
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1986 -- 91

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday November 4, 1986

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

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. Weekes, (Speaker)

His Honour J. J. Payne, (Deputy Speaker)

Hon. L. E. Sandiford, B.A., M.A., (Econ.), J.P.,
(Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Education and
Culture and Leader of the House)

Hon. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., M.A., LL.B., (Leader
of the Opposition)

Hon. E. E. Greaves, B.A., Ed.M., (Minister of Trade
and Commerce)

Hon. M. A. King, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General
and Minister of Legal Affairs)

Hon. N. K. Simmons, (Minister of Health)

Mr. D. A. C. Simmons, Q.C., LL.M.

Mr. O. S. Arthur, M.Sc., (Econ.)

Mrs. M. Barker-Welch, (Parliamentary Secretary,
Ministry of Employment, Labour Relations and Com-
munity Development)

Mr. C. V. Walker, (Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry
of Education and Culture)

Mr. L. L. Brathwaite, J.P.

Mr. E. Bourne

Dr. E. A. Simmons

Mr. C. A. Neblett, B.A., A.C.M.A.

Mr. P. J. M. Miller

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, October
21, 1986.

*Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN and Hon. W. W. HALL en-
tered the Chamber and took their seats.*

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to
move that the Minutes of Tuesday, October 21, 1986 be
confirmed as an accurate record of proceedings of that
date.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations by
honourable Members let those Minutes stand confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. SPEAKER: I am to announce that I have re-
ceived the Accounts and Statements for the month of
September, 1986, as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay
on behalf of the Minister of Finance the Customs Tariff
(Amendment) (No. 7) Order, 1986.

*Hon. B. M. TAITT entered the Chamber and took
his seat.*

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to table
the Health Services Embalmers and Funeral Directors
(Amendment) Regulations, 1986.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give
notice of the following:—

A Resolution to grant the sum of \$651 804 from
the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the dispo-
sal of the Government to supplement the Estimates
1986/87, Part I, Current, as shown in the Supple-
mentary Estimates 1986/87 No. 8 which form the
Schedule to the Resolution.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The first question standing in the name of the honourable Member for Christ Church East re dangerous corners in certain areas of the constituency of Christ Church East.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, this question is directed to the Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications.

I beg to give notice of the following question:—

Is the Minister aware that the following corners in the constituency of Christ Church East are dangerous to all users of the roads where they exist:—

- (a) at Sayers Court/Goodland/Gibbons, commonly known as King's Corner, where the road needs to be widened and the bends straightened,
- (b) at the Rising Sun/Seales/Lowlands, where stop lights or a round-about would correct the problem, and
- (c) at Pilgrim Place, leading into Parish Land off Highway 7, where the road should be widened and the fence fronting Pilgrim Place lowered?

Will the Minister initiate appropriate action to correct the hazards of those corners?

Mr. SPEAKER: Question by the same honourable Member re street lighting at Thyme Bottom in the same constituency.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this question be put to the Honourable Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications:—

Is the Minister aware that there is an urgent need for the provision of street lighting at Thyme Bottom in the constituency of Christ Church East?

Will the Minister cause appropriate street lighting to be installed in that district before Christmas, 1986?

Mr. SPEAKER: Question by the same honourable Member re sharpened bends at Wilcox Hill.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following question:—

Is the Minister aware of the continuing dangers of Wilcox Hill, Christ Church to increasing pedestrian and vehicular (local and tourist) traffic, due to the

sharpness of the bends in the hill, poor maintenance of the road surfaces and the narrowness of the roads?

Will the Minister endeavour to have those problems rectified?

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member again from Christ Church East re repairs to certain roads at Silver Sands, Breedy's Land Road, Ealing Grove, Boggs Road and Hopewell.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to ask of the Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications the following question:—

Will the Minister take steps to ensure (1) the early repair, and raising of the road surface of the Silver Sands Coast Road, and Breedy's Land Road which joins Ealing Park 1 and 2 to Hopewell and the Ealing Grove Boggs Road, all of which are presently almost impassable, and (2) the provision of slipper drains for those roads?

Mr. SPEAKER: The same honourable Member re the deterioration of maintenance work at South Point Depot.

Mr. E. BOURNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following question:—

Is the Minister aware that the South Point Depot of his Ministry is understaffed and under-equipped, with the result that the volume and efficiency of maintenance work at that Depot have deteriorated and continue to deteriorate?

Will the Minister endeavour, without delay, to correct the above problems?

12.25 p.m.

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

To enquire of the Minister of Education and Culture:—

1. Is the aware that,
 - (a) the grounds and public environs of St. Christopher Girls' School are in urgent need of debushing,
 - (b) the floors of that school are falling in and the roof leaks persistently,
 - (c) the said school is infested with rodents and other vermin,

- (d) a garbage dump is being created at the front of the school, and
 - (e) school meals are prepared at St. Christopher Girls' School for all schools in the constituency of Christ Church East?
2. Will the Minister urgently give his attention to the eradication of the problems identified at the said school?

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

To enquire of the Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications:—

- 1. Is the Minister aware of the grave danger to health caused by exhaust fumes from motor vehicles throughout this island?
- 2. Will the Minister take steps, by the initiation and rigid enforcement of legislation, to ensure that the emission of noxious pollutants from diesel trucks, buses, cars and other motor vehicles is minimized and, if possible, totally eliminated?

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

To enquire of the Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs:—

- 1. Is the Minister aware that the present system of registration of title to land hinders the speedy and effective administration of justice?
- 2. Will the Minister state,
 - (a) when the Land Registration Act, 1979–8, will be proclaimed,
 - (b) when the Land Registry provided for by that Act will be instituted, and
 - (c) whether appropriate staff have yet been identified for the Land Registry?

ORDERS OF THE DAY GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with Order No. 1, I wish to indicate, Sir, that the Government proposes to commence debate on this particular order today, but we do not intend to proceed to

the actual second reading vote on this matter. We intend at an appropriate stage to move for further consideration of the item to be postponed, as the honourable Member for St. Lucy will indicate when he introduces the motion.

I should also take this opportunity to ask that Standing Orders Nos. 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day's sitting, and to indicate to honourable Members that our dining room facilities are still not ready for use today and that the arrangements which pertained on the last sitting day a fortnight ago will also apply today.

THE CARICOM ENTERPRISES ACT, 1986

Order No. 1 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to provide for the implementation by Barbados of the Agreement for the establishment of a Regime for CARICOM Enterprises and for related matters.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, as the Leader of the House has indicated, we propose to commence discussion on this Bill today, but because of a communication which we received from the CARICOM Secretariat a few days ago, we would want to postpone further consideration of it somewhere in the debate.

The basic reason for this request, as I understand it, has to do with the situation as described by the CARICOM Secretariat; that the agreement was drafted well over ten years ago and has not yet been implemented. Also because of the many changes which have taken place both in the regional and international economic environment they see a need to look at the agreement again and do some redrafting.

I would want to say though that this particular Bill which seeks to establish a regime for CARICOM Enterprises has been under consideration for introduction into Parliament for some time. If one were to search the file, one would find that on two or three previous occasions in the former administration, Cabinet had looked at this and had approved at least certain aspects of the Bill. On every occasion some new ideas came up, and I think it was Mr. Justice Williams who was asked by the Secretariat to do a general review of the agreement to ensure that it was in keeping generally speaking with the legal arrangements in the various territories.

Basically what the CARICOM Enterprises Bill seeks to do is to set out the various features for the Regime. The economic origins of this Bill stem from the fact that the Caribbean Community has been in existence for some time, and the need for increased economic and financial resources which should be available to member countries and their nationals as a group was seen as a necessity. It

created a form for new business organisations to facilitate utilisation of such resources and their movement across national barriers. So that the setting up of a regime for the creation of a CARICOM Enterprise is an attempt to provide one such form of business organisation.

The CARICOM Enterprise is conceived as a legal entity created by incorporation in the member country in which its central management and control will be situated and in accordance with the Company Laws of that country. 12.30 p.m.

Before its incorporation, a CARICOM Enterprise must receive the approval of its application to a body of representatives of all the member countries called the "Authority" and set up under the Regime. A CARICOM Enterprise may only engage in certain areas of economic activity and a member country may refuse permission for its operation in its territory or in particular economic activities.

The Agreement makes provision for the establishment of supervisory machinery to ensure that the operations are *bona fide* operations.

The special features related to the Regime for CARICOM Enterprises include the following:

1. The CARICOM Enterprise would be concerned with the production of goods of Common Market origin in certain sectors of the regional economy.
2. It must be a joint venture between at least two Member States or their nationals.
3. It must be regionally owned and controlled.
4. An existing Enterprise which conforms to the establishment criteria could become a CARICOM Enterprise.
5. The Regime has established an Authority with powers to review, approve or reject applications for the setting up of CARICOM Enterprises and to supervise their operations.
6. All Member States would be represented on the Authority but only Member States whose nationals were promoting a particular enterprise could vote on its application for CARICOM Enterprise status.
7. Non voting States could exercise a veto on operations in their territories within a specified time limit.

8. The state in which the enterprise would be centrally managed and controlled, called the Headquarters State has to be stipulated in the application and a special register for CARICOM Enterprises is to be kept in each Member State. These enterprises had to go through a two-tiered system of registration, the first being merely a recording process, and CARICOM Enterprise status could be revoked by the Headquarters State for persistent violation of the Agreement.

That, Sir, constitutes the background against which this particular bit of legislation was conceived. But as I said, because of the request from the CARICOM Secretariat, we would not want to go through with this Bill at this point.

However, I think it would be necessary for me to say that Barbados signed the Agreement in Georgetown, Guyana on September 15, 1977. The following Member States have also signed the Agreement:

Antigua
Belize
Dominica
Jamaica
Montserrat
St. Lucia
and
St. Vincent

One would hope that when the review has been undertaken by the CARICOM Secretariat that we would be in a position then to return to Parliament to make sure that we have the legislation in place.

I think, Sir, however, that it should be pointed out that the fact that this Government is prepared to introduce this legislation demonstrates once more the commitment of this Administration to the whole principle and concept of CARICOM.

I am sure that this debate, if a debate does take place, would to some extent focus on the contemporary situation in CARICOM recognizing that there are a number of difficulties which confront the regional movement. But one would hasten to suggest that any trading arrangement is fraught with difficulties and the way in which countries and members of the particular trading arrangement are able to rise to the occasion to present, as it were, a kind of approach that would meet to some extent and certainly to deal with some of these difficulties, would be a tribute not only to those countries but also to the entire movement.

And so that with CARICOM, at the moment, we of course are faced with a number of difficulties and problems. It is the feeling of the Democratic Labour Party that these problems will be dealt with when countries are able to put their minds together, where they try to sink as far as possible the general nationalistic approach which would normally surface in these particular matters and try to approach the matter on a global or indeed a regional basis. One recognizes that this will not be an easy task. One also has to bear in mind that the political directorate in any country would, to some extent, have to listen to the way in which nationals feel about certain matters, and I believe that this is one of the problems which confront the Regional Integration Movement, in that enough has not been done to involve nationals, in terms of their orientation, to what is expected and what is involved in a Regional Integration Movement.

I believe, Sir, that it has to be an ongoing process of education and an ongoing process of public enlightenment, if nationals of the various countries are expected to have an appreciation for what is involved in the Regional Integration Movement.

It is the belief of the Democratic Labour Party that provided the systems function efficiently and effectively that CARICOM can become a force to be reckoned with in the whole question of trade and can certainly have an effect on raising the whole quality of life within the region.

I would want to say, particularly, when one talks about the difficulties confronting the Regional Integration Movement that a number of things have happened within recent years to cause the Integration Movement to flounder somewhat.

There is no doubt that the oil crisis and the consequential deterioration of the terms of trade against the region, with Trinidad and Tobago being the one exception, led to a severe drain on the foreign exchange earnings of the region and the ensuing balance of payments difficulties.

The drain on the foreign exchange earnings and balance of payments problems in all but one Member State led to excessive and dangerous levels of over dependence on the Trinidad and Tobago market and the regional manufacturing and agricultural sectors, since most other Member States, notably Jamaica and Guyana were unable to finance previous levels of intra-regional imports, and found it necessary to introduce measures to limit the level of CARICOM imports into their countries.

During the period of the buoyancy of the oil sector of Trinidad and Tobago, the Government of that country demonstrated a high level of commitment to CARICOM

and sympathetic understanding of the foreign exchange difficulties facing other Member States. Thus the Trinidad and Tobago market was extremely receptive to CARICOM exports from about 1977 when Jamaica started the implementation of trade restricting measures under Article 28 of the Common Market until approximately by 1983 when its own economy began to experience foreign exchange problems, consequent upon a change in fortunes of the international oil sector.

12.45 p.m.

This development in conjunction with the demise of the Caribbean Multilateral Clearing Facility in April 1983 supposedly influenced the Port-of-Spain administration to review its intra-CARICOM trade policy.

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

The introduction of a rigid licencing regime and exchange orders ECO's by the Trinidad Government in 1983 represented a realistic attempt to grapple with the practical problems imposed by the new limitations imposed on its import capabilities.

The effect of these measures dealt intra-regional trade flows a staggering blow. The intra-CARICOM trade plunged from its peak in 1980s to dangerously low levels by late 1983. In 1980, for example the value of Barbados' domestic exports to the rest of the region was \$189.1 million, but by 1983 the figure had declined to \$152.5 million. Today it is even less.

The Barbados experience was not unique but characterized intra-CARICOM domestic export trade during this period. Indeed, the threat to intra-regional trade was taken so seriously that in May 1983 an extraordinary meeting of the Common Market Council of Ministers was summoned in St. John, Antigua to give urgent consideration to the problems facing intra-regional trade and to devise mechanisms to respond to the regional needs. Of course, stemming from that meeting, we had then the 1984 meeting of the Heads of Governments, the Fourth Heads of Governments Conference, which was convened in Nassau in July 1984 and the famous Nassau package of trade measures came from that particular meeting.

I do not think it would be necessary to go through all of those measures, but one would remember that among these measures were an absolute 15% *ad valorem* increase in import duty on a list of sensitive items imported from Third Countries, a decision of each Member State to make available a portion of any lines of credit obtained from extra-regional sources to finance their intra-regional imports; a 15% reduction by January 1, 1985 by the LDC's of import duty imposed on items of the reserved list imported from MDC's with the removal

of the remaining 50% by January 1, 1986; and an increase from 20% to 30% of the local value added requirement as a qualification for common market tariff treatment where this criteria applied to the LDC.

It should be pointed out, Sir, that the implementation of these measures has not yet begun to have the kind of impact which was anticipated, and one reason for that was that most of the Member States were late in implementing these measures.

I think that at the last council meeting, it was indicated that the two outstanding Members, Montserrat and Antigua, indicated that they would implement the measures. So that by now it is my understanding that all of the countries who are Members of the Common Market have agreed to implement the measures.

Against that kind of background, Sir, one has to look at the prospects for the future. It should be pointed out that even if there is a strong and sustained recovery in the international oil sector, and Trinidad and Tobago were to regain its buoyancy of the early 1980's, it is doubtful whether the regional manufacturing and agricultural sectors would find the Trinidad and Tobago market as receptive to its goods, as it was in the early 1980.

For one thing, the Trinidad and Tobago manufacturing and agricultural sectors have been considerably strengthened and consolidated in recent years. This process has been assisted by a 50% devaluation of the Trinidad and Tobago dollar which has rendered intra-CARICOM exports less competitive in that market and has made the Trinidad and Tobago manufacturing and agricultural sectors more competitive at home against CARICOM imports.

This Government, however, as I pointed out at the beginning, is committed to CARICOM, and feels that a number of the difficulties which have been experienced would, to some extent, be overcome by being able to sit down and discuss both at a regional and at a bilateral level the whole question of trade.

In pursuance of this particular approach and indeed, Sir, this is in keeping with the decisions of the Heads of Governments which was held in Guyana in August of this year where it was generally speaking agreed that countries should seek on a bilateral basis to try to iron out what difficulties they may be existing among themselves.

So that the Government of Barbados, recognising this particular approach, has already initiated a number of measures through discussions with Trinidad and Tobago in the first instance and also with St. Lucia. We have discussed the whole question of various aspects of trade between these countries. We have also had a number of discussions with Guyana but one recognises the particular problem there.

Aside.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: We are trying to get back some of the money. That is the point, we may very well have to get into a bargaining situation.

However, the Government has already initiated a number of measures designed to assist local exporters to gain increase access to markets in the CARICOM region. We opened fresh negotiations with the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. These negotiations have already led to significantly improved access of local manufacturers particularly garments to the Trinidad and Tobago market.

This improved access is likely to continue to improve even further as the two Governments continue to have dialogue in our determined efforts to normalize trade between these two countries.

In addition, Sir, the Export Promotion Corporation has taken new initiatives to revive domestic export trade to Jamaica.
12.55 p.m.

Successive devaluations of the Jamaica dollar, along with a restrictive licensing regime, have reduced exports from Barbados to that country to relatively insignificant quantities in recent years. However, with the abandonment of the licensing regime by the Government of Jamaica and research into that market, we discovered that devaluation notwithstanding, certain Barbadian manufactured goods still remain competitive there.

It was against this background, Sir, that the Export Promotion Corporation recently mounted a well-organised and reasonably successful trade mission to that country which netted some \$2 million in firm orders. Furthermore, a number of individual manufacturers undertook their own private and individual marketing efforts to Jamaica. These privately organised trade missions also achieved a measure of success. Thus after several years of frustration and disappointment with the Jamaica market, local manufacturers are once again demonstrating their readiness to explore that market.

I would want to say also in this regard that the Arawak Cement Plant has also been able in this arrangement to land an order from Jamaica which would see the Arawak Cement Plant at least delivering \$1 million in cement per month to Jamaica, and this is another way in which we are hoping that we will be able to push that particular product.

I think the Guyana market, since we are talking about CARICOM, one has to recognise that Guyana being part of the CARICOM arrangement does present some difficulties to the whole trading arrangement within the

region and primarily because of the foreign exchange availability to finance intra-regional trade, because the availability of finance remains weak. However, efforts are continuing to recapture a portion of the substantial sums through commodity trade which are owing to Barbados under the CMCF arrangement, and one would hate to think that that particular *faux pas* which has left Barbados holding, I believe it must have been when the CMCF collapsed, about Bds. \$120 million or U.S. \$60 million, that we would be able over the years to reduce that by a particular arrangement which we are trying to work out with the Government of Guyana.

The markets of the LDC's, Sir, continue to be relatively receptive to exports from Barbados, and Barbados continues to record a reasonable surplus with each LDC country. Taken as a whole, the LDC's market constitutes the second largest receiver of our goods, that is, next to Trinidad and Tobago, but again the whole question of keeping this, and improving on it depends to a large extent on the kind of relationship which we continue to have, and the kind of negotiations at the bilateral level which, hopefully, we will continue to have with the various countries.

It is clear to us in this Government that we have to continue the dialogue, because as I said at the beginning, any trading arrangement — and this has been evidenced if one were to study any of the trading arrangements in the world — would find that there are difficulties which arise from time to time and we recognise this. We recognise however that a lot of these difficulties can be overcome by understanding, and can be overcome by a general appreciation on the part of those who have to make decisions relating to these matters.

Having said all of that, Sir, I think it must be said very clearly that as far as this Government is concerned we do not believe that the domestic market or the regional market must be the be all and end all of the export thrust. We recognise that we have to make a very concerted effort to get beyond the regional market and we are therefore devising ways and means of penetrating the extra-regional markets, but we have to recognise that extra-regional markets, particularly those of the industrialised countries of North America and Western Europe, are characterised by extremely high levels of quality products and price competitiveness.

Our manufacturers have been advised about the need to improve the quality of their products and to be more competitive in price if we are to make any significant inroads into the markets of industrialised countries, and the Government is committed to providing whatever assistance — that is through the Export Promotion Corporation — and giving whatever encouragement we can to ensure that our manufacturers are able to produce goods which will be able to at least get a niche in the market beyond the CARICOM region.

One hopes that one could see a new kind of approach being adopted by our manufacturers, the kind of aggressiveness which one has seen as characterising countries, small though they may be, which have made a breakthrough on the international markets. This kind of aggressiveness we recognise needs the support of the Government, and this Government stands committed to providing and indeed giving whatever encouragement we can.

Now, we know that under the CBI and under CARICOM and under Lome III certain concessionary arrangements have been made for trade. However, when one looks at these, one finds that it is still very difficult particularly the areas which have been excluded are the very areas that we would certainly like to see included, the areas where we have the most difficulties are the areas which we would really like to have had included in the concessionary arrangements. One can only hope that the developed countries would recognise that they have a responsibility to small developing countries to make it possible for them to trade in a meaningful way with them.

Some time ago, the cry from developing countries was trade and not aid. I believe to some extent that still holds true today, that is, that if countries could get the opportunity to trade, then not only would it bring some measure of respect to them, because they know that they would be doing something in a productive way rather than having to sit back and await aid which is handed out by industrialised countries.
1.05 p.m.

This is not to say that one is rejecting aid but, nevertheless, I think one must recognize that certainly if the avenues of trade were open, that it would have a much lasting and a more meaningful effect on the particular countries, and that is what we are seeking.

We are seeking an opportunity to have a meaningful trading arrangement, and we are therefore, looking forward, and we hope that in the future that through, maybe, on a regional basis, we will be able to let our feelings continue to be known, particularly to the industrialised countries of the north where they would have easier arrangements for us to trade in those particular areas and we would also expect that our manufacturers would really take a new look in this particular area, and try to upgrade their quality and really adopt a kind of marketing approach and strategy that would assist us in breaking through on the international trading level.

Sir, I think that with that kind of background, as I indicated, I thought that we would be able to, at least, have the debate initiated, but as the Leader of the House has indicated, we would not be proceeding any further with the Bill here today, but, I am sure that other honourable Members would want to speak on this Bill.

Thank you.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second this Bill and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for Christ Church West.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I believe that this is really the only item on the Order Paper and no doubt we are using the opportunity in order to provide the House with some business and if it were not so, I would have expected the honourable Member really to have postponed consideration of this issue because to some extent it does seem rather premature to begin a debate on a Bill which seeks to implement an agreement that has so far not been signed by some of the parties to the agreement, and an agreement which, obviously, after nine years when it was first approved at the CARICOM Heads of Government or Council of Ministers, is in need of a tremendous amount of revision.

The idea behind the agreement for CARICOM enterprise is a very good idea. At the time when it was being pressed in 1977, the urgency was to restart the Regional Movement which had floundered somewhat prior to 1976.

Those of us who do not have short memories will recall that CARICOM went through a very difficult period from about 1973 principally because, as has occurred again in the period 1983, of an oil crisis and because of recession in the world economy. The CARICOM members — most of them — did what most people will do who are attacked; they closed their doors and looked after their self-interest first. There were a few of us who have never done that. I am happy to say that Barbados has stood out in this regard.

Subsequent to 1973, the Regional Movement was again floundering, and it was necessary to take several new initiatives to revive that Movement. Those of us who do not have short memories would recall that some of those initiatives led to the prospect of an early Heads of Government Conference at the time. Unfortunately the famous "castor oil" speech from the then Prime Minister of Jamaica, led Dr. Eric Williams to cancel the prospect of a new Heads of Government meeting and it was left to the initiative of the then Government of Barbados to use a bilateral form of arrangement to resuscitate the ailing CARICOM Movement.

Out of that grew the Memorandum of Understanding between Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados which led to the establishment of the Arawak Cement Plant and CARICARGO and with the prospect of other countries coming into the Movement a little later.

I recall these matters because in 1977 when this Agreement was being negotiated, it was hoped that it

would have been implemented then in order to make it easy for us to have a truly CARICOM enterprise which would have legal personality in the respective countries and would not be subjected to some of the limitations contained in the countries, particularly the Companies Act, Exchange Control Provisions, etc.

Even then, the agreement which we reached in 1977 was not perfect. In fact it posits that the member states will pass enabling legislation, and I think that the Minister, if he researches the files, will find that there are not many of them who have made any process in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that what is needed is not a special treaty at all to deal with this issue. The ideal situation would be for us within CARICOM to harmonize our Companies legislation so that it would be easy to incorporate a company which could operate regionally without the necessity for a new formation whenever we move into another country. Very slow progress has been made on the harmonisation of the CARICOM laws even those laws which impact on the CARICOM Treaty.

We continue to flounder in this regard, despite the fact that every Heads of Government Conference pays respect to the idea of regional unity.

What is needed further is probably not this legislation at all. What we really need is to start dismantling within the CARICOM countries the limitations which we have set up on the operation of business enterprises across our respective borders.

We have set up restrictions based not only on freedom of movement of persons, a very sore point in the history of Caribbean integration, but we have set up limitations based on freedom of movement of goods and freedom of movement of currencies etc.

One of the most debilitating things on the improvement in CARICOM and in trade in CARICOM is the fact that we each now have our own currencies.
1.15 p.m.

We now have something like five Central Banks, each setting a fiscal and monetary policy, a policy which is not really coordinated.

If we wish to export to Trinidad and Tobago, no matter how optimistic the Minister may sound after his initial and virgin negotiations in that country, we still have to get the permission of the Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago; so even after the manufacturers have struck a deal, it cannot be implemented until there is a release of foreign exchange. If we want to push the integration movement forward, we really have to deal with these difficult problems, and say that the true

nationalism which you need is nationalism of being a West Indian, and not the nationalism of being a Barbadian or a Guyanese or a Kittitian or a Trinidadian, and that the concrete way in which you have to deal with the problem is to deal with the problem there at the root, and how to remove those barriers.

Now we also have to recognise at the level of the ordinary citizen of which the honourable Member spoke, that some of our ordinary citizens are not yet prepared to recognise in reality such a regional person as a West Indian or a Caricom citizen. We have to take that into consideration. The Trinidad manufacturer when faced with contracting foreign exchange thinks principally of Trinidad and Tobago. The same goes for the Barbadian manufacturer. No matter how much they may beat the politicians, sometimes we have to be blunt to them because after all they are our constituents, and they exercise a good deal of influence the nearer we run up to elections in how we react as politicians.

There is no doubt in my mind that a huge and mammoth task of education awaits us all in these territories if the regional movement is to progress.

When I was younger and under forty, Mr. Speaker, I had all of the enthusiasm which now I see inspire some other people who look down the road of regional integration. I am realistic enough now to recognise that the task cannot be accomplished within this century. We can well make up in our minds that a political union is out. One has to very blunt.

Nobody has backed a political union of the Caribbean more than those of us who belong to the Barbados Labour Party, but we must now recognise that this is going to take a long, long time in coming, because of some of the inherent difficulties of which I spoke. And also it is not only the difficulties of our manufacturers; it is the difficulties of some of the very laws that we believe we want for our own protection. Immigration laws set up the barriers of freedom of movement.

Sir, you will recall that the first Federation broke up on that issue. Despite the fact that we are clamouring daily for a regional movement, and improvement and growth in the regional movement, the Barbadian manufacturer setting up a plant in St. Lucia cannot move willy-nilly his best skilled workmen there because he is up against the problem of a work permit. The same goes here in Barbados. I am not dealing with people outside of the Caribbean. Do not mind all the nice words we from time to time say about each other. The realities of the situation are that there will be a hue and cry if you had mass movement of workers from one country coming into another country.

In this regard, Sir, let me once again say that Barbados has shown great magnanimity to the rest of the Caribbean. Perhaps we are repaying the magnanimity which they showed us before when we used to export our teachers, our nurses and our policemen through the Islands. But certainly in the Seventies we opened our doors to a large number of CARICOM citizens. If my memory serves me right, almost four thousand CARICOM citizens in a short period of two or three years were given immigrant status here to the extent today that a large proportion of the young children going into the schools in Barbados are first generation Barbadians, their parents are usually from St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica or elsewhere.

I am not saying that it has been a one-sided affair, Mr. Speaker, because in many respects we have profited from this liberal policy. Quite a lot of the investment which has gone into manufacturing has come to us from people who pulled up roots and left Guyana to come here; quite a lot of the expertise has come from some of the other islands, and some of the investment as well. So we have profited to some extent. But I make bold to say that even in this regard Barbados has been a model in CARICOM.

It does not surprise me to hear the Minister say that only now two of the countries are implementing the 1984 Nassau Agreement. But once again the first country to implement that agreement was Barbados, and I believe it is correct to say that on this very agreement for CARICOM Enterprise, the first Parliament which is debating the issue is the Parliament of Barbados.

There has been a consistency in Barbados towards the CARICOM movement. We have never yet reneged on any one agreement we have signed in CARICOM even although we ourselves were subjected in the two periods of 1973 to 1976 and 1982 to 1986 to a very bad world recession, we have not put restrictions on other persons' imports coming into Barbados. We have made noises and threatened once or twice that we would do something about it. Even when we have been under massive pressure from our own manufacturers and some political pressure from the present Government using their position of course as the then Opposition anxious for power.

I promise the Minister this, that this Opposition, small in numbers though we are, will bring to this exercise not a partisan approach, but a national approach. I promise him that.

Asides.

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We have always recognised as the Minister is now recognising that the problems of CARICOM trade in the last few years: the problems faced by our manufacturers was not of the making of the Barbados Labour Party. That is the point I want to emphasise. The problems were the problems, and the difficulties were the difficulties caused by the very reasons outlined by the Minister today. The Minister spoke so ably of them I do not want to paraphrase his words or summarise them; but the Minister on this particular party spoke very well. We recognise that the problems of CARICOM trade arose from the contraction of foreign exchange in three of the major partners of CARICOM.

1.25 p.m.

Firstly, it was Guyana. Guyana found itself that it had no foreign exchange to pay its debts. Let us face that fact. We were trading with Guyana and giving Guyana credit, and to a large extent the taxpayers of Barbados were carrying the bill for the manufacturers who were making money. Some of us were not blunt enough to tell the manufacturers this, that do not matter — there is one manufacturer in this House...

(*ASIDE*: Four.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: and if he has not heard it from anybody yet he is going to hear it from me. The truth is that the rank and file in Barbados, the consumer was allowing manufacturers to keep their doors open because the Treasury of Barbados was subsidizing trade with Guyana. No foreign exchange! It was a subsidy to the manufacturers that they have never gratefully acknowledged from the consumers. That is the point I am making.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: You call it what you want but when you look at it, it is that.

You know, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that they would get from this Opposition is very blunt talking to people in Barbados because I think people must understand that in the last resort, the consumers of Barbados are paying in order to maintain the manufacturing industry. You have to understand that, Sir.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, please!

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir,.....

(*Aside*: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Chase way the whole gang.)

Laughter.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: as usual when the Government hears some blunt talking, they become a little bit restive and make noises, *sotto voce*, to put one off the point, Sir.

But let me remind honourable Members that Guyana found itself with no foreign exchange, so although you were sending the goods into Guyana, the debts were not being settled between Central Banks. The position was even so bad that when you made a telephone call from here to Guyana or from Guyana to Barbados, that part of the fees that was due to the authorities in Barbados was not being paid. Let us bring it down that the man in the street can understand what we are talking about. They could not even pay their telephone bills.

(*Aside*: Hon. B. M. TAITT: How long did it take your Government to understand this? One hundred and twenty million dollars.)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Unlike the present Minister of Industry who is speaking *sotto voce*, this Government not only in the spirit of CARICOM but because it wanted to help keep the factories open and employment up continued, fortunately, in order to help the manufacturers to export.

Let me go on to another point, Sir, Jamaica. The Minister is quite right. I agree with him. Part of the problem is that Jamaica itself had no foreign exchange.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member must recognize that the difficulties started not with the present Government of Jamaica. The difficulties started under the last Government of Jamaica.....

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: a Government with whom we have had the best of relations. But the reality of the position was that the Jamaican economy got to the stage that they could not pay in trading within CARICOM.

(*Aside*: Hon. B. M. TAITT: Why?)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: No foreign exchange.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is a fact, Sir, that about this time, the two Governments which consistently tried

to carry the CARICOM exercise were those of Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados.

I have always been very careful in my speeches to deal with Barbados/Trinidad relations because I found among the Trinidad and Tobago Government in this period, a very high standard of regionalism and great generosity in dealing with their CARICOM partners. Not only did Trinidad and Tobago extend the oil facility to most of the CARICOM countries, but it made financial arrangements to assist with balance of payments in some of these countries, and its aid was given on highly concessionary terms.

In relation to Barbados, even during this period, the Barbados Government was able to assist Jamaica with a loan. These matters are not often remembered, but we have to recall them now. We showed our interest in the CARICOM Movement, even to that extent, rallying to help the foreign exchange position of the Government of Jamaica.

But, Sir, as happen in the affairs of men and of Governments and of Parties, there comes a time when all does not always go well. The terms of the oil trade changed for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, and the second world recession had its impact even on the oil economy of Trinidad and Tobago.

Now, Sir, this occurred just at the time as well as the Grenada issue. And some of us misunderstood the signs and believed, I think in some cases genuinely, that the source of difficulties confronting Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago sprung from the Grenada issue. But political scientists who analyze these matters very objectively and carefully would recognize that the difficulty was more endemic than that. The difficulty was the international terms of trade.

And, Sir, what happened? The manufacturers in Trinidad and Tobago became more vocal. They became more protective and even with the greatest amount of dialogue, it was not possible to persuade them, and in the last resort, their representatives, that you had to still keep open doors if CARICOM were to survive.

I believe that Trinidad and Tobago applied under the CARICOM Treaty for certain protection and to place restrictions on goods. Jamaica had applied before. Guyana had applied. Barbados, if my memory serves me right, has never once sought to lay down any restrictions under the CARICOM Treaty.

Now, Sir, it is not that the Government was not under pressure. Our manufacturers quite rightly, from their own perspective, tried to pressurize successive Ministers of Trade and Industry to put up some ban.

Sir, the records are replete with statements from individual manufacturers making a plea for limitation on the importation of garments sometimes and other things. And I say individual manufacturers because I do not believe that the BMA itself has ever, during that period, enunciated a policy on the matter.

But the Government withstood the pressure. Perhaps in the process, the Government antagonized a few people. But I think that Governments must be able to withstand pressure in the overall public interest, even if it means eventually that they lose power. I believe that if you are there to govern, you have to take the long-term view of where you are taking your country. The Barbados Labour Party believes that the decisions we made then were right and in the long-term interest of the country Barbados, because it is only if we could have freer trade and the terms of trade being equal, that eventually we could have a growth in manufacturing and in trading.

1.35 p.m.

We recognize that our manufacturers have had to face a devaluation in most of the major trading partners in the Caribbean region. There have been several devaluations in Jamaica, several devaluations in Guyana. There was in the period of devaluation of the Eastern Caribbean dollar realignment of that. We have not had a devaluation in the parity of the Barbados dollar to the U.S. dollar to whom we are pegged except an evaluation only in relation to the other currencies to the extent that the U.S. dollar falls against other dollars. Yet we have remained reasonably competitive, and I want to pay a tribute to the Barbadian workmen and manufacturers in his regard in maintaining some edge of competition despite that problem.

Sir, I believe that once again the CARICOM countries will have to take a close look at a basket of currencies in order to come to a common currency for the conduct of CARICOM trade. I am not in any regard recommending a devaluation. I want to make that clear and I do not want to be misquoted. What I am saying is that it is realistic for us to look at whether we cannot as has occurred within the European Economic Community set up a monitoring regime where for trade intra-CARICOM we are able to exchange our goods more easily and to make payment and settlement more easily without detriment to our other foreign exchange requirements.

I know that the former Prime Minister, Bernard St. John, very frequently enunciated this view in CARICOM Councils, and indeed I think that the Minister will find that there are studies within the Government on this issue. It is something that we should not abandon, if we are looking at the long term interest of the Caribbean.

Sir, I had listened with care to see whether the Minister would have told me what was the present day level of trade. He merely gave me in a general way, saying that Barbados trade within CARICOM had fallen from a high of \$189.1 million in 1980 to \$152.5 million in 1983 and he merely said that today it is even less. I myself have not got the present statistics. But I think it is true to say that other than in the Eastern Caribbean that our trade has fallen very significantly from the highs of 1983. Today we have an adverse balance of trade with Jamaica, with Trinidad and Tobago, and with Guyana. We have favourable terms of trade with almost all of the LDC's. I think that the last three years will find that some years St. Lucia and another year Dominica will have a better balance of trade than with ourselves.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, the honourable Members are reminding me that it has always been so. But what I am saying to them is that with the proportion we have a lesser percentage now than we had before and our market share has fallen in that regard whereas it has increased in the LDC's.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Minister has the statistics there. Somewhere in the Central Bank Report you will find that I am correct.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: We have to impress on our regional partners that our market share with the MDC's must increase. Sir, I believe that even although Jamaica has had a rationing of foreign exchange that a greater proportion of that foreign exchange could have been spent on CARICOM goods, and I equally believe that the same went for Guyana. What we have found from an examination of the statistics is that whilst they were using the provisions of the CARICOM Treaty in order to seek limitations on trade that whatever foreign exchange that they had they were still trading with territories outside of the CARICOM region. So that if Barbados is to continue its generous approach on CARICOM trade we will expect reciprocity of treatment from all of our CARICOM partners in this regard, and we have to let them know that, Sir. We must be able to sell our products with the same amount of freedom in their territories that they are enabled to sell their products within our region.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I still believe that the idea of CARICOM is the correct idea for these small territories. I still believe that the political parties must educate the public in the realities of trade within the region. I still

believe that both of the major political parties in this country must rededicate themselves to improving on functionable cooperation within the Caribbean.

Aside

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: It is a tragedy that some people were not patient enough to have seen the Federation through, Sir. But we took a much smaller step that we would now like to see that step improved on, and some further progress made.

I will commend to the Minister for reading, Sir, as I think it is the best study done on the CARICOM movement recently, and what is said in that study is very pertinent, the Report of the Twelve Wise Men — a study done by Mr. Demas. Again, Sir, the initiative of the Government of Barbados is to be commended there. It was the Barbados Government which suggested a study of where the CARICOM movement had reached and where it should go in the future, and a lot of the findings in that study are still extremely relevant today, Sir. It will probably guide us in how we go forward in the future.

The Minister did not make any reference to the efforts to revive some form of payment or clearing facility within CARICOM. But it must be very high on our agenda.

1.45 p.m.

It is important not only for Barbados to be paid the outstanding debt. Equally important, in my mind, is for us to be sure that in future the volume of trade can improve, because there is enough money there to pay everybody.

I want to hear from the Minister what further steps have been taken since Nassau and since the meeting at Sam Lord's to revive the Multilateral Clearing Facility. So I was very pleased that the Minister ended his speech on the note not merely of regionalism but on the note of inter-nationalism.

Small territories cannot survive in a cocoon, Sir. We have to recognise that we are part of a wider world and no matter how difficult it is for us, we have to learn to trade within the wider world as well, and I think the Minister is very right, it is a point which successive Ministers of Industry and Commerce and Trade and Finance within the Barbados Labour Party Government have emphasised.

That person who has made an outstanding contribution to the Caribbean, Bernard St. John, very frequently hammered the point that the next step forward for our manufacturers must be in the extra-regional markets.

One of the things that we did to assist that was the establishment of the Export Promotion Corporation.

There are various other assistance given to the manufacturers in order to assist them extra-regionally; the budgetary proposals in 1985 are there, Sir. There are some proposals which we have left which I would like to see implemented; not only assisting in market development, but also assisting those of our citizens who are prepared to sell their services across CARICOM and outside of CARICOM — professional services. It is an area on which we must put some accents.

I can assure the Government that if it brings measures to the Honourable House which will assist in this regard, it will have the ready support of the Barbados Labour Party.

The honourable Member for Bridgetown smiles, Sir, but one of these days in his quieter moments when he reflects and when this Government is longer in the saddle and it starts to speak of the Government, it will be coming back talking about the measures, as it is beginning to do, which this Government has taken, Sir, because one of the things that is very significant, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a greater continuity in policies than political parties sometimes want to recognise and acknowledge, and indeed after the Minister had spoken I was well satisfied that he had read some of the speeches that he had found there left by Ministers who had held the portfolios before him.

Asides.

I believe that the Honourable Minister has his own input to put outside of the Civil Servants, so I am not going to say that he is merely listening to what the Civil Servants have told him, but what I want to say is that the Honourable Minister should now be satisfied that the policies enunciated during the previous years on the regional movement by our Government are correct policies.

Sir, I do not want to sit down, although we are talking basically about trade, to let anybody misunderstand that on other aspects of the CARICOM movement the Barbados Government has never flinched from undertaking its obligations, nor the people of Barbados;

whether it is in the issue of security, whether it is on the issue of human rights, whether it is in the issue of health or education, we have always carried out our obligations.

So that in terms of CARICOM we have been consistent, Sir, and whilst I welcome this measure as in the spirit of CARICOM, I would wish that we were in a position to go further than we were posited by this agreement of 77, and I hope that when the Minister comes back to the House that he will come back with a measure which shows, Mr. Speaker, that there has been new thinking, and that he can assure us in the Honourable House that the harmonisation of laws is now taking place to make the CARICOM enterprise truly functional.

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I know that there are other honourable Members who may wish to speak on this issue, but I would like to assure the Honourable House that we will seek to provide other opportunities whereby matters relating to CARICOM can be discussed, and we believe that it is important for Barbados and for the region that greater opportunities for discussing our common problems in the region should be provided, but at this stage I wish to move that further consideration of this matter be postponed.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, that brings us to the end of Government Business for today. As I have indicated, arrangements similar to those pertaining last week for lunch are in train, and I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, the 11th November, at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: I beg to second that.

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

1.55 p.m.

CONTENTS**MINUTES**

Confirmation of the Minutes of Tuesday, October 21, 1986	309
--	-----

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR THE SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER	309
--------------------------	-----

Accounts and Statements for the month of September, 1986 as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD	309
-----------------------------------	-----

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 7) Order, 1986.

Hon. N. K. SIMMONS	309
---------------------------------	-----

The Health Services (Embalmers and Funeral Directors) (Amendment) Regulations, 1986.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD	309
-----------------------------------	-----

A Resolution to grant the sum of \$651,804 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1986-87 - Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1986-87 No. 8 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. E. BOURNE	310, 311
----------------------------	----------

Question re certain dangerous corners in the Constituency of Christ Church East, of Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications (Hon. P. M. Greaves).

Question re the provision of street lighting at Thyme Bottom in the Constituency of Christ Church East, of Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications (Hon. P. M. Greaves).

Question re the dangers of Wilcox Hill, Christ Church to pedestrians and vehicular traffic, of Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications (Hon. P. M. Greaves).

Question re repair and raising of road surface of Silver Sands Coast Road, etc. of Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications (Hon. P. M. Greaves).

Question re the deterioration of the South Point Depot, of Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications (Hon. P. M. Greaves).

Question re the grounds and Public environs of St. Christopher Girls' School, of Minister of Education and Culture (Hon. L. E. Sandiford).

Question re grave danger to health caused by exhaust fumes from motor vehicles, of Minister of Transport, Works and Telecommunications (Hon. P. M. Greaves).

Question re the present system of registration of title to land, of Attorney General and Minister of Legal Affairs (Hon. M. A. King).

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS	311
--	-----

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

CARICOM ENTERPRISES ACT, 1986	311
--	-----

Mr. E. E. Greaves, 311, Mr. Forde, 316.

ADJOURNMENT	321
--------------------------	-----

Mr. Sandiford, 321.

SPEAKERS IN THIS ISSUE

BOURNE, E. (Christ Church East)
GREAVES, Hon. E. E. (St. Lucy)
FORDE, Hon. H. deB. (Christ Church West)
SANDIFORD, Hon. L. E. (St. Michael South)
SIMMONS, Hon. N. K. (St. James South)