any observations from Members on the other side. If necessary, I will reply more comprehensively.

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

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Speaker, I think that the Bill itself, the amendment to the Road Traffic Act, is unlikely to attract any controversy *per se* in its formulation, because what it seeks to do is unlikely to attract any negative reaction. The honourable Member outlined his thinking on the Bill, and especially with regard to the age limit of 70 years of age, I believe that it is a step in the direction that not even the most vigorous 70 year old will have any quarrel with, because all that is being required is that such an individual indicate that he or she is capable of driving.

I wish to take the opportunity of the introduction of this amendment to the Road Traffic Act to raise a couple of questions concerning safety which, I believe, the Minister might wish to give some consideration to. I discovered recently, to my horror, that there are, in fact, motor cars, specifically motor cars, coming into Barbados and sold to the public in Barbados with a number of what are now considered conventional safety features absent from them. I do not intend to go into detail or give exhaustive lists of those safety features that are missing, but I think one in particular ought to be drawn to the attention of this Honourable House. I think that it is wrong at this stage of our development that any motor car could come into Barbados as a finished product without the attachment of seat belts as a part of the equipment of that motor car. I was really horrified when I realized that a very popular model — this is the one I know about, I have no doubt there are others — actually come into the country without seat belts as part of its standard equipment.

In Barbados today, we ought to be able to benefit from the results of studies which have been done elsewhere, and I think Your Honour would be familiar with a very famous study that was done at the University of North Carolina which surveyed traffic accidents and determined that seat belts reduced serious injuries by up to 50 per cent, and fatal injuries by as much as 75 per cent. Mr. Speaker, you are probably aware, also, that a study was done in Sweden of accidents by sea belt users which surveyed nearly 29 000 accidents, and that study was able to demonstrate that not a single one of these accidents resulted in a fatal injury. The National Highway Safety Administration of the United States has also recently estimated that were seat belts to be made mandatory in the United States, fatalities would drop by at least 50 per cent overnight.

3.55 p.m.

More recently still, I read the autobiography of Lee Iaccocca, who is considered to be one of the more important executives in the motor car industry to come on the scene since the industry was in existence. He is an advocate, and he says in his book that seat belts ought to be mandatory to save lives, and he said that in more than 30 countries in the world, the seat belt is now mandatory and/or there is some legislation dealing with the question of the use of seat belts. Certainly in Canada, five of the ten provinces have introduced legislation for mandatory use of the seat belt, and in France where they enacted a similar law, the death rate from traffic accidents dropped by 20 per cent almost immediately.

There are a number of persons who will find the use of a seat belt inconvenient, and I am not here to suggest that we ought to tell people what they must do all the time, even though it may save their lives. What I am saying, however, is that we ought not to allow any

motor car to be imported into this country that does not have as part of its standard equipment seat belts. This is probably one of the few countries where any automobile manufacturer would be allowed to sell an automobile without seat belts, and I am drawing it to the attention of the Minister in the hope and in the recommendation that the Minister will see to it, using whatever mechanism that is necessary, including an amendment to the 1981 Road Traffic Act if necessary, to insist that no more automobiles, no motor cars especially, be allowed to be imported into this country without seat belts as part of their standard equipment.

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is being indicated to me that indeed what we should do is to amend the legislation, and I am very happy to hear it coming from the other side that we should amend this legislation to make the wearing of seat belts mandatory, because if we have to pass legislation to stop people from killing themselves, then let us pass the legislation.

I will take this opportunity to draw attention to some aspects of the Road Traffic Act which have been passed in this Chamber, but which are being ignored by some of the citizens. I saw during the last week a lady in Barbados driving with two small children sitting or standing, in the front seat next to her. A more dangerous practice in the business of driving cannot be imagined, and it is my understanding that the law now requires that children under a certain age must travel in the back of a motor car unless they are accompanied by an adult sitting in the front seat. I think that we should ask the Police Force not necessarily to prosecute every one who is found in breach of this part of the law, but to make it a point to stop such persons and help to educate them as to what is safe for them while travelling in motor cars.

I also saw recently someone driving with two passengers in the back, one with his arm outside the automobile linked over the door, again a very dangerous and unnecessary activity. I would like to invite the Minister, as I had done some years ago, and I saw a part of it being implemented, that we should utilise the television in Barbados to educate the public not only on the requirements of the law, but in the good driving habits that will help to save lives and indeed may help to save the lives of the individuals concerned. I find that there are a number of slots in the television programmes on a daily basis which could be profitably and usefully filled with good information, educational information, that would teach the people of Barbados how to protect themselves and how to make themselves healthier, and I see no reason why, especially as it relates to driving, we ought not to be having more and better information on television.

I make no apology when I say that we on this side, I in particular, are very pleased that my constant harassment of the Minister and the Government for requests of lights on the Spring Garden has fallen on fertile ground, and that we are going to have lights on Spring Garden. I think if the cost had been \$1 million, it was money well spent. I wish to invite the Minister to go on and fulfil a commitment which was made during the St. Peter discussions and put lights on the St. Peter By-pass. The honourable Member has said in here in a previous debate that the lights had been ordered for St. Peter — I am not sure if he did not say it during the campaign that the lights had already been ordered — but sufficient time has passed that the lights for St. Peter By-pass should have been installed by now, and following the installation of lights at Spring Garden, I would invite the Minister to proceed without any more delay to put lights along the St. Peter By-pass.

During the Easter holiday, I happened to be on the by-pass at an hour after the sun had been down — I still visit St. Peter; I go north as often as possible — and again the dangers of that road became apparent. There are spots in that road where unless the individual who is driving on the Speightstown By-pass is absolutely familiar with the turns and twists in the road, when the sun has gone down, it becomes positively dangerous. I am inviting the Government to go on and put up the lights which they promised in St. Peter to put on the by-pass road.

There are a number of other little things that one could touch on, but I do not intend to delay this Honourable House on this occasion. I would end by saying that having put the lights in Spring Garden, it is only a matter of making sure that the crossings are dealt with as a matter of urgency, because the constituents in St. Michael West, and if I may do so on behalf of my colleagues, St. Michael North West and all those persons from St. Michael West Central, who are accustomed using the beaches at Brandons and Brighton are still under severe pressure to cross that very wide highway, and I think that the Minister ought to spare no effort to ensure that we have crossings, if only at the Brighton cross road for the time being, but we should have crossings as a matter of urgency. I think that there are citizens of Barbados who will be able to take credit for having joined with us in the House of Assembly for insisting that safety forms a part of our life in this country.

4.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, the actual amendments which we are dealing with will not warrant any in-depth discussion. They are fairly straight-forward and one would only wonder why — as Your Honour would recall when this matter was introduced, I pointed this out to Your Honour in another capacity — the CC and FC situations had not been clarified. I recall very well that in

the debate, it was indicated that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had responsibility for that. I would think that it is desirable, however, that when we are going to pass legislation that has connotations and has implications for our international obligations, we ought to save ourselves the trouble of having to come back to the House to amend such legislation to take account of what, in essence, are fairly straight-forward international obligations. The implementations of a free licence for your foreign diplomats and other representatives ought not to be a matter on which we should have been caught. However, as they say, it is better late than never, so we are not likely to be quarrelling with this legislation.

I take one issue with the Minister on the question of the international driver's licence. I think that the time has come when Barbados should be enlightened as to what precisely is an international driver's licence and where it is valid. I noticed recently that provision is being made for the issuance of an international driver's licence, and an increase in the fee, I believe, has occurred. But there are a number of places which are supposed to be parties to the international convention on drivers' licences where an international driver's licence from Barbados is not considered, in practical terms, to be valid. I believe that information regarding the international driver's licence ought to be made available to the citizens of Barbados lest many of them fall into difficulties in places outside of Barbados, in the mistaken belief that once they have an international driver's licence, they are entitled to drive wherever they are.

It is not often known, and it is not drawn to the attention of many Barbadians, that what laws apply with regard to driving in a particular jurisdiction are the laws dictated by that particular state. And so, in some parts of the United States, you can drive with your Barbados licence. You can do it in Miami, for example, you can do it in Philadelphia, as far as I remember, and you can now do it in New York, I am told. But there are other parts of the United States where you have to get a driver's licence from that state or you cannot drive, no matter what you are holding, including a licence from another United States state. So the green piece of card which is given as an international driver's licence is not always valid in every state in which you may drive.

I made a comment which excited the honourable Member, the Minister when I said that in some states, if you have a driver's licence from out of town, you still have to get a driver's licence from that state. He indicated to me that that is not quite accurate. I will not pursue the point, because the point I am making is a technical one and does not enhance the discussion by going into detail. I would only say to him that if he were to drive in Canada with a licence from Virginia, he would be accepted in Canada as having a driver's licence. If, however, he goes to drive in Virginia with a Canadian

driver's licence, he may discover that he is on the wrong side of the law. But the honourable and gallant Member who is the Minister of Transport — I think you use gallant when they have been to the war, Sir — has indicated that there are no areas of controversy in the Bill and I do not propose to introduce any.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I take the honourable Member for St. Michael West's concern about vehicular safety in Barbados, and I share entirely in his views that we have to seriously consider the prospect of providing for the further safety of the motoring public by ensuring that cars are equipped with seat belts. We do not have this immediately under contemplation, but it is one of the things that we have on our plans for more safety, and at the appropriate time, we will take very careful consideration of it to see whether or not it is necessary.

In our view, whatever we need to do to enhance the safety of the people of this country, we must do. However, change comes hard in this very conservative society that we live in, and frequently people misunderstand the intention of these bits of legislation, they think that it is an attempt on the part of the Government to dictate to people, and for that reason we go into these matters with the greatest reluctance. But we believe that the introduction of safety helmets, for example, for motor cycles will go a long way towards assisting in the preservation of life and the reduction of the incidence of injury to people who travel by motor cycle. We are sure that the statistical evidence that has been compiled in North America with respect to the use of seat belts is equally valid in Barbados, and we will take that under further scrutiny.

With respect to the use of television for the promulgation of information regarding the proper use of the highways, we have already started that exercise. The Government Information Service has been doing some television shorts designed to instruct people in the proper use of the roads. I have already had discussions with one private agency and we are discussing the prospect of doing some further television promos for the purpose of advising people how to use, particularly, multi-lane highways.

I have seen accidents on the Spring Garden Highway when, on the north bound section, two vehicles are travelling almost abreast, a gentleman decides that he wants to turn off at Exmouth, and he turns right across from the left lane and gets it broadside. It would appear to me that it should be elementary that on a multi-lane highway, it would be unwise, indeed suicidal, to try to make a right hand turn out of the left lane. But there are people who do it, for whatever reasons. We feel that we will have to go on the assumption that some people do not know how to use that stretch and we will try to advise them how to drive on multi lane highways.

I watch how Barbadians drive and I see that some people, even on broad lanes, pull far left to turn right. That, too, is not the appropriate way to turn right. A right hand turn should be made from as close to the centre of the road as possible so that traffic can be free to go through on the left inside. These are things that we will have to rely on the television cameras to assist us in putting across to motorists.

In so far as the Spring Garden Highway is concerned, the lights have been installed, and in a few short hours I will be switching them on. We hope that that exercise will go a long way towards improving the safety of that highway, but, in the final analysis, the highway will be as safe as the persons who use it. I believe that to the extent that lives have been lost on the Spring Garden, those lives, in the main, have been lost due to carelessness on the part of motorists.

We used to have some early pedestrian problems, and I believe that those have righted themselves, but I still see people doing some things on that highway that the highway was not designed for. As a matter of fact, some of the highways in the United States were not designed for that sort of madness, and as long as we have a class of motorists in our midst that does not sufficiently regard the safety of limb of his passengers and innocent pedestrians on the highway, we will continue to have problems on Spring Garden and on any other road for that matter. The driver that is unsafe on the Spring Garden Highway is unsafe on a regular network of roads, because he carries his dangerous and reckless attitude on the higher quality of that road. He just tends to scratch the margin of error and, therefore, gets himself into trouble that much more quickly.

I hope that those persons who are responsible for leading public opinion, I am referring to the media and others, will assist us in our campaign to make the Spring Garden and all of our roads safe. This appeal goes particularly to motorists who continue to abuse the highway.

St. Barnabas Road will shortly have its lights, they are in the island now.
4.15 p.m.

I take the point that the Speightstown By-pass is dark and can be dangerous at night. I drive on it every night and, therefore, I am in a position to know. I do not think that we can put Gibbons Heights in the same category as the Speightstown By-pass, but we will give Gibbons Heights due consideration. I can assure the honourable Member for St. Peter that we will be looking at that as a matter of urgency.....

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member is only repeating what he heard the honourable Member say at a different time. We are grateful that he remembered that the honourable Member for St. Peter has already brought that to our attention.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir: I did not even know, in terms of this particular issue that there was a Member for St. Peter. I never heard him mention it. It was earlier when we did not have any honourable Member for St. Peter when these matters were raised.

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

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

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

Clause 3 was called.

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

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

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Clause 3 talks about the character of registration number plates and says that the Licensing Authority, on application made to it without payment of a fee, should issue to various persons a registration number plate in accordance with the Second Schedule, except that the background on such number plates shall be dark blue in colour and the borders, letters and figures thereon, yellow.

The Second Schedule of the Act, as I understand it, does set out the character of the number plates in 1(2):

"The number plates may at the option of the owner be of the shape shown in the alternative diagrams or one of....."

It is obscure, I cannot see it, but it does talk about the shape of number plates. Then (b) deals with the background of the number plates, which must be black with white metalline figures or of white reflective nature with black letters and figures. So as it stands, there are two options — one of black number plates with white letters and figures, or, secondly, a white reflective number plate with black letters.

This new amendment makes provision for the colour in relation to what are diplomatic licenses for diplomatic consul and international organizations. I note that there are number plates on official cars, particularly

those bearing the letters of MP and ML, where the background of the number plate is green, and I believe the letters are black. I see no authority in the Road Traffic Act for having the background green, and I was wondering if the Honourable Minister could perhaps tell the Honourable House by what authority is the green background in relation to those cars bearing MP and ML used.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member for Christ Church West Central has asked a question about which, I must confess, as he has pointed out, I do not see the authority in the Act, and I will have to get that matter researched before I am in a position to give him an answer. I believe green was picked after some due consideration. I will have to research that matter before I can tell him precisely how it was achieved.

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

Clause 4 was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Clause 4 stand part.

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

Mr. M. A. KING: Clause 4, subsection 2 which reads as follows:

"(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), a driving licence to which that section refers is renewable in the month in which the licence holder was born and not later than the last day of that month."

This clearly is the provision which provides for the renewal for licence issued on the anniversary of the licence holder. What the subsection does seem to do is to say that those licences are renewable in the month in which the holder was born and not later than the last day of that month. Exactly what does this section mean? Clearly if a person is born, let us say, on the 1st of March, he has the whole month of March in which he may renew his licence, and renewal at any time within that month is a lawful and valid renewal. Clearly a person who has not renewed a licence on, let us say, the anniversary, which is the 2nd of March, cannot be prosecuted until the end of March has expired. But the way in which the legislation seems to be framed, that the licence is renewable in the month in which the licence holder was born and not later than the last day in that month, it is not renewable after the last day of that month. Does this mean that if the licence holder does not renew his licence after the last day of that month that he may not renew that licence at all? That is the possible interpretation which I think can be put on the legislation in the form in which it is drafted.

4.25 p.m.

What I am saying is that this needs to be clarified. I do not understand why the words "and not later than the last day of the month" are added. If it stopped at, say, "the licence was renewable in the month in which the licence holder was born", it seems to me that that would meet the requirements of permitting a later renewal, but clearly if you renew beyond that date, you are liable for prosecution for not having your licence renewed on time. What I am concerned about is if the additional words "and not later than the last day of that month" is a total proscription against the renewal of a licence while you have not come within the appropriate time.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member's instincts are correct. I am talking to the intention of the Bill. I am not a lawyer, but I can tell you that the intention of this clause is to encourage persons to renew their licences during the month of their birth and that renewals after the end of that month will put them in some jeopardy with the police. It does not mean that the licence becomes totally invalid. At least that was our intention. I will allow the Attorney General to talk to the legal point. As far as I can read it here, it looks all right to me, but the lawyers will have to tell me if it is all right or not. I suspect that it was scrutinised by the Attorney General's office, because they drafted the legislation.

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): The ball has been put in my court. What normally happens is that Executive Ministries advise the lawyers what they want. The lawyers cannot make policy for them. I am not sure what kind of instructions were passed to the Chambers in respect of drafting the intention of the Ministry of Transport and Works. However, it does appear from a reading of subsection (2), as pointed out by the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King), that at the end of the anniversary month there would be no provisions for renewal of licences. That is how it appears to me.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) suggests that perhaps if there were to be a period at the end of "born", that would answer it, and cross out the rest. That is not my view. I understand what the honourable Member is recommending, but the same driving licence to which the section refers as renewable in the month in which the licence holder was born, period, suggests that it is not renewable any other time. Therefore, I would suggest to the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works, who introduced this Bill, that perhaps at this point we should postpone further consideration of the Bill and refer it back to the Attorney General's Chambers with a clear and explicit instruction as to exactly what is needed so that we can put it in the form that satisfies the need.

I did hear the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves) volunteer that sometimes mis-

takes were made in the Chambers. I hope he was not referring to this particular one.

Aside.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member is now saying that mistakes are made everywhere. I can live with that, but too often there is expectation that lawyers will create the policy, give the instruction and then draft it. They can only draft legislation based on clear instructions given by Executive Ministries.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: In view of the difficulty expressed by the Member for Christ Church West Central and the advice of the Attorney General, I will move that further consideration of this Bill be postponed until we have had a chance to refer this subsection to the Attorney General's Chambers for clarification of the intention of the Bill.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, further consideration of the Bill was postponed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Sir, before I adjourn the sitting, it is customary for us to pay tributes when tributes are due, and also to say a few words of kindness on behalf of those people who served. I did not do it this morning because I know the Opposition would feel very left out if I had made reference to this item which I now propose to speak on.
4.35 p.m.

We know for a long time the House was adjourned until 12 o'clock noon on the 16th, but when the Orders were called and we came to Obituaries and/or Congratulatory Speeches, I did not think it fit to have proceeded to such an item in the absence of the Opposition. I, therefore, Mr. Speaker, would like to revert to the appropriate item under *Orders of the Day* on the Notice Paper, *Congratulatory and/or Obituary Speeches*, so that I will be able to say a few words on the passing of our former legislative colleague.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no objections, we will refer to the Agenda. There are no objections, so the honourable Member is therefore entitled to proceed.

OBITUARY SPEECHES RE LATE H. A. VAUGHAN

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Speaker, during the course of recess, we learned of the death of the late Hilton Augustus Vaughan, who was a member of this House, and his other pursuits during the period of time, I believe, 1926.

The late Hilton Vaughan had a distinguished career in Barbados not only as a legislator but also as a barrister-at-law, a member of the Magistracy, a Judge of the Assistant Court of Appeal and, later in his life, as a member of the Senate, a Minister and Attorney General. He also acted on many occasions as Governor-General of this nation.

All those who knew Hilton Vaughan would be aware of his great interest in history and in what one may generally call cultural matters. He was a great storyteller, and I have had the privilege on many occasions to appear before him in his capacity as a judge of the Assistant Court of Appeal, which was a very important court in Barbados. It was the Assistant Court of Appeal that the general mass of litigants in Barbados looked to for what they regarded as further and better justice. As a matter of fact, when I first started to appear in the courts of this island, one of the most telling things that could happen to you was, when you won a case, the other side would say, "I appeal for further justice to the Court of Appeal." In those days we also, of course, used to have a number of lay Magistrates, and the senior lawyers would be heard to say during the course of the judicial process, "Of course, we are only going through this exercise. We are going for justice before the Assistant Court of Appeal". Hilton Vaughan was a member of that Court, and he served there with distinction.

He specialized in his writings, as he was a well-known writer about a particular period of Barbadian history, the period of the creation of the Executive Committee in Barbados, and the parallel development that took place in the Commonwealth constitutional history at that time between what developed in Canada and what developed in Barbados. It was said that Canada's was a model of ours. I think that was said arising out of the Durham Report. In addition to that, he was very interested in the period of Samuel Prescod and Conrad Reeves relating to the Executive Committee. He also was a poet of no mean fame here, and a number of his writings of poetry have now been published and are available for sale.

I think that as a politician, I had the privilege of serving with him in the Senate, and I can testify to the vigorous style of his debate in the Other Place, particularly at the time when we were debating the reforms of the Constitution, which were necessary for us to have an independent state in Barbados. He played an active part in that area.

He worked as an Attorney General, but I do not think that it could be truthfully said that he enjoyed that activity. I think he much preferred the bench or the legislature or, indeed, later, as I am told, he enjoyed his period of time as an Ambassador to the United States of America, as Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

He of course, had the distinguished privilege of living in a very distinguished constituency in Christ Church, as a well-known resident of Top Rock in Christ Church.

He is survived by his third wife, and I think it would be quite appropriate for us to recognize that during most of his adult life here, he was married to a former Chief Welfare Officer in Barbados who herself, rendered distinguished service throughout Barbados as Chief Social Welfare Officer.

It is with deep regret that I beg to move the usual and customary Resolution of sympathy to his wife, daughter and other relatives on the occasion of the passing of Hilton Augustus Vaughan who rendered distinguished service in Barbados in a number of areas.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Speaker, with much regret I join with the Prime Minister in moving this Resolution. My regret is that although it is inevitable that at some point life ends for each individual, when the time comes and life does end, there is still sadness of having to part.

Hilton Augustus Vaughan had lived to a full and ripe old age. He was over 80, but even in the later years of his life, the gusto and incisiveness with which he approached the task of living was still sufficient to illuminate the lives of all those who touched him during the years of his life.

I served with him in New York, where he was the Second Ambassador of Barbados to the United Nations, following in the footsteps of Frank Walcott, who only stayed for three months, and so it would be correct to say that the pattern, the style and the direction in which the newborn, independent Barbados would go in that august Assembly was established by this man, who had served in so many areas of public life.
4.45 p.m.

Within a very short time in that capacity he had brought to bear his tremendous wisdom, his almost indefatigable capacity for detail and his absolute charm and wit as he dealt with serious matters and not so serious matters in almost the same manner. 'The ambassador', as I subsequently came to call him was, capable of breaking the most difficult situation by the infusion of his own experience, drawing widely, first, as an African man and,

secondly, as a Caribbean man, and bringing his tremendous experience to bear among a number of diplomats who were invariably younger than he himself.

When I think of him, I think of the Senegalese President Leopold Senghor, who was a poet as well as a statesman. I think of the two of them not in terms of their public career, but in their capacities as poets, because there was something about the poetry of the two men which seemed to suggest a very clear and distinct relationship with the heritage which emerged from their African ancestry.

Hilton Vaughan spent many hours discussing with his younger colleagues the merits of looking back to African heritage, and in his writings, behaviour and in his attitude he demonstrated constantly that he was able to draw from that heritage. It is of some regret that, in the final analysis, he did not reap what, in my view, was the highest reward which ought to have fallen to him, but perhaps he is the best vehicle by which that particular failure is manifested. He was able to say on more than one occasion that the only honour he longed for was in the end to be regarded by his fellowmen as a worthwhile citizen.

In listening to the recitation of achievements outlined first by his eulogists and again today by the Prime Minister, it is not difficult to say without fear of contradiction that he was, in fact, a worthwhile man. In the final analysis then, his greatest honour was achieved in the exemplary nature of his commitment to principle in the life which he led, a man who was able to nurture three families and leave behind him a large coterie of friends, young, middle aged and old, a man whose witness on earth is going to be remembered long after he and his colleagues have gone, a man who in making his contribution to the public life of Barbados never thought of himself as anything other than a Barbadian and a Caribbean man.

One does not look forward to obituaries, one does not look forward to these Resolutions which deal with the passing of a distinguished Member of this Chamber, but I think that Hilton Vaughan would want us to say that having lived as long as he did, there should be no moment other than rejoicing for his having served in both Chambers of Parliament of Barbados. He served with

distinction representing the City — it had to be distinction to be able to serve at the time when he did, in the manner which he did — and he served with distinction in the Senate, coming at an almost entirely different era and yet representing what was the most important and perhaps the only thing that binds most people in public life in Barbados, the political life of the community as seen through the eyes of a public person.

Hilton Vaughan understood what true independence was all about. It is my hope that those of us who have come after him will be able to fulfil the dream which he had for an independent Barbados. I think he would have wanted me, finally, to pay tribute to the contribution which he made to the political party of which he had the honour to be a member and to represent. That political party was fortunately at the point in office when independence came to Barbados, and Hilton Vaughan was able finally to leave his mark for all time on the history of Barbados by his contribution to what is now regarded as a fitting wonderful National Anthem.

I am deeply moved to be associated with this Resolution moved by the Honourable Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take this opportunity to join with Members of this Honourable Chamber in expressing my condolences to the family of the late Hilton Augustus Vaughan and request that you now stand for one minute in silence as a method of passing the necessary Resolution.

Honourable Members stood silently in their places for one minute.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this brings us to the end of today's sitting.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, April 23, 1985, at 12 o'clock noon.

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

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

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