
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, October 15, 1985.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.15 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Speaker)
His Honour R. E. Brathwaite, (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. S. Craig, (Acting Prime Minister, Minister of Information and Leader of the House)
Hon. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Hon. V. L. Johnson, M.A., (Minister of Transport and Works)
Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw, (Minister of Labour and Community Development)
Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, M.A., M.Sc., (Econ.) (Minister of Agriculture and Natural Resources)
Hon. A. Truss, (Minister of Tourism and the Environment)
Hon. O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.), (Parliamentary Secretary, Prime Minister's Office)
Hon. D. A. C. Simmons, Q.C., LL.M., (Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Prayers were led by Rev. I. M. Harewood.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, October 1, 1985.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, October 1, 1985, be taken as read.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I have received the following:

Accounts and Statement for the month of August, 1985, as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. O. S. ARTHUR: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

Statement showing the Net Customs and Excise Receipts for 2 months ending May 1985.

The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Barbados National Bank for the year 1984.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

A Bill to amend the Insurance Act.

A Bill to amend the Barbados National Bank Act.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES and Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN entered the Chamber and took their seats.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

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

A Bill to amend the Insurance Act.

A Bill to amend the Barbados National Bank Act.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

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

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

The question that those several Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

APPOINTMENT OF TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, before I call Order No. 1, I wish to inform the House that the Chairman of Committees is not in his seat today — he is still out of the island — and I beg to move that the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) be appointed temporary Chairman for today's sitting.

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

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply.

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

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

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS entered the Chamber and took his seat.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this item stands in my name, but I shall be passing the file over to the Acting Minister of Finance, who, we are well aware, is quite capable of handling matters of this nature, having such a splendid and brilliant economics mind. I therefore alert the House that the Acting Minister of Finance, the honourable Member for St. Peter, will deal with this matter.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1985-86

No. 5 — \$279 321

HEAD 41 — MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT

Hon. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Chairman, the Resolution before the House requires an amount of \$279 321 to be granted from the Consolidated Fund and to be placed at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1985-86, Head 41, Subhead 5, pertaining to regional shipping services development. The amount, Sir, is intended to cover the Government subvention to the West Indies Shipping Corporation for the fiscal year 1985.

By way of background, the West Indies Shipping Corporation has had a very unhappy financial history since 1980. Indeed, Sir, losses in 1984 amounted to TT \$8.1 million as compared with losses of TT \$4.4 million in 1983. To compound the issue, Sir, member states in CARICOM have not been making good the loss, so much so that the company has had to make extensive use of overdraft facilities.

I am happy to report that Barbados honoured its commitment up to 1984. But supplementary requests were made by the corporation to enable it to cover part of its operating deficits for 1983 and 1984, and a provision was made in our Estimates of 1985-86 in the amount of \$358 833 to provide additional financing to deal with the operating deficits for 1983-84. However, Mr. Chairman, no provision was made in the Estimates of 1985-86 for this year's subvention because of a particular principle. Cabinet decided that, in the light of a default by other CARICOM member countries, Barbados would hold back its payments and make its payment for 1985-86 conditional on the response by member countries in relation to the amount due and owing them to WISCO. I am happy to report, Mr. Chairman, that at the recently concluded Heads of Government Conference, it was agreed that all Governments in the region should settle all outstanding arrears owed to WISCO by December 1985. Government's liability has been set at

\$638 207 and, therefore, an additional provision of \$279 321 is now required to enable Government to meet its commitment to the corporation.
12.25 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I spoke earlier on the unhappy financial experience of WISCO, and I trust that, in their contributions to this debate, Members of this Chamber will not be unduly harsh on the corporation concerned. WISCO, as you are aware, Sir, is part of that general apparatus within the region which is designed to promote the growth of inter-regional trade, and, like many new institutions, it has had to face severe financial difficulties during its initial years of operation, difficulties which have been compounded by factors perhaps entirely outside its control. I speak here particularly of the fall-off in inter-regional trade caused by the severe economic recession in the region and I speak also, Sir, of the acute financial and foreign exchange difficulties which might have stood in the way of member countries making their subventions to WISCO in a timely fashion.

We in Barbados, Sir, should not strain at our subventions to WISCO because the evidence, both financial and economic, would suggest that the contribution of WISCO to our economy has not been inconsequential. It has served as a major vehicle whereby our trade to the region has expanded, and I am advised that the direct financial benefit to Barbados ensuing from the operation of WISCO has, in some years, exceeded \$3 000 000. To that extent, Sir, WISCO has made a net contribution, in purely financial terms, to the running of the Barbados economy, and in that spirit, I have the honour, Sir, to beg that this Resolution do now stand part.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I rise to second the Resolution and I reserve my right to speak.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, the Acting Minister of Finance, the honourable Member for St. Peter, has asked that Members on this side be not unduly harsh on the West Indies Shipping Corporation. I think we can comply with that request. In fact, I do believe that the West Indies Shipping Corporation has, for quite some time, made a contribution to Barbados and to the West Indies.

I am not sure what are the Corporation's problems. That formal body, which I call West Indies Shipping, has traditionally been a burden on the taxpayers of contributing territories. Why that has been the case, quite frankly, Sir, I do not know. I believe that there are other persons who are owners of ships, which ply the West Indian waters and transport produce and goods from one part to the other, and whose businesses, Sir, are profitable ones. Why that cannot be so for West Indies Shipping Corporation, I really cannot say, but there is a history of unprofitability attached to the West Indies Shipping Corporation.

I have been wondering why, Sir, we passed only \$455 000 in the Estimates earlier this year when, in fact, we are required now to make a total contribution of over \$600 000. That did not make much sense to me. But having heard the Acting Minister of Finance, I have been made to understand that the Government deliberately refused to bring this matter to the attention of the House and seek an appropriation for the West Indies Shipping Corporation because of the default of other contributing territories. It might have been better if, in fact, we had asked for the appropriation and Government had not spent it, because it is the amount of money that you would be owing in any event. In the long run, it appears to us — I may be wrong — as though we are paying more on this occasion than we would have been asked to appropriate.

I should like to know, Sir, what is the subvention of the Barbados Government to the West Indies Shipping Corporation? From what I heard here this morning, it would appear as though the amount that we are being asked to appropriate now is not Barbados' subvention but, in fact, includes certain arrears or certain outstanding amounts owing to the corporation. I think the Minister, in his reply, can enlighten us as to the amount of money that Barbados is required to contribute annually to the West Indies Shipping Corporation, if, in fact, this is not the amount. I may be wrong in my interpretation, but, Sir, I do not think that I am.

On this matter, Sir, I should like to state that I hope that the other contributing territories follow Barbados' example and pay up what monies are owing because the fact of an agreement — wherever that agreement took place, I am not sure where — does not necessarily mean that defaulting territories are going to pay up. We have had examples of this, even in recent times. I know there are some territories that are exceedingly unhappy about WISCO — I know this for sure, Sir — and I know some of those territories are saying that they are not going to make a contribution. If they have been able now to persuade those territories to contribute, all well and good, but I know the history of subventions by other territories to matters that are regional. Take the University and the Regional Police Training School as examples. It has not been good. I do hope, Sir, that we all pull together and try to make something of the West Indies Shipping Corporation. I believe that it can do a world of good for Barbados in terms of the movement of goods now we are trying to export, in terms of manufactured goods and in terms of agriculture.

I would be happy, Sir, if I can get replies to the few questions that I have posed.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the West Indies Shipping Corporation

is one of those partnership agreements between CARICOM communities for the provision of a service that is intended to be mutually beneficial to all of the territories involved. I do not believe, Sir, that there is any question in the minds of those of us who have watched WISCO for some time that the corporation provides an invaluable service, or should be able to provide an invaluable service, particularly to the manufacturers and the traders of Barbados, and particularly in respect of cargo flowing between the CARICOM Community and North America. But there are certain problems which perplex us nonetheless, Sir, because when we attempt to analyse WISCO's usefulness and to measure the extent to which it has actually performed according to its charter, we are faced with a number of questions which I think need at some stage to be addressed, and which I know Barbados has raised in the CARICOM Ministers of Transport Meetings that are held yearly.

12.35 p.m.

Some of the territories, particularly Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and, I believe, Guyana, operate an independent shipping service that may be said to be running in competition, to some degree, with WISCO. It has always been a source of bafflement to me how it can be rationalized that territories together would provide for a common carrier service and then some of those territories, independently, put in another service that is competing with that service to which we all make contributions. It would appear to me to be a substantial conflict of interest in respect of the operation of that common service, and we have raised that question before.

Additionally, Sir, we need to raise another question, and it has to do with the level of commitment that CARICOM member states hold in respect of these services that we run jointly. Because in almost every case we are faced with a situation in which other member territories are largely in default of their financial commitments for the running of the service and, therefore, WISCO is always teetering on the brink of collapse and scrambling about to find a rescuing act in order to keep its service going.

Barbados has always been making its contribution on a timely basis and, as a matter of fact, Sir, it had come to the stage where we were wondering whether, in fact, we could continue responding positively to calls for supplementing the deficit owed to WISCO when other territories have not made good their first commitment to the operating of the line. It was at that stage that Barbados sent a message — we telegraphed our intentions to hold our contributions until we could see some positive decision on the part of member states to honour their primary commitments.

If you were to look, Sir, at the outstanding contributions up to July 10, 1985, you would see in

Trinidad dollars, Trinidad and Tobago, \$1 672 000; Jamaica, \$2 888 000; Barbados \$678 000; Guyana, \$718 000. It is not as if we do not intend to honour our obligations, but we do want to let it be clearly known that Barbados alone does not constitute CARICOM. We have to make sure that when we make a contribution to an organization that is supposed to be a regional organization, all of those partners to that Treaty or agreement should regard their duties as imperative to the survival of all of us.

I believe, Sir, that shipping plays a tremendous role in the industrial development of this region. It is not good enough that we should have to rely on external shipping lines to provide our primary means of transporting finished products to their market destinations. Therefore, the whole intention behind the WISCO arrangement is to give us a cutting edge into the principal markets of the world — and I am speaking primarily of North America, where the big growth potential is regarded to be — so that our manufacturers can have their finished goods put, on a timely basis, in the markets that they are intended to go to, and that we can have our raw materials, which in large measure come out of that same North American market, reaching our manufacturers in time, so that they will be able to take advantage of the opportunities that are regarded as being there.

Sir, I obviously will support the Resolution, but I believe that we have to sound a clear note of warning that if we are serious about this partnership in which we are all engaged, we have to put our heads together and, like big men, honour our obligations so that we will not have to speculate as to the motives of some for not meeting their contributions. Finally, Sir, I reiterate that we have to take a closer look at whether or not it is in the best interest of WISCO to have other shipping lines run by member states functioning in competition with WISCO, and whether or not we should make a concerted effort to allow all of the cargo that is available for transshipment from here to North America to be consolidated on one principal carrier that serves the interests of all of us.

I, Sir, support the Resolution.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that we are concentrating on the most miniscule aspect of international shipping. As far as the honourable Member who has just sat down is concerned, I do not think that Governments in the region are promoting shipping in competition with the West Indies Shipping Corporation. I think this is an unfair accusation, because Governments would be cutting their own throats. What is happening is that there is a demand for inter-island shipping in the Eastern Caribbean, the frequency and quality of which is not being catered to, by the West Indian Shipping Service.

When the Government of Jamaica was not speaking to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, like the Jews and the Samaritans, the British Government asked them to take over the chairmanship of the shipping service to see if we could establish some kind of — to use a word from international jargon — “detente” between the two countries. Whenever we are speaking of the shipping service, we have to speak in terms of Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Guyana, because whether it is a shipping service or whether it is the University of the West Indies, or on any other level of regional co-operation, even the Leeward Islands Air Transport, you will find that the Eastern Caribbean countries, which are vociferous over ownership and control, are very delinquent when it comes to paying their just dues, although, invariably — let us take the shipping service and let us take the air transport situation — these operations are predominantly beneficial to the smaller Lesser Antilles. I am not using that in a pejorative sense, I use it merely as a geographical expression. I frequently refer to them as the Lesser Antilles because that is what it says on a map in my office. They are the “Lesser” when it comes to making contributions, but they are the Greater Antilles when it comes to wishing to have control over the shipping service and over the air transport services, the only regional carrier in the area, apart from the shipping service, being the Leeward Islands Air Transport.

12.45 p.m.

The country which really benefits and needs the shipping service more than any other country is the country that has the largest deficit in contributions, that is Jamaica, because the schooner captains and the motor vessel owners, who are willing to ply their trade all the way from here up to Antigua and Montserrat, and even the British and American Virgin Islands, and as far south as Guyana, on a voluntary basis without any Government subsidy, are not prepared to make the long haul to Jamaica because they lose too much time. The shipping service really is beneficial to the Jamaican manufacturers, and it is Jamaica which is in the largest deficit. We do not really need the shipping service because, with a little encouragement, the private ship owners, of which my grandfather was one he lost a lot of money in it, it was only my grandmother’s good sense that was able to send the children to school but my grandfather was very venture-some in these things and he decided he wanted to run a schooner between here and Tobago — you always find a lot of foolish and venturesome spirits in the inter-island shipping service, and because it is a personally-managed business, they are able to literally keep their heads above water.

We can always get goods moved between here and St. Vincent. We can always get goods, like our cement, moved to Guyana, although we would have been better off with the *North Point*. We can always get goods moved as far north as Antigua without any Government inter-

vention, but we cannot get them moved to Jamaica, and the shipping service really has been designed to promote and foster trade between Jamaica and the Eastern Caribbean, which will include, in that expression, Barbados and Guyana, and Trinidad as well. So when you look at this thing realistically, it is an instrument of CARICOM which is looked upon not for the peculiar benefits which we in Barbados derive from it, but our brothers in Jamaica, the manufacturers, the Government and everybody. It is really a Jamaican-oriented operation.

When I say that this is miniscule, I am satisfied that we can move goods in the eastern Caribbean without any Government intervention or any Government subsidy. It is a great pity that we dismantled the schooner pool. That was a disaster, because at least the schooner pool gave some regularity to the shipping service. Now it is a question of, “when I get a full cargo I will sail — and not before.” It is not on any basis of regularity to one island or the other or from one island to the other. If we have to rely on the West Indian Shipping Service to get mangoes from Dominica, we would never get them. By the time the boat has made the trip from Jamaica back down to Dominica, a period of 8 or 10 days elapses and all the mangoes have gone bad. So we need this private entrepreneurial activity going on in the shipping service to the eastern Caribbean, and I think that we should look for ways and means of stimulating and assisting that particular kind of traffic, as well as keeping our interest in the regional shipping service, which is for the long haul.

When I use the expression “miniscule,” I wonder if the Minister is aware that Barbados is spending \$100 million or more — I have not got the latest figures — on freight charges to and from the United Kingdom and North America alone. That is a direct drain on our foreign exchange reserves, and what Dr. Williams and I have been urging for a long time, in co-operation with Dr. Alvarez Ecchevaria who was the President of Mexico, is that here in the region, in the Caribbean, we ought to develop an international shipping service since a lot of our traffic, the bulk of our traffic, is with countries to the north of us, notably Canada, the United States of America and Great Britain, and using Great Britain’s ports, such as Barry, Southampton and Plymouth as entrepôts on to the European Economic Community. And if Barbados alone is spending \$100 million in hard-earned foreign currency on external shipping, I have no idea, but it must be astronomical what the whole Caribbean is spending on shipping from outside.

If you study the history of the development of the western hemisphere, the imperial policy, you will discover that the wars that took place in Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries were about shipping. The separation of the 13 colonies, in 1765 or whenever it was, was over shipping. The continuation of the war after the American

colonies had been sequestered was over shipping. The 1651 revolution in Barbados was over shipping, of the hegemony. The imperial power wanted to tell us what kind of ships we should send our goods to North America in, and Barbados went to war, and in 1652 we signed a treaty with the British Government, in Oistin Town at the Mermaid Tavern, on which the rights of Barbados were established, although they called it the Articles of Capitulation. It was capitulation by the British Government. That happened in Oistins, and it was our shipping.

Basically, it was fundamental to the survival of the British economy that they should control the shipping into the western hemisphere, as they still control shipping into Barbados and other islands in the eastern Caribbean. So instead of looking at these microscopic areas, we will have to go on paying the subsidy, because we want to have our trade with Jamaica. We do not really need shipping for our own purposes. We must now begin to look at our foreign exchange reserves, and since we are spending such a large amount of these reserves paying freight charges through the shipping conferences, at rates that they fix and over which we have no control whatsoever, should we not now get together with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and take up the challenge laid down by President Ecchevaria of Mexico and develop a regional shipping service that will bring our goods from Europe and the United States and so save a large amount of our precious and hardly-earned foreign exchange reserves?

I am willing to support the Resolution. It is a fact of life that they who keep the most noise are the ones who pay least, and I hate to think what Barbados' position would have been if we had been so misguided as to pick up all the tabs with these other people in a Federation until they become fully acquainted with the economic facts of life. They are not accustomed to paying, and until we convert them to the philosophy that what you pay for you get and what you get you must pay for, then we will have to go on just subsidising. But in the long run they will pay it. What used to happen in the past, with the West Indies University and with the shipping service, was that after about three years writing them letters and so on, the British Government used to give them a grant to wipe off the arrears. I do not know who is going to wipe off the arrears now, and I hope the shipping service will get the money from somewhere, but I agree with the Minister that we should not pay one cent more than what is our lawful contribution to the service which we are discussing.

12.55 p.m.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT (St. Michael North East): Sir, I want to make a short contribution to this debate since this matter falls directly within the Ministry of International Transport, and since I have been following very closely some of the meetings in which WISCO is involved.

I want to say that the practical shipping world is a very intense cut-throat business. WISCO, a quasi-regional organization, is finding itself locked in battle with international shipping concerns which, are finding it very difficult to keep their vessels afloat. Against that background, we have the inter-regional problem of declining trade, for which, every day, there is mounting competition.

Sometime this month, very shortly, a new service will be coming into the region, adding further pressure on WISCO and even the smaller vessels that ply throughout the island with produce such as mangoes and plantains, as the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has mentioned. But I would wish to say that WISCO is not taking it sitting down. WISCO has been trying, rather hard to look at new markets outside of the region. Even though they say it is an inter-regional shipping service, they have already begun an operation out of Miami into the eastern Caribbean, which is, perhaps, the most lucrative of its routes, because of the said problem of the declining inter-regional trade.

WISCO also has on the drawing board plans to transship a substantial amount of cargo out of Belize into the region. As you are well aware, Sir, the Government of Belize is looking very closely at doing greater trade with the CARICOM states. This was pinpointed by the Prime Minister of that country at the recent Heads of Government Conference here in Barbados, when he clearly itemized a number of products that Belize is now producing and for which they are looking for markets within the Caribbean and Mexico. WISCO is the line which, automatically, would fall in line for this business if it should take off.

The problem with the shipping service, Mr. Chairman, however, apart from the competitive spirit of the shipping world, is that the management structure has not had that exposure as its competitors into the practical world of shipping, and since they have most times to rely on the Governments which support the operation for decisions, they are disadvantaged as to how they can make a competitive bargain. I feel that if there is one area within WISCO that needs strengthening, it would be a look at the management structure, to bring in people who perhaps, have had experience in the administration of shipping rather than, perhaps, an educational background, a degree, which is non-shipping.

I want to give support to this Resolution, Sir, and to urge those Governments which are delinquent in their payments to the corporation to see the corporation as fulfilling a need within CARICOM which, if left to outside business, would accelerate the cost of freight within the region. We feel that with all other things being equal and the international economy gets going again and regional trade takes off, WISCO should see better days ahead.

With this short address, I just want to commend the Minister acting for Finance on this measure before the House and give it my full support.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman the honourable Member who just sat down, whom we on this side refer to as the "First Lord of the Admiralty" — and again, I say that in no pejorative sense, but due to his experience above decks for a short time before he entered the House, he has been held up as being the expert on shipping — I want to ask him if the ships that we have now are capable of carrying containers. It appears to me that if the ships are not capable of carrying containers, extending their operations to Miami against a well-established shipping line such as *Tropical* is going to lengthen the interval of calls between ports, because we have not increased the number of ships to take care of the extension. The distance between Kingston, Jamaica, if you go direct from Palisadoes to Miami International Airport, is 550 miles, but since you have to go around the tip of Cuba, it is going to be more like 700 or 800 miles, which is probably 3½ sailing days in each direction. I do not see how extending the service to Miami, or to any part of Florida, is going to improve the services. It is going to cause a deterioration of the services around the Eastern Caribbean because of the extension of the interval that the ships are going to have between the ports of call. It is, also, to me essential that in these days of containerisation, any ship that goes to Florida must necessarily have, not only containers, but refrigerated containers.

On the question of management, what you really need on a ship is a captain and a crew. We have a board, and the board makes political decisions, such as the contributions which each country should make. After that, the best people to manage a shipping service are the agents, who want to make money in each port; and they will get the cargoes going. That is why I said before that it is a pity that we decided to dismantle the schooner pool which had its headquarters here in Barbados.

I should like to tell the honourable Member for St. Michael North East that he should not take any question I raise as a criticism or in any way trying to disparage the contribution which he has made. I only wish to point out to him that in making the decision to extend the service, you may actually be doing yourself a disservice.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: If I may reply to this, Sir, WISCO currently operates a containerised service out of Miami into the Caribbean and, to my knowledge, there have not been any complaints about the service being inadequate.
1.05 p.m.

One of the problems which the company has is to dispense with the first vessel, the *CARICOM ENTERPRISE*. They have been trying to sell that vessel

because it is, as the honourable Member for St. John just said, 'really not practical in today's shipping world. They have been advertising to see what is the best price they can get, but I do not think that the service would fall short in any way by going around Mexico and the tip of Cuba, because they are also using a third vessel on charter which fills or bridges the gap when they have to go on an extended run into the Caribbean.

The difference between WISCO and the inter-island vessel is merely the fact of offering a regular service, which WISCO is committed to. The operator of a schooner, who is a private entrepreneur, makes his own decision as to when he will sail. If there is no cargo for Barbados, obviously he is going to wait in Bequia two or three days until he gets some cargo to come into Barbados. WISCO has to make a decision. The captain has to make a call to Barbados, despite what little cargo he might have, and without trying to be drawn into any argument between WISCO and the small schooner entrepreneur, I think they are both providing a very valuable service at both ends of the scale.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1985–86, No. 6
— \$675 000

HEAD 77 — MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS (St. Thomas): Mr. Chairman this Resolution seeks to provide supplementary provision to cover additional costs of refurbishing the premises at 263 Tottenham Court Road in England, arising from a number of increases.

If I may just give the House some background to this, perhaps all Members know that the present premises of the Barbados High Commission in London are situated at Upper Belgrave Street. The lease for those premises expires at the beginning of 1987. On August 20, last year, a decision was taken and the purchase went through for this building at Tottenham Court Road. For those Members who may not have had the opportunity to visit Tottenham Court Road within the last year, it is at that junction of Tottenham Court Road with Great Russell Street — not the Oxford Street end, but nearer to the Holborn end — what I used to call the bottom of Tottenham Court Road. It is in the heart of commercial London, in the heart of a very busy area, but with easy access from the new premises to the underground at Tottenham Court Road Station. Of course, that area is well supplied with buses, and there are simple parking facilities, at the premises and nearby, for the occupants of the building. The floor space is 9 317 square feet, and that square footage will adequately house the

High Commission itself, Caribbean Airways and the Board of Tourism's office in London.

Sir, the funds for purchasing this property last year were provided by means of a loan of £1 350 000 from the Royal Bank of Canada, London, and £650 000 from the Barbados National Bank, through its London branch, and those loans were approved by Parliament last year in Resolutions Nos. 43 and 44. This supplementary of approximately £225 000 is needed to do a number of things, and I think the House is entitled to know some of the details involved in the refurbishing programme and how this overrun has been occasioned.

First of all, Sir, there is an increase in the schedule of accommodation. Originally, the premises were to house 36 persons. They will now house 47, so there is need, because of the additional personnel, consequentially to do partitioning, have additional doors, heating, lighting, ventilation and a greater power supply. There is a mezzanine floor in the building. I had the good fortune on my way back from Vanuatu in the first week in August to have visited the offices with the High Commissioner. I think if honourable Members get the chance to see it, they will be well satisfied that it is an excellent property. On the first mezzanine floor there is need to increase the floor space to provide for the additional occupancy — 11 other occupants — that we will have.

In addition, this extra money is required to meet the special security arrangements that are required by the British authorities for High Commission premises generally. One is only too well aware of the potentiality for High Commission premises to be attacked by terrorists and so on, and I am sure honourable Members will agree that it is vital to our interest that we take the utmost care in ensuring that the security arrangements meet, as far as possible, the standards set by the host country, Britain.

The entire toilet system will be renewed to provide separate male and female facilities on each floor level. There will be the provision of showers in the basement for the Board of Tourism and tea stations, as they call them, on the mezzanine and first floors.

On the fifth floor there is going to be a small flat with a kitchen for the High Commissioner. Members on the Opposition benches will be aware that the residence of the High Commissioner is sited quite some way from central London, at Thames Ditton, and sometimes it is not convenient for the High Commissioner, if he has an early evening function, to get from central London to Thames Ditton, change and come back to central London for the function. So we are going to be providing for a small kitchen, basic sanitary facilities and a little flat for the High Commissioner in these premises.

The heating system is to be changed from an oil heating system to a gas heating system, and those would

be the main structural improvements which will require this supplementary. But there is a slight increase in the cost of labour, material and plant of approximately 5.8 per cent. In addition, I think honourable Members ought to be aware that in England this type of structural improvement will attract value added tax, and, Sir, the value added tax in this regard is estimated at £93 000. It is hoped, through negotiation, to see if we can recover part, if not all, of the VAT. The quantity surveyor's fees, Sir, constitute the final component in this amount of money, and they are £12 000.

1.15 p.m.

Sir, in a general way, I wish to say that I am particularly pleased to be moving this Resolution today, because for many years, both during the time when I was a student in London and after 1966 when we became independent and had our own High Commission offices, I was always of the view, and made representation, that we should look to the day when the Barbados Government would own its own property in London. It may not have been financially possible in the latter sixties for this to be done, but I am glad that the country can now afford to have its own freehold property in London.

When I was in the Other Place, I believe it may have been 1983, I spoke in a debate about the need for there to be harmonization and rationalization of all of the agencies in London. To me, it was no good having the High Commission premises and the Tourist Board too at Upper Belgrave Street but Caribbean Airways in Bruton Street. Where the present premises of the Tourist Board are situated at Upper Belgrave Street, scarcely anybody who would be interested in coming to Barbados as a tourist would pass there. It is an area that is set apart from activity. It is not busy. The premises for the Tourist Board are less than satisfactory. When you approach the present premises at Belgrave Street, you will see the Barbados Flag projecting from a balcony. That is the only indication, apart from a little name plate outside, that that is the Barbados High Commission premises. But the Tourist Board is worse — they are in a little room with no display to the general public so that passers-by do not even know!

Aside

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: It is a cubby hole. Passers-by do not know that here is a country which is selling a tourist product and they could stop in. You have to go pass the door, meet the receptionist, on your left, who will then show you into a little room behind her, where there is total confusion, books, papers, brochures, everything all over the place, and human bodies too, five and six in a room. I do not know how they could concentrate and do proper planning in that atmosphere of chaos. So I am indeed heartened that Government has been able to move to a location which, I think, is an attractive location. It is certainly an area of

London where tourists and English people pass in great profusion all day long. It is very, very, very busy.

I hope that the Tourist Board will develop some kind of movie video system that will be played continuously all day, as you see in other places in London, advertising Barbados. There should be an ongoing film of half an hour, an hour, whatever, where when you pass, you would be seeing shots of Barbados and that in itself will attract people to stop and go in. It is only an idea that I am sharing with Members. I hope that there is some merit in it and that the Tourist Board can look at it. The premises lend themselves to that kind of outward expression, that kind of display.

I trust that Members will find it possible, Sir, to support this Resolution.

I beg to move that this Resolution stand part.

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

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You are no seconder, you are the Leader of the House. Act like a leader.

Aside

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Leaders do not second Resolutions.

(Aside: Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is your problem.)

Laughter.

(Aside: Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You do not second things. You always want to first it.)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, one of our neighbouring territories had a motto of, "Forward ever, backward never". I never thought I would live to see the day that a High Commission would move from Belgravia, up there with all the prominent European countries, with the exception of probably the Russian Embassy — the United States Embassy is in Grosvenor Square — and would be going to Tottenham Court Road.

As a matter of geography, and I think the honourable Member is a bit out, because Holborn is at the other end. We have not moved..... Oh dear, he is going to tell me about Holborn and Tottenham!

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: What is the point of order?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: He is wrong on his geography, Sir.

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

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I have not even finished. Why does the honourable Member not listen? I am the expert on Tottenham Court Road. I will tell you my experience in Tottenham Court Road.

(Aside: Hear you!)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: There was a Deputy Assistant Provost Marshal of London by the name of Flight Lieutenant Scoon, and there was a place in Tottenham Court Road, which the honourable Member may not know, that we used to call the Jungle, and whenever they were going to raid the Jungle, the Deputy Assistant Provost Marshal would call me up and tell me: "Well, you better let the Barbados boys stay away from the Jungle tonight, because the military police are raiding the Jungle tonight." That was the place which was the palais de dance or something to Tottenham Court Road. It eventually became the Metropolitan Bobera House — not opera house, Bobera House — the headquarters of Bob.

My other experience about Tottenham Court Road was this. I was standing up almost directly opposite the new premises being acquired by the Barbados Government one day. And we speak about terrorism! It was at the Tottenham Court Road Police Station, and I was at the bus stop waiting to go to Hampstead, because I had to come back down to classes — I used to walk in the evening but it was the middle of the day — and I saw a big furniture van drive up and four men took out a piece of new furniture and took it into the police station. And while I was waiting for the bus they moved out all the other furniture from the police station and there was a sergeant on duty! At 6.30 p.m. in the evening, I read *The Star*: "Thieves raid Tottenham Court Road police station and carried out every stick of furniture under the eyes of the Sergeant." That is the protection we are going to get from terrorism! What they did was very clever. They moved in one settee, which was new, and carried out the fridge, the TV sets, about eighteen chairs and the billiard table, and when the Sergeant thought that they were renewing the furniture, they were cleaning out Tottenham Court Road police station.

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is the kind of protection we are going to get!

The point I am making is this. Everything the honourable Member has said, and I really would compliment him on the first time we are hearing from the other side a complete explanation of a Resolution — it is not his decision — is an excellent argument for moving Caribbean Airways and the Tourist Board — they could work together — to Tottenham Court Road, or maybe down closer to Trafalgar Square, or the Strand or some-

where like that, where tourists are more likely to congregate. But the High Commission does not have to be there. It is a bit of a let down for Barbados. When the honourable Member was there working for the High Commission, he would not have printed a card.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: On a point of order, Sir, and I have to put this one in first, Sir: It just is not true that I ever worked for the Barbados High Commission, or indeed for the Barbados Government, until June 15 this year. I never worked for them. He must not confuse me with my brother.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The reason why I made the unforgivable, to him, mistake of confusing him, was that during our Independence Conference he was in attendance on our delegation all the time, and I thought he had been sent there by the High Commission to make us comfortable. I did not know that he was not working.....

Laughter.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: for the Barbados Government — that he was just doing this through his willingness to see that we were all right. I must say we appreciated his services, but I really thought he was doing it for the Barbados Government. I did not know that he was doing it on his own. I ask the honourable Member to accept my apologies.
1.25 p.m.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Then there was another incident in which he was wrongfully blamed. He was with some other High Commission people, and his brother was there, too, so I thought that they were all working there.

In the days when the honourable Member was teaching, or whatever he was doing, and was familiar with the High Commission, he would agree that if he had a business card he would not have put down Tottenham Court Road as the address of a High Commission.

As you know, Sir, in London there are certain areas which are for certain things. Belgravia is for embassies. Places like Bond Street, Oxford Street, the Strand, and Northumberland Avenue, are where you see airlines and Tourist Boards. At the bottom of Pall Mall or the top of Pall Mall, you will see numerous Middle Eastern places represented by their airlines. But, of course, if they decide they want to go to Tottenham Court Road, I agree that the Tourist Board and Caribbean Airways could work closer together. If that is the decision and the best thing to do is to buy a place, then we will have to suffer the indignity in an area associated more closely

with the development of bop music and matters of that kind than with ambassadorial functions.

Sir, I am not being too critical. I am just saying that I am amused that we should consider that this would be appropriate. What the honourable Member could probably assist me on is this. He has admitted that £650 000 came from the bank. This added insult to injury. The branch of the bank that we set up in London, honourable Members would be surprised to know that the Governor of the Central Bank had his eyes on that institution for a very long time — and that little bank was able to lend the Government of Barbados £10 million, savings mobilized by workers in England. The Governor of the Central Bank here wanted to bring the accounts of the Barbados National Bank's branch, which was then situated in Belgrave Street — No. 6, I think — into his general accounts to make his Balance of Payments look good. The man on that side said, "Oh no, this is money which belongs to the workers in England". And that money was invested in England by the National Bank, so that when the people who had migrated to the United Kingdom wanted to transfer money to Barbados to buy property and so on, I have to be very careful how I use my expression. I would not like to say with the connivance of the Bank of England or with the English authorities looking the other way. Even before Mrs. Thatcher allowed such free transfers, they were able to transfer money just by a telex message from that little bank there.

That bank had accumulated assets at one time of some £41 million. You would not believe it, but I made the first deposit in that bank, which I received notice of two weeks ago that they transferred to Fairchild Street — all £21 of it. They sent a big notice saying that they had transferred my money to Fairchild Street. I never made any more deposits and I did not make any withdrawals, so it grew from about £15 to £21 pounds. I was the first depositor. It was under the staircase, and would you believe — the honourable Member would know this — with those small beginnings, that that bank was able to take out £10 million in Development Bonds here in Barbados to assist the Government, by ways and means advances and so on through the Central Bank.

When I was in the United Kingdom 3 or 4 weeks ago, Barbadians who are residing overseas were all asking me, "Why it is they are closing down our bank?", because it was a great convenience to them. I was surprised to hear the honourable Member state today that that same little bank that they closed down lent them £650 000 to help buy the building. And the thanks they got for it? Out through the door! Bring in Caribbean Airways, which has not contributed anything but deficits to the finances of this country! The honourable Member cannot deny it — I did not know until he said it — the bank that lent them the

money to purchase the building, they said they do not want this bank anymore. Go and ask the migrants how they feel about that!

I myself was surprised when I heard it only a few weeks ago when I was up there, that £10 million had been lent to the Barbados Government, but because the great conundrum over here on my right — I do not mean you, Sir, I mean in Trafalgar Square — decided that he wanted to control the bank, they closed the bank down. It was providing a valuable service, not only to the people who work in England, but to their relatives over here, because transfers could be made.

If you say that that bank was losing money, which it was not, well then close down Caribbean Airways. As far as I know, they still owe Ghana Airways some 3 million, and I am sure that the bank that we had over there, all of us Barbadians, has never lost a penny. That is what I am really concerned about, because little institutions like that not only perform a service to our nationals abroad, but they assist the assets of Barbados in the long run, whether they are under the control of the Governor of the Central Bank or whether they are controlled by the High Commission overseas. That is my real stricture.

You cannot say that the bank was losing money if they could lend £650 000 to buy the building. You cannot say that. Six hundred and fifty thousand pounds is nearly \$2 million or more, and if they can lend you that in these days, and still you have £10 million belonging to them somewhere along the line, you cannot say they are losing money.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It took about two officers. Mr. Edey was there at one time, and Mr. Jordan assisted.

In relation to the Tourist Board — I agree with everything the honourable Member said. Belgravia is not a place for any Tourist Board. The people in Belgravia do not go to travel agents or Tourist Boards. They have their agent, they pick up the telephone, and they book a passage first class on British Airways and so on. Migrants do not live in Belgravia; migrants lived in Brixton — that is what we call the front line — migrants live in Birmingham, migrants live in Wolverhampton. So as far as I am concerned, the Tourist Board was not serving any useful purpose in being there.

The Honourable Attorney General is boasting — I do not mean that he personally was boasting — but in his explanation he said how much square footage he had, and they are accommodating 47 instead of 36 people with garage, parking and security measures. Do you mean

that you could not even find 40 square feet, that is, 80 square feet — sorry, I said 40 — a little room 8 by 10, with a little window and one door, to let the nationals come in and make their deposits? I mean that is it. I wonder if the honourable Member personally feels that that was the right decision to make.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Tell me outside. The honourable Member will confide in me outside. I will not hold it against him. What he tells me will be between him and me, Sir.

I think, as a Barbadian and somebody who knows the conditions, closing that bank was a tragic mistake. That is what the people over there have told me, that they regret that we have curtailed the activities in the National Bank in London. The £15 that I had there was neither here nor there. But the fact that I was willing to leave it there, when some months I had an overdraft and could have gone and called for that little bit of bread, shows the confidence I had in that little bank over there in setting an example. I wish I could have deposited more.

1.35 p.m.

I tell you something more. Not only were Barbadian nationals depositing money with the Barbados National Bank, but other Caribbean peoples were using that bank, because they found its activities very beneficial to them. I hope the Minister will consult with his colleagues, and that, as soon as the premises have been refurbished, they will consider finding accommodation, if purely for economic reasons, or nationalistic reasons, so that we can have a little berth inside there so that the nationals can come in and add to the assets of this country.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Mr. Chairman, I quite enjoyed the speech of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. I anticipated, and I was telling my friend, the Honourable Minister of Labour, that he was bound to reply to me in aviation terms and anecdotes of his days in London. One has become accustomed to those and our knowledge is thereby enriched. The thing about it is that none of us is of comparable age to dispute what he gives us as the truth.

He did not tell us whether on his recent visit to London he was able to have a physical view and inspection of these premises.

(Asides: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Outside.)

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Outside. So he must know then, Sir, that it is nearer — when I said it was at the bottom of Oxford Street — to Holborn, that I am right, because the underground station that puts you out

into the doorway virtually is Tottenham Court Road. The next on the Central line going east is Holborn.

(*Asides:* Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Goodge Street).

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, he is talking about Goodge Street. I did say that the next on the Central line, the red one, is Holborn. Goodge Street is on the Northern Line.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I think the honourable Member will agree that on Tottenham Court Road, you will have down at the bottom Shaftesbury Avenue and Oxford, then Goodge Street, then Great Portland Street. When you go to Holborn now you are going to Liverpool Street Station and going away to Aldwych and places like that. You are going to Whitechapel and those kinds of places, but we are not concerned about that, we are concerned about places on Tottenham Court Road. It is not closer to Holborn.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You had better keep out of this, Geography was never your strong point.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, the Honourable Minister of Labour was a Headmaster who, I believe, specialised in English. You cannot be a specialist in everything, so if he was not a specialist in Geography, he certainly tells me he was a specialist in English. Be that as it may, Sir, I am not going to reduce the debate to an argument over minutiae of Geography.

There are a few matters I have to correct. For one reason or another — I do not know if it has to do with age, confusion of thought, or for whatever reason — the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, even though I tried to correct him to say that I had never worked for the Barbados Government, and certainly not in those days of 1966 when there was a constitutional conference at Marlborough House, proceeded to say that he thought I was sent to work at the conference by the Government of Barbados, when he well knew that it was on many occasions after the day's deliberations that I approached him on lobby terms and said to him, "You know I am covering the conference for the Daily News and Rediffusion," and he would give me a little piece to send down for the people of Barbados to know what was going on.

If he does not remember that, the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves) was in a position to remind him. I am very grateful that Mr. Cameron Tudor is not in the House, because even though he would have been conversant with those facts, he would have been obliged to lie.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I would just like to tell the honourable Member I apologise. I said it was my impression. But now I understand where all the misinformation was coming from back in Barbados. I honestly thought that at that time the honourable member was working for the High Commission. I apologise to the honourable member.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Sir, it is easy to say the thought is honest, but I will not pursue that any further. I have given the facts. The honourable Member could have made a mistake with the passage of years. It only proves that being one of yesterday's men, who is so liable to confusion of thought, perhaps 20 years on in 1986 he will prove that he is unfit once again, not for any reason other than confusion, to lead this country again as Prime Minister.

All I can tell the honourable Member, who, I think, expressed a legitimate concern about the closure of the National Bank — and one is being very serious now — is that I have on this file, which is a Foreign Affairs file and not a Ministry of Finance file, a letter from the National Bank in July this year indicating that they no longer require space in the High Commission's office, that the Board of Directors had decided to discontinue operations in the U.K. as of September 30, 1985. The basis upon which that decision to close was predicted was not expressed in the letter, nor am I going to guess at the reason for the closure.

The Honourable Acting Minister of Finance and Planning went and got some information for me during the honourable Member's speech, to the effect that £650 000, which was lent, was lent by the Head Office in Barbados to the London branch with a view to purchasing the building. Secondly, as I have said quite loudly for members of the Press to hear, when the honourable Member said that there were £41 million worth of assets, the Barbados National Bank reports that deposits never exceeded £350 000, a long way.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of explanation: I said 'accumulated assets', and by 'assets' I do not mean shareholders' equity or anything like that. I never dealt with profits. "Accumulated assets" mean accumulated deposits over a period of time, not necessarily that at a particular date you would have £41 million. It is the money that they dealt with over a period of time. I never said anything about profits.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: The third notation from the Honourable Acting Minister of Finance is that money sent back for investment totalled £300 000.

I think that this is a matter which requires a fuller explanation and a greater exposition of facts. I wish to give the House the assurance that, in the light of the question raised by the honourable Member, in a legitimate way — because there are a number of Barbadians, many hundred thousands, in London — we ought to get these facts, and perhaps on another supplementary and another debate the whole matter would be fully ventilated. I give the honourable Member the assurance that I will devil the facts and report to the House, or if I am not acting, have the appropriate Minister give the facts.
1.45 p.m.

I think, too, that Members should be aware that, in the recent past, it has been a deliberate policy on the part of the Barbados National Bank to reduce the number of branches that it had scattered all about Barbados. It is a decision with which I agree, and honourable Members will find my comments in the Senate Debates of 1983, when I had some very serious things to say, in the presence of the Directors who came to the Senate Chamber, about the Barbados National Bank and how it was set up. And, for the sake of completeness, we must never forget that the prime person behind the implementation of the decision to establish the Barbados National Bank, who moved the Barbados National Bank as a fledgling operation into a great dispersal of branches all over Barbados in a very short space of time, was none other than he who, in August this year, allowed himself to be photographed in the front row of the Democratic Labour Party Conference, Mr. L. V. H. Lewis. It was his policy.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member — I have no notice of the name of a Mr. Lewis.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Is he still a member of the Government Service?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have no notice of his name, and if his name is going to be introduced in the debate, I will have to have notice of that.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: All know of whom I am speaking; I will not repeat a name now, I accept Mr. Chairman's ruling. The fact is that here you had a bank, which had the greatest potential for development as a national institution, set up in 1979 to compete with established banks like Barclays, Royal Bank of Canada and the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, all banks which had been here for many years and which had had a long history in banking, and, all of a sudden, this fledgling bank comes along and starts expanding. Barclays was not doing it. Barclays took years before they went to Six Roads in St. Philip, before they went to Four Roads in St. John.

(Asides: Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: They have closed down both now.)

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: They have closed down both now, but they closed them down after they realized that the system was contracting to such an extent that it did not make it worthwhile. But within 2 to 3 years of establishment, by 1981-82, the National Bank was at University Drive, Speightstown, St. Peter, the Airport, Fairchild Street, James Street and Broad Street — a bank without the assets of Barclay's Bank, the Royal Bank of Canada and all of them.

That was not all. All the people in the Bank, in the management were driving about big ML cars, Datsuns. What are the big Datsuns called? I do not even know — I have a pooh-pooh little car there. I cannot tell you what it is, a 120Y or whatever, a big tremendous thing. They were able to attract very few with high banking skills. What do you expect? You started the policy on the wrong foot. You had a Managing Director who was also a Chairman, a Mr. Lewis.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want to restrict the honourable Member, but the Head relates to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, and debate on the bank, if necessary, should be continued only in so far as it is relevant to the bank having premises in London. Any wider debate on the question of the bank must not arise under this Head of this Resolution, so I would ask the honourable Member to confine his remarks under this Head.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: Your Honour, in so far as I am the last speaker in this debate, I can assure you that there will be no wider expansion of the debate, except to say that it was I who pointed out that one of the loans was raised from the Barbados National Bank. It was commented on by the Leader of the Opposition, and even though I do not want to get into a debate on banking now, Sir, — there will be plenty of time for that — I thought I had a duty to explain the reason for the contraction of the branches in Barbados and the one overseas. And I said that the reason was grounded upon a mis-application of policy and philosophy from the inception of the bank, and I blamed the early directorate for that, Sir.

The Right Honourable Member for St. John made the comment that, perhaps, we should have closed Caribbean Airways rather than the National Bank. Well, I would not accept that because it is losing, as he said — let us even assume his figures are right, but likely to be proven wrong — \$3 million, that that is a good enough reason to close it, when it is shown clearly that Caribbean Airways has developed tourism into Europe. And if the prognostications for this winter are accurate, it has a great role to play, and perhaps one would see the deficit come down. But, of course, Caribbean Airways is one of those enterprises which was set up, when all roads led to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, by him, and was

making a steady annual loss under him. If he wants his own brainchild put to rest, it will not be put to rest....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of explanation: I am not going to let the honourable Member get away with this.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am not giving way, Sir.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I do not have to get permission from you on a point of explanation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two honourable Members are on their feet.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I have said I am on a point of explanation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two honourable Members are on their feet.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You have to sit down.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I am waiting for Your Honour's ruling.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I said I am on a point of explanation.

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I had the floor.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member refuses to give way, so I have to ask you.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of explanation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: A point of explanation?

Hon. D. A. C. SIMMONS: I beg to move that Head 77 stand part of this Resolution.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I should just like to tell the honourable Member.....

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I could not rise on a point of explanation. I never at any time said that we should close down Caribbean Airways. What I said was that if a cost factor, a profit and loss criterion was going to be applied, I am sure that the bank never lost money, whereas Caribbean Airways was losing money, if you are going to use that as a criterion.
1.55 p.m.

My submission is that even if the bank had been losing money, it provided a service, just as Caribbean

Airways supplies a service — and it never lost money under our dispensation — I may as well get that in now — and I was merely saying that profit and loss is not the only criterion that you apply.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I allowed the Right Honourable Member to get in his point of explanation, but I could not reopen the debate at this stage.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Can I ask the Minister one question, Sir? Why is it that Barclays are only closing down branches in St. Philip and St. John?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am not going to allow any further debate. The honourable Member for St. Thomas had wound up the debate, but the Right Honourable Member wanted an explanation and, in the interest of the Record, I thought it was fair to allow that.

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

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two Resolutions in Committee of Supply, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, each seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES PENSIONS (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1985

Order No. 3 was called — To move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Public Employees Pensions Act, Cap. 30.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Mr. Speaker, this is a relatively short amendment to the Public Employees Pensions Act. The date of the Act should have been June 1, 1984, but it was stated as January 1, 1984. I would think, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that the House would have no difficulty in having this error corrected.

With this very brief introduction, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

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

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Speaker, a little typographical error or something like that is not normally the subject of any debate, but I would not like our silence to be interpreted as acquiescence to something which I said at the time when the Pensions Bill came before this House for the first time, that it constitutes

an amendment to the Constitution, because all matters relating to the Public Service and the Pensions Act are entrenched provisions. I was not taken on at that time. It may be challenged subsequently by the NUPW or some individual employee. I am only getting on the Record that, if we say nothing, it does not mean that we now feel that this is not an entrenched provision in the Constitution of Barbados. With that warning, I will say nothing more.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I have no doubt that this would be within the province of the legal brains, and since this Bill, when it was drafted, was drafted by the advisers to the Government in the Legal Department. It came to Parliament and there was a difference of opinion, again by the legal men, and since it is the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition, who himself is a legal luminary, I can only conclude that when it is challenged, maybe there is going to be a difference of opinion in the court. I am in no position to determine who is right or wrong in this. Experienced draughtsmen drafted this, the legal brains on this side thought it was not tampering with the Constitution of Barbados, and on that side — I cannot say the legal brains over there, I know there are legal gentlemen on the other side.....

Aside

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Do you really call him a lawyer, and call yourself one? Don't do that to the profession, please!

I can only say that whenever the occasion arises to challenge it in the court, I have no jurisdiction over that.

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

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Hon. H. deB. FORDE Acting Chairman, in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3 were called and passed.

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

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

FINAL APPROPRIATION (1984-85) ACT, 1985

Order No. 4 was called — To move the second reading of a Bill to grant an additional sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and appropriate the same for the service of the island for the Financial Year ending 31st March, 1985.

Hon. O. S. ARTHUR (St. Peter): Mr. Speaker, the original Appropriation Bill for the year ending March 31, 1985 was approved in the House of Assembly on March 29, 1984, in the sum of \$486 335 770 to provide goods and services for the benefit of the Island. During the fiscal year 1984-85 it became necessary to supplement the original grant by the sum of \$67 564 683, as set out in the Schedule to this Final Appropriation Bill.
2.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the various Heads which have been included in the Schedule have already enjoyed full and ample debate at the time when they were introduced and, as a result, Sir, I do not think we need to tarry the House with further debate on this matter.

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

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

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. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Hon. H. deB. FORDE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is now in Committee on this Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

The Preamble was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Hon. O. S. ARTHUR, each seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Sir, this has been a relatively short sitting and we have had the work expedited in a manner which I am quite sure both sides can be saluted on.

In rising to adjourn the sitting, I want to say that I was particularly pleased with the Leader of the Opposition for his contribution today, Sir. I thought that at one stage, he was giving us a lecture in History. No longer did his memory fail him. He spoke of 1651, and all the geographical problems and such areas, Sir, as the shipping lanes and things of that nature. I was particularly pleased, Sir, and I believe it would be remiss of me if I did not really salute him.

I am particularly happy to know that the House had a relatively short sitting because I have to go and do a bit of reading, Sir, on something which over the past weeks may have been not particularly problematic to me but it is a bit of a problem. I know that what I have to look at, when I look at it carefully again, could only have come from out of the retreat of the Democratic Labour Party. I have no doubt that they did a very good job in putting their declared manifesto on the road.

I could imagine such a sheet coming, Sir, on the feet of the caucus, and I am quite sure that they will be anxious, when I adjourn the House today, Sir, again....

Mr. SPEAKER: I was just going to ask....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, Sir, when I adjourn....

Mr. SPEAKER: On what....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: the House again today, Sir, as I speak on the adjournment as to why I am going to adjourn it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish the honourable Member would hold a minute.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not know what he is speaking on, because up until this point, I have only been hearing a speech. There is nothing before the Chamber on which any speech can be founded. If the honourable Member would enlighten the Chair as to the basis of his discussion, I would be very happy to entertain him.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, in my capacity as Leader of the House, and with great and due respect to Your Honour, I rise to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, if you would move the adjournment, then we could have our discussion on the adjournment.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: No, Sir. When I rose, as I think the record would show, I said, "As I rise to move the adjournment".

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not heard it at all.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Well, Sir, probably you did not hear that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not heard it.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: And I intimated how I would be anxious; I said that I am glad we had a short sitting so that I could go home and read.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, but I have not heard the motion for the adjournment.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Well, Sir, most impressibly,....I now move that the House be adjourned.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Now.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: and my reason for the adjournment, if you would like me to put it that way, Sir, is so I can get home and relax.

Mr. SPEAKER: Can I have the date of the Adjournment?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I will give you the date of the adjournment, Sir, so that I can get home and relax — on that date which I am going to give you, Mr. Speaker — and examine a number of things which came out of the retreat of the....

Mr. SPEAKER: I still have part of a motion.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg your pardon, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: I still have part of a motion.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the House be adjourned, and then it will be seconded, and then the motion would be completed. So you only got the first half, that is the moving of it, Sir. I am still at first street. The second part is when it is seconded. We have not got to that street yet, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: We have not got the date yet.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The date will come, Sir. You have no doubt in your mind, Sir. I will give you the date, but I am telling you why I am going to give you the date, for it to be that long; because I believe, like my colleagues on this side, I would like to be able to go and relax, and maybe even go into retreat, as the honourable Members on the other side went into retreat and came up with a Manifesto, which I would be very, very pleased to

read when I get an opportunity to read it on that date when I adjourn the House, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well if....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: And I believe, Mr. Speaker, and I have no doubt in my mind, that a Manifesto so well put together could only have come from the very clear mind of the Leader of the Opposition who was so well associated with a distinguished gun runner, professional convict.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: in the person of Mr. Sydney Alleyne.

I am satisfied, and I wish to salute the Right Honourable Member for asking you if he did, Mr. Speaker, that he would not even have a demonstration because only his members would have adhered to that demonstration. And his members did! There was no demonstration, so they adhered to it!

I believe that that Manifesto which I see on the street is no doubt in my mind, the declared policy of the Democratic Labour Party, Sir.

I beg to move, Sir, that this House do now stand adjourned until November 5, 1985, when we can all go and look at the Manifesto as declared by the Democratic Labour Party. I refer to the scandal sheet, Sir, which they have put out!
2.15 p.m.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Sir, I move to second the adjournment.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You cannot rise to second the adjournment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a minute. It has never been customary for a member of the Opposition to second a Government motion, unless it had been agreed beforehand that it is a non-party matter. That is my ruling.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: So you do not want to hear me agreeing with him on seconding the adjournment? I want to second the adjournment. That is all I want to do, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you want to speak on the adjournment? Just answer the question.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I want to say a few words, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Can I have a seconder?

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Sir, I beg to second the motion that was moved by the Leader of the House and Acting Prime Minister, and I reserve my right to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is..... Do you want to speak on the adjournment?

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Yes, Sir, on matters that were raised on the motion for the adjournment.

I merely want to inform this Honourable Chamber that what came out of that retreat referred to by the Honourable Leader of the House when he made the motion to adjourn this Chamber can be looked at by the honourable Members over there. It might be their embarrassment, but not in terms of what he was clearly referring to. We, at the retreat or at any stage, retreat or non-retreat, would have nothing whatsoever to do with the matters to which he was referring — absolutely nothing as a party! I want to make that absolutely clear, Sir.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I really thought we were going to hear something, Sir. Move the House, Sir. You are a typical clown in truth, you know!

The question that the House do now stand adjourned until November 5, 1985 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly.
2.20 p.m.

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