

THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1991 - 96

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, May 25, 1993

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12:15 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour L. A. WEEKES, G.C.M., J.P., (Speaker)
Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD, B.A., M. A., (Econ.),
J.P., (Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economic
Affairs and Minister for the Civil Service)
Mr. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M. A., LL.B., (Leader
of the Opposition)
Hon. B. M. TAITT, B.A.(Hons.), M.P.A.,
LL.B.(Hons.), (Minister of Health)
Hon. M. A. KING, Q.C., LL.B., (Attorney General
'and Minister of Foreign Affairs)
Hon. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.C., M.I.A.S., J.P.,
(Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce)
Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, B.Sc.(Econ.)
Mr. O. S. ARTHUR, M.Sc.(Econ.)
Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, Q.C., LL.M.
Hon. C. V. WALKER, (Minister of Education)
Mr. L. L. Brathwaite, J.P. (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. E. E. GREAVES, G.C.M., B.A., Ed.M.,
(Minister of Housing and Lands, Community Development
and Culture)
Hon. W. W. HALL, G.C.M., H.B.M. (Minister of
Tourism and Sports)
Mr. R. L. MORRIS, B.A., Cert. Ed.
Hon. D. J. H. THOMPSON, LL.B.(Hons.) (Minister
of State, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs)
Miss B. A. MILLER
Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Q.C., M.A., M.Sc.
(Econ.)
Mr. J. O. TUDOR

Hon. D. W. BOWEN (Minister of Agriculture, Food
and Fisheries)

Mr. G. W. PAYNE

Prayers were led by Rev. Father Ivan Harewood.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES Mr. SPEAKER:

Minutes of Tuesday, May 11, 1993.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Minutes of the
House of Assembly for Tuesday, May 11, 1993 have been
circulated and presumed have been read. I beg to move that
these minutes be now confirmed.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS

Rt. Hon. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am
commanded to lay the Insurance Corporation of Barbados
(Reinsurance Cessions) (Amendment) Order, 1993.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that
a Technical and Vocational Education and Training Council
Bill, 1993 be now read a first time.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of this day's sitting.

Hon. M. A. KING: I beg to second that.

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

ORDER NO. 3 - RESOLUTION TO NOTE, AGREEMENT FOR THE ASSEMBLY OF CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY PARLIAMENTARIANS

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, there has been no political party in the Caribbean which has been more consistent in its support of political union of the English speaking Caribbean countries than the Barbados Labour Party. In fact, our consistency led us in the 1950s to make available to the people of the Caribbean the distinguished presence and leadership of the late Sir Grantley Adams and to make the sacrifice necessary on the political home front to champion the cause of Federation and West Indian union.

As a young man under 40 in the 1950s and the 1960's, I was captivated by the zeal with which the Barbados Labour Party members and leadership pursued the federal goal. It has been a goal that all right thinking West Indians have sought to achieve for well over 60 years now. Regrettably it has been a goal that has eluded us and for the foreseeable future I predict it will be a goal which will continue to elude us.

At the time of the Independence Debate my Party took the view that every last effort should be made to hold together those territories in the Caribbean, particularly in the Eastern Caribbean, who were interested in closer political, economic and social union. That was perhaps the 3rd major debate in the history of the Caribbean countries on the issue of federation. I was happy, as an under 40, to participate in that debate and to enlighten the country as to the reasons why closer union was a necessity. Those reasons are still valid today. I need not repeat them because I think that the West Indian peoples have now come to realise that their effort at functional cooperation has not achieved an enhanced standard of living for them in the way that a tighter closer union would have achieved.

We are still faced, Mr. Speaker, in our separate territories with a certain degree of insularity, with a certain degree of mistrust and, certainly, with a substantial degree of lack of vision. Within recent years, we have made once again tentative steps to bring the Caribbean peoples together. I believe that the manner in which we have made those steps has been more costly to us financially than the

steps that were being recommended by people like Sir Grantley Adams back in the 1940s and 1950s. 12.30 p.m.

I believe that although some progress has been made between the break-up of the Federation in 1962 and today, those steps have not been as satisfactory as the genuine West Indian patriot would have wanted it. Whilst not decrying those steps, I remain fully committed to a serious attempt at political union within the Caribbean with those two's, or threes, or fours who may be serious about such an objective. What the Labour Party will find difficult to accept is that of the piling up of institution on to institution without, in the long run, achieving the objective of integration. None of us can be happy today with the state of the Integration Movement after 35 years or more.

Only a few days ago, the Right Honourable Member for St. Michael South was issuing the veiled threat of retaliation in defence of Barbadian manufacturers and against, at least, two other of the countries in the region. Implicit in his statement was not only the nationalism which we will support (so far as it is legitimate and reasonable), but the recognition that the Integration Movement at the moment is not elastic enough to recognise when fundamental changes have to be made and made quickly. The compromises now coming out of the Heads of Government Conference make me believe that that Conference has lost its primary function of trying to achieve closer integration in as rapid a period of time as necessary. The Conference must be more forceful. It must be able to achieve the objectives of the Chaguaramas Treaty and the political union which Caribbean peoples desire. It must not only achieve the objectives of Chaguaramas but it must go beyond Chaguaramas.

Sir, if there is one criticism which I want to make of the West Indian Report put out by Sir Shirdath Ramphal and his team it is that they missed a wonderful opportunity to be bold; that in trying to make compromises, they regrettably undermined, in a way, the old concept of an * integrated West Indian union. I believe that the proposal of the Right Honourable Member for an Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, must also be placed among the missed opportunities. I have examined the draft Agreement and what we really are establishing is another talk shop. We are piling up institution on institution. We are seeking to establish another body lacking in real power: a body which will make no difference to the people of the Caribbean.

What is the Assembly supposed to do? Its objective, apparently, is to involve the people of the Community, through their representatives, in the process of consolidating and strengthening the Community; to provide a forum for the people of the Community to make their views known through their representatives; to promote greater understanding among Member States and

Associate Member States, and to encourage the adoption by Governments of a common policy on economic, social, cultural, scientific and legal matters deliberated upon by the Assembly.

Let me say that those objectives are already set out in the Treaty of Chaguaramas. There are institutions already charged with achieving those same objectives. If, therefore, these objectives are really to be achieved by this Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians, I would expect Parliament would be given greater powers which are not now available to existing institutions or that it would have powers that are in addition to those available to existing institutions.

It is significant that the proposed Article 5.2 which sets out the functions and powers of the Community of the Assembly is so lacking in imagination it will achieve the objectives set out for the Assembly under Article 4. What will this Assembly be able to do? Make recommendations to the Conference of Heads of Government, the Council of Ministers, Institutions and Associate Institutions of the Community and the Secretariat! So we are going to take a group of us, 4 Parliamentarians from here, 4 from the other countries, a couple from Associate countries to go to make recommendations. Now, we already have it within our power, as a Parliament, all of us, not 4 of us, to make recommendations to these visitations. And what is more, we can go further and pass the necessary laws if the Council of Ministers and the Heads of Government and the other institutions would only get on with deepening the integration process.

What else is the Assembly supposed to do? A power, to request from the bodies that I have referred to, information and reports for discussion. Mr. Speaker, without exception, the reports and information from CARICOM should be laid here within this Parliament and should be freely available to the peoples of the region without having to set up an institution to make a request for what is, in my view, a fundamental right of every Caribbean person whose money is being spent to keep the CARICOM Community going.

What else can it do? It is supposed to discuss and make recommendations on any matter within the scope of the objectives of the Community. That is in no way different from the first function I have outlined; so I need say no more about it. It can discuss and make recommendations on any matter referred to it by the Conference, the Council, or any Institution or Associate Institution. Now, I do not see the point of referring matters to a body which has no teeth, no executive powers; to a body which cannot pass laws to nullify anything that the Council or institutions are doing and with which it disagrees. 12.40 p.m.

So that I find it really a pointless exercise to set up another layer of Government - I call it - in the Caribbean at this stage that is really merely - to quote the words of the Honourable Member for St. Peter - a "talk shop". What can it do? It can adopt resolutions on any issue or matter arising under the Treaty. But all of the existing Parliaments can do that. Every Parliament of the CARICOM Community can do that. I make the point most strongly because the Assembly is to consist of representatives of member states and associate member states elected by the Parliaments or appointed in such manner from their membership, as the Parliaments should decide.

So we are choosing ourselves, sending 4 of us to talk at least once a year at a sitting presided over by a Speaker and whole panoply of Clerks, *et cetera* to do exactly what each of our individual Parliaments can do and should be doing now, which is, discussing CARICOM matters as often as possible and putting pressure on the institutions of CARICOM to move quickly on with the integration movement. These are some of the reasons why the Labour Party finds it impossible to lend its support to an institution such as this.

I have grave difficulty as well, Mr. Speaker, with the proposed manner in which Members of the Assembly are to be chosen. 4 Members are to be chosen by each Parliament. There is to be no direct election to this Assembly. There is to be no direct election to this Assembly of Parliamentarians by the people themselves. We have already been elected by the people. We are now to elect ourselves to be another Parliament for the Caribbean. I am fundamentally opposed to any appointments, as I call it, being made by politicians from among ourselves to represent the man in the street or from around Dayrells Road in a Caribbean Parliament. If there are to be people elected I want to see full democratic election. The man at Dayrells Road corner, the man in Clapham Park, the man in Suttle Street, the man in Rose Hill, the man in Chelsea Road and the women - when I say men I also mean women - must have a direct say in any Parliament that we are going to elect. Otherwise the Parliament will have no real meaning or effect.

Let me give you an example of what I fear, Sir. In the last elections in one of our CARICOM countries, our CARICOM neighbour St. Vincent, all the members returned were from one political party only. As a result, based on a legal opinion, it was decided that no Opposition Senators could be appointed. No attempt has been made to alter the Constitution to allow the Opposition to have meaningful representation within that Parliament. But I am now being told that in those circumstances that Parliament will choose 4 people and can choose 4 of their members as fully representative of a democratic St. Vincent in order to participate in the proposed Assembly. I have great difficulty with that, Sir. I have great difficulty with it because I have always believed in true democracy.

I had great difficulty at the 1966 Conference on Independence with the concept of a Senate in which there are 2 people appointed by the Opposition, 7 by the Governor-General from "supposed-to-be-independent" interests and 12 by the Government. At that early age I took strong objection, as a democrat, to that form of body or institution and I still hold strong objections to the manner in which our Senate is appointed. That is why we intended, as Cox recommended, to change the Senate and to make changes to ensure the existence and maintenance of true parliamentary and participatory democracy within our existing institution.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I could not now support a position - for the benefit of Honourable Members the Cox Commission reported in 1980.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Yes. Therefore if the Honourable Member who speaks *sotto voce* on that side wants to engage me in debate, I will engage him at any time.

The position is that I take strong objection to a Caribbean institution that is of a deliberative nature, representative of the people and established for the people to do the business of the people, being selected in the manner proposed. That is a fundamental objection.

Politicians have to be very careful in the changing times that we are in. I detect abroad, not only in the Caribbean but elsewhere - but particularly within my Caribbean experience and Barbadian experience - that people are turned off of politicians. They are very suspicious of the moves we make. We must therefore have a clear, open and transparent Government and widen participation by the people in their democracy, if we are to be convincing.

I am sure I am saying nothing new when I tell this House that it is easier to get our younger people to attend a dub concert or a music fest or a football match or any sporting event than to get them interested in public affairs or to attend sittings of their own Parliament or to listen to their own Parliamentarians. Honourable Members only have to look at their constituency meetings.

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: I have watched the Honourable Member for St. Michael West's constituency meetings - passed up and down sometimes - and his voice is loud...

Aside.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: ...and singular on those occasions. The point is, Sir, that a couple of months ago The Economist carried an article analyzing the causes for this. One of the fundamental causes identified was the lack of confidence and trust in the political system and in the politicians of the day. 12.50 p.m.

Sir, I am saying to the Rt. Honourable Member that this Assembly will not increase that trust. I know the Honourable Member in introducing the Resolution said that it was unlikely to cost us more, because we can all meet at the CPA.

Now, I ask myself this, what is there that this Assembly is going to do that a body of Caribbean Parliamentarians, meeting at the CPA regionally, cannot do and cannot say? What is there? We would have no authority, for instance, Sir, to ask for the Public Accounts of the Community. We cannot look at any violation of any domestic matter that is supposed to be within the domestic jurisdiction or reserve of a particular country. So that when human rights are being abused, for example, the flagrant abuse of human rights that occurred in Guyana.' Let me take that as an example, Sir - the open electoral fraud that was practiced in that country and that offended fundamental human rights. Guyana would have claimed and no doubt its claim would have been sustained by the Speaker of this so-called Assembly, that it could not be debated by the Assembly of Parliamentarians although, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I could come into my own Parliament here and debate the matter. That is the position.

Really, I find it difficult to see where we are going, within the Caribbean. Take Haiti, let us assume that Haiti became an associate member, and objection is taken to our raising matters of abuse of human rights within Haiti. That too would be a matter within the domestic jurisdiction of Haiti, not to be debated at this Assembly.

I believe that if we are to make progress with the integration movement, we must do so in a meaningful way. If we cannot accommodate the fears of Jamaica, let us face facts. It is obvious to me that the Ramphal Report ran away from dealing with the fact that Mr. Seaga and his Party are not interested in closer political integration in the region, or in any form of integration and that is affecting the pace at which Jamaica sees itself coming into closer contact with the balance of the Caribbean.

Guyana has now changed its tune. I have been through all of this from a school boy and I do not believe that we must continue compromising the issue of Caribbean integration, because one or two countries have reservations of this nature; and that we must pile on institutions that are costly to my constituents and to the people of Barbados, and are meaningless. I would prefer to have no exercise at all .towards integration, than to have this sort of exercise.

Take for instance, Sir, there could be no more pressing CARICOM problem than regional security. That is one of the problems. Yet you know there is a reluctance of some of the Caribbean countries to come into the Regional Security System. We have at long last managed to persuade the Democratic Labour Party to recognise the value and worth of a regional security system.

I would prefer to see that the Heads of Government, at the moment, and institutions concentrate on meaningful policies to rid the Caribbean of the rampant, high and unacceptable unemployment which is at the moment destroying the spirit of Caribbean people, than for us to be in here voting for an Assembly of Parliamentarians that in my view can bring no immediate benefit to the relief of unemployment.

What am I to say, Sir, to the person up in Lynch Gap, what am I to say to him when he asks me, is it going to bring me a job? I cannot promise the person in Lynch Gap there will be a job. What can I say to the lady in Bynoe Road, Sir? None of this will go one inch of the way to relieving us from unemployment, from the lack of opportunities of improving the region or deepening the integration process that our manufacturers and our industrialists or investors can now combine in a way to make maximum use of the resources of the Caribbean. When any one is prepared to bring to me, Sir, proposals along that line, then he will have the support of the Party that I have the privilege at this time to lead; and he will have my own support.

I again refer this House to the opening statement which I made on behalf of the Barbados Labour Party to the West Indian Commission which I will make a document of this House. It shows how serious we are in the Labour Party about our commitment to the cause of Caribbean integration and how deep our conviction is that we should move in this direction. In our 55 years of existence, we have never failed to support such a movement but we are not now going to be a party to other false starts that have no meaning for the man in the street, whether he be in Kingstown or in Georgetown, whether he be in Bridgetown or in Port-of-Spain.

Hon. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, if this agreement were designed to set up a Parliament with decision making powers and the type of institution of which we are members and the type of institution which I think all of us will, ideally, one day want to see as a Caribbean Parliament of a Caribbean Nation, if that were the type of institution this agreement were trying to set up, I think all of us would agree 100% with the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: ...the Honourable Member for Christ Church West. I do apologise to the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. But, I think, Mr. Speaker, we all recognise and I think the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, himself, recognises that in the world of real politics, we have to deal with what is achievable and this is the mission I think we have to look at.

Is it desirable in this Caribbean community of which we are members, and which we are trying to propel into deeper integration, is it desirable that we should have within the framework of this region, an institution where Parliamentarians can meet and discuss the issues affecting the region?

The Honourable Member for Christ Church ... I did not interrupt you when you were speaking. Let me say what I have got to say. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West, has made the point, what can this assembly of Parliamentarians do that these individual Parliaments cannot do? Now they are not the same thing. They are not designed and were never intended to deal with the same things. The Assembly of Parliamentarians is not intended to be a decision making body in relation to the affairs of CARICOM as this body is in relation the affairs of Barbados or as any national Parliament is in relation to the national issues which confront us. So that we cannot conceive of that institution merely as another institution of CARICOM which has no meaning. If one looks at the beginning of the European Parliament itself when it was formed, Mr. Speaker, it was originally accused of being the same kind of talk shop of which we now accuse this Assembly of Parliamentarians. It was accused of being a talk shop. It was not elected directly by the constituents of the countries from which the members came. The membership of the European Parliament in its initial stages was selected by the Parliaments of the national jurisdictions making up the European Community. As the integration movement grew, eventually the situation was arrived at where the members of the European Parliament are now there as a result of direct elections. 1.00 p.m.

Now you may still argue that the European Parliament today is still a talk shop and you may argue that it is useless to the integration and growth of the European Economic Community. Now that is an argument which may be used. It is an argument which has certainly been used in relation to CARICOM. It is an argument which one can develop. All I am saying is that one can understand that argument being developed. But do not say that there is not a case for having an institution where people of a region who are seeking to develop closer integration can get together and discuss the issues which affect them.

Now the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has made the point that we have to be frank and, if

Jamaica is not concerned about the integration, let us recognise that. He commented on the perception that Seaga and the Jamaica Labour Party are not interested in closer integration with the region.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Okay. I have said that you made that statement. You can perhaps make that statement in relation to a number of other countries of the region. Now the question I am asking is this. Should we then say that it is time for all of us in this region to scrap any idea of forming closer union? Is it time to scrap the integration movement? If you say that Jamaica is not interested, let us forget them and go along? Should we single out each country whom we perceive is not interested and say let us scrap them and move ahead? Let us not even make an attempt to provide an institution or an avenue where the dialogue can continue?

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Do not mind that. It is as a result of dialogue that we can get results. Is it not desirable, Mr. Speaker? Perhaps we may have said of the United Nations in its earlier days that it was merely a talk shop. We may say of the Organisation of American States that it was merely a talk shop. We could say of any institution where nations meet that it is merely a talk shop. Mr. Speaker, sometimes the mere fact that people from different nations can get together and discuss issues, it is good. It is done in the U.N. too and the constant talking many times can avert the hot wars.

Sir, the fact that they accused this institution as being merely a talk shop is not necessarily something for which you can condemn it. The fact that it is available as a talk shop for the people of the region is something which should be commended. How often do we accuse ourselves of not talking enough to each other in this region about the issues that really affect us?

Mr. Speaker, no one is saying that the Assembly of Parliamentarians is going to be the entire catalyst for the integration movement, because there are clearly a number of areas where integration has to be built up such as the Meeting of Council of Ministers, Meeting of Heads of Government and the formation of things like a CAPJCOM Supreme Court. The NGOs of the region have expressed an interest in being able to meet and talk together about the issues which affect non-Governmental organisations. The young people of the region may want to get together to talk about the issues which affect young people of the region. Are you going to say that all of that is just institution building? Is that not giving people an opportunity of the region to talk to one another, to understand each other, to get to know and understand each other, to build up the

integration process and to build up a sense of community? That is what we are talking about - building up a sense of community among the people who inhabit these lands. All this Assembly of Parliamentarians is designed to do, is to be one of the institutions which will facilitate to build up that sense of community among the people of this region.

The Honourable Member for Christ Church West made the point that the powers which this Assembly of Parliamentarians should have should be more or less akin to the powers which exist in Parliamentary institutions in the region or they should have powers in addition to existing parliamentary institutions. Now what that statement ignores, Mr. Speaker, is the reality of politics in the region. It is not so long ago in the 1950s where we saw the demise of the federal experiment. That is not so far back that we do not understand the concern of Governments of this region, and I am talking about all of them, about giving powers to institutions which are not national institutions. One of the things which one has to consider in a CARICOM setting in order to advance the integration process is that you want to proceed along lines where you are likely to get some kind of agreement. I venture to say this, Sir, that if you seek to set up a Parliament for the region which has powers which are equivalent to the National Parliaments, you are not likely to get any support for that. Because lots of people in the region still see the spectre of the failure of the federal experiment and they do not want to go down that road again in seeing an experiment fail before it has even matured.

Sir, the thing that guides and directs the thinking of those people who are presently responsible for trying to get the integration process on stream is that we try and see what is achievable, more or less like getting the least common denominator which everybody will accept in an effort to get an agreement on something. As soon as one can get an agreement from all those participating, then you build it up, act on it, and develop it until you can get to the situation where you have something which grows in strength, grows in dimension, and grows in the capacity to produce for the people of the region what you really want it to achieve in the ultimate analysis. This is not intended to be perfect. It could never be at this stage. You cannot analyse this institution in terms of the comment made by the Honourable Member for Christ Church West at the end, "what is the person on the street in St. Matthias 1.10 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. M. A. KING: Lynch Gap? I can say that the person in Silver Hill will ask "what is this Caribbean institution going to bring me in terms of jobs?" You cannot analyse institutions in those terms. If we took a Caribbean Supreme Court, for instance, as the final Court of Appeal

for this region, do we feel that that is something which it is desirable that this region should have? If we say that it is desirable for this region to have that, should we rationalise whether the Caribbean Supreme Court is a good institution or not by making a judgment of what is that court going to do in terms of providing a job for you? Or is it going to put bread and butter on your table? What is it going to do to improve justice? That is a legitimate question.

Mr. Speaker, the important thing one has to recognise, we have to determine if it is in the interest of the people of this region to try to build up a Caribbean Community. I say that if we agree that it is in the interest of the people of our region to try to build a Caribbean Community, we have to take whatever steps we consider reasonable and achievable, achievable being the important thing, towards the goals which we seek in the interest of establishing the institutional arrangements.

You have to look at the objectives. We do not claim for the Agreement anything more than the Agreement shows. Article 4 sets out what its objectives are. Throughout the Agreement emphasis is placed on this concept of getting the people of this Caribbean Community involved in discussing the issues of the Community. I am not going to be tedious and read out all of these, but Article 5 sets out the functions and the powers of the institution and nothing more or less is claimed for this institution than what is set out in Article 5. I say, Mr. Speaker, that we have to look at the Agreement in the context and in the terms in which it is written, view it for what it is, no more or no less than what it seeks to achieve. If you do that and do not seek to claim for it more than it seeks to achieve, none of us can have any difficulty supporting the Resolution for the establishment of this Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians.

Thank you.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the origin of this idea of an Assembly of Caribbean Community Parliamentarians with the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Barbados goes back, I believe, to his first Heads of Government meeting in St. Lucia some time in the late 80s. He is nodding his head yes. He was the new boy, it was his first outing as a Prime Minister. He had to make an impression, he had to call attention to his presence there. Usually when you come into Parliament you want to say something that is interesting, different, startling, striking, whatever. He had to come with an idea and he came with this idea of a Caribbean Community of Parliamentarians, which was pooh-poohed then in St. Lucia, has been pooh-poohed at every Heads of Government meeting thereafter, his prime ministerial colleagues pooh-pooh it behind his back to other people all the time.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I know whereof I speak on this. The major criticism of it is that it was not well thought out. Some people say it was not thought out at all. It is to be a peripatetic bother, a travelling circus. I do not see anything in the proposal which leads me to believe that it would not enjoy the fate of CARIFESTA.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, CARIFESTA. They cannot get another CARIFESTA going, because nobody wants to pay for it. You are dealing with CARICOM Governments who will not pay their way for the University, to which they all subscribe and are supposed to subscribe and belong, from which they all benefit. They will not pay for LIAT, not even the home country housing LIAT will pay for LIAT. They will not pay for WISCO. There is no entity which is described today as a Caribbean entity that you can get them to pay for, so that is the first thing.

I understand that this is to cost in excess of \$1 million and I have to ask which dollars. We are dealing with a Caribbean where there are at least 6 different currencies, with 6 different parities, a Caribbean that cannot get CARIFESTA together, a Caribbean that cannot yet get a Caribbean Court of Appeal together. Why does the Right Honourable Prime Minister believe that he is going to get this Assembly together?

I have made this point before, Mr. Speaker, but we are living at a time when as parliamentarians we have fallen into grave disrepute, where the very institution of Parliament has fallen into disrepute. This is universal. I am not saying that this is peculiar to Barbados, but we have to be concerned about it in Barbados, and in my opinion if we cannot put our own Barbadian House of Parliament in order, I do not know what order we are going to bring to any Assembly of Caribbean Parliamentarians. I have a lot of difficulty with that.

My views on the urgent need for parliamentary reform in Barbados are well known and I am prepared to outline them again in here today. The form of Parliament, the institutions of Government as we know them today were known by our forebears way back in Victorian times. It is one of the few things we did not deal with at Independence. The form is now antiquated, antediluvian, Victorian, irrelevant and that is part of the reason why the generation behind us disrespect it. They do not feel that it relates to them or that they can relate to it. They do not feel that it represents their aspirations, their needs, their demands, their desires. Mr. Speaker, although I am a member of it, I have to agree. I do not see the relevance of a bicameral Parliament in Barbados in the 1990s. I honestly do not. The Senate in Barbados...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes. I would chase it away. In recent weeks I have had cause to tell the Governor-General that if I had my way I would do away with her job too, and she took it very well indeed. She did not disagree with me. It is not relevant as presently constructed, it is not relevant to the needs of today. Something is wrong when we have a Governor General who cannot and does not move around. Don't tell me veer off it. 1.20 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, I am not going to let...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am going to hear Mr. Speaker telling me now about protocol. I hear you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot and you know that very well.

Miss B. A. MILLER: That is part of the irrelevance, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, but it has not changed so' we have to live with it until it is changed. You cannot go down the road I think you are headed for. You have already identified the person.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I accept your ruling, Sir. But the point I am trying to make is that that is part of the difficulty with this whole set up and part of the irrelevance. Imagine I cannot even address that matter in here in 1993 because that is a Standing Order and a Rule that we made for ourselves 67 years ago.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to take exception to that If you say you cannot discuss it and then say it is because of a Standing Order you are then putting the Chair in an awkward position. You know very well you cannot discuss it.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I know that, Sir, but I want to put the Chair in an awkward position. In fact, Sir, I want to put all of us in an awkward position because if we feel we are in an awkward position we begin to understand that something is wrong. We are not comfortable with it and if we cannot discuss it in this forum I do not know where we will be able to discuss it.

It needs to be an item for the agenda for some kind of discussion within the parliamentary structure. If we have to...

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a minute. Just let me clear myself. I am not saying you cannot discuss the office as such. What I am trying to say is that as long as you introduce the personal aspect...

Miss B. A. MILLER: I am not dealing with the person at all, not even with the office.

Mr. SPEAKER: No. You prefaced your remark by saying you spoke to the person. Then you went down the other line. This is my exception.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not want to speak to the person of the Governor General. I do not even want to speak to the post of the Governor General. I want to deal with the concept of the structure of Government which allows a Head of State who has no role or function that people today feel that they can relate to. I will move away from the Governor General because we have made this stupid rule, if I may be permitted to say so, which does not permit us to discuss it

We want to be more British parliamentary in our behaviour than the British Parliament itself. Every day in the British Parliament Royalty gets "rinsed out" and lambasted. The Press is making a mint out of them and we have a puppet situation in Barbados, a copy cat thing...

Hon. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. At the risk of being antediluvian, Sir, I object strenuously to the line which the Honourable Member is taking. I am a member of this House and I object most strenuously to the line the Honourable Member is taking with regard to my position in this House.

Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to move to the Senate. Another irrelevance. It has never served the function which we were made to understand that it was designed to serve post-independence. It is a terrible example yet we go on and on with it There are other countries in the Eastern Caribbean - do not let us forget we are just another Island in the Eastern Caribbean with the Commonwealth parliamentary tradition - which have tinkered. I cannot put it any higher than that because they have still not tried to make their system of parliament relevant and that is why in a lot of those countries the parliament does not meet on a regular basis. But, they have gone the unicameral way and it has worked remarkably well in my experience and I would venture to say perhaps in your experience too, Sir. Still all of us have not dealt with relating and making relevant to the realities of the 1990s a system of Parliament.

I am not going to be supportive of going into any Caribbean Assembly which is only going to be an Assembly based on these same antediluvian, outdated, outmoded irrelevant principles. I am sorry, I cannot be expected to promote it. I believe that I am representing the interests of modern young people, modern young women and modern young men and that I am reflecting their view. I have said it in here before, Sir. We need to be very deeply concerned with the level of disrespect, not only

for us as parliamentarians but for the institution of parliament itself. I repeat, Sir, a lot of it has to do with the fact that this Parliament has long outlived its usefulness in the form that we now practise.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this proposed Assembly is not, in my view, the answer to the failed political union of 1962. It is not, in my opinion, a solution for the 21st century because that is what we are talking about. We cannot even begin to be thinking about the 1990's anymore. We have to be looking forward. This is another layer of bureaucracy that the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister is propounding for those who are going to inherit from us for the 21st century. I must tell you, Sir, it is my belief that this is not what they want. If they do not want what we have now they are not looking to put another layer of bureaucracy to the tune of \$1 million on top of that. We do not know where this money is coming from.

A war was fought in North America on the premise of no taxes if people cannot get representation. I must agree with the Leader of the Opposition. I have a lot of difficulty with a group of parliamentarians arrogating to themselves the right to select from among themselves some kind of super irrelevant body now to be called the Caribbean Assembly of Parliamentarians. I am sorry. I have a lot of difficulty with it. As a citizen of Barbados I would want to have the right to vote for a Caribbean parliamentarian in a Caribbean Assembly that could be relevant and that could answer needs clearly already expressed and unmet in our communities. If it could be the answer in that way, I would want to reserve to myself the right to elect my own representatives to such an Assembly. So I have a lot of difficulty with the principle in the first place and the structure proposed for this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we have the Heads of Government Conference. We have various Standing Committees of CARICOM Ministries, some of which meet and do good work, some of which are dormant. It usually has from time to time to do with the personality of a particular Minister or group of Ministers who may want to move an idea forward. It has to do sometimes with the personality and the willingness to work of the civil servants who are in that particular sector. When I was a Minister of Health they worked exceedingly well. The present Minister of Health may or may not be in a position to say whether the Standing Committee of Caribbean Ministers of Health is still a vital institution. I do not know. I suspect that if it were I would be hearing about it because I shadow Health, but I do not know. It is better that he who is a member of it to speak to it than I should speak to it.

You do not hear anything from the Agriculture Ministers because the form of those Standing Committees is irrelevant as well. This Parliament should be a full-time working body. In the 1990s for the agenda that we have this Parliament should be a full-time working Parliament.

I find it incredible that in 1993 there is no Standing Committee of Tourism in the Barbados Parliament. There is no Standing Committee on Education in the Barbados Parliament or on any of the productive or social or any sector at all, not even the Library Committee works in this Parliament and there are complaints about the Standing Commission of Management as well.

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Why do we feel we can take to a Caribbean Assembly that is only a consultative and deliberative one... Do we really need this? We are in the age of strategic planning, Sir. We are in the age of new technology. We are in the age of new technology. We do not need the travelling circus anymore. We can do it on T.V. We can have a T.V. show of it. You would get to more people. 1.30 p.m.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: No. Not as many people have fax machines as have TV sets and they would see in living colour. You would come right into the drawing rooms and touch more people than you would touch in a Parliament. We cannot even quarter fill the Gallery in here on a Tuesday. People are not even coming in for the Budget. The 15 people who came in for the Budget Obviously did not have access to a television set.

You have to take cognisance of the fact that the new technology, and the new communications technology in particular, Sir, has changed the way in which we will communicate with each other. This kind of communication is finished. We are here taking part in it but it really is finished. I do not believe I am the only one who has recognised that. I think we all know it. But now it is up to us to do with the political will and courage to design and devise something that will appeal to people because if we go on in this mode by the end of this century it is all over.

The same way that people now feel they can walk into a school and into a dominoes game and flourish a gun, they can walk into the Court in tear-up old pants and tear-up old T-shirts - and I have to tell the Judges and Magistrates all the time "You have to deal with it here because the next thing they will want to do is to sit down where you are sitting down because they do not respect the system." It starts off with disrespect for the person, then it moves to the system and then you have anarchy. People just do not respect the system so why are we wanting to perpetuate the system in the same old antiquated mode? Nobody can persuade me yet.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that this concept of the Assembly has not at all been well-thought out. I believe it is one of those outmoded irrelevant antiquated ideas that the Right Honourable Prime Minister had. The Democratic Labour Party came back to Government in 1986 without

a single new idea that you could pick up from the front bench and they still do not have one.

The Prime Minister admits that he had an idea from 1971 about an examination centre and out of that we have something called Sherbourne. I have to call it Sherbourne because I do not know what it is. Nobody knows what it is. Five different Ministers have pronounced on what it could be and what it might be. Even from the Minister now who is in charge of the funding for it we hear that there is going to be an Environmental Conference here next year and they are trying in a hurry now to get it ready. I do not know about the funds voted for it but they are trying to get it ready in time for that Conference in April. I hope it comes to pass because it is a shocking statement, not only about Government's incompetence, but all of us in Barbados.

It was to house the CPA Conference in 1989 and then a whole host of other meetings were going to be predicated on the fact that they would be hosted there. I hope the Environmental Conference comes to pass and that it will be held at Sherbourne so that something will happen there. It will not justify this antiquated idea because an examination centre cannot justify that kind of expenditure. All of the other usages to which we heard that it was going to be put would require it to be customised designed and built to certain specifications. Certainly if it were going to be a place where one could have concerts because I know that the idea for a school of music was left in a file in the Ministry of Education and the site at Sherbourne was suggested for it. A former Prime Minister was even prevailed upon and asked if he would not enjoy the strains of violin and piano music and singing coming from next door to Ilaro Court. There was no money for it at the time and it did not move. There is still no money for it but I am really deeply concerned. Is Sherbourne going to be a place where this Caribbean Assembly would meet when it comes to Barbados because it could not fit in here, or we are going to take them to the Stadium or the Gymnasium?

The Honourable Member for St. George South once made a statement in here. Somebody from that side was shouting that the Airport was their idea and he asked a simple question. "Can you land an airplane on an idea?" I want to get to the reality of this thing now, the nuts and bolts. I am a hands-on type person. I am not so sure how it is going to work either.

I look at the objectives of the Assembly, Sir, and I see among these objectives that it is to provide opportunities for involvement in the issues of integration. But we know that the Standing Committees, the Heads of Government, even the CPA, if we could make it into a really vibrant and viable organisation, it could be made to provide some of these opportunities. There are institutions already on the ground designed to do just this. I do not understand that the Assembly is to have any function to consolidate any of these. It is just to be another layer of

something stacked into something, or on to something, or on top of something.

It is also to provide a forum for people of the Community to make their views known through their representatives. But we raise the question again. Whose representatives? As I understand it, the people who go to the Caribbean Assembly would not be the representatives of the people. They would be representatives of Parliament.

It is also to provide enhanced opportunities for the coordination of the foreign policies of Member States. This is in a region where the first thing you can hear when you say the words "foreign policy" is non-interference. Do not interfere in my backyard and I will not interfere with yours. We have sat through all kinds of atrocities in the Caribbean based on that principle. What magic is the Assembly going to bring to change that? That is the function of the CARICOM Secretariat, this business of frequent contact and the monitoring of the policies of the community. The CARICOM Secretariat with all of its bureaucracy has not been able to do it. What is going to suddenly enable this Assembly to do that?

Another function and objective of this Assembly I see is to provide greater understanding among Member States and Associate Members for the purpose of realising and safeguarding the ideals and principles of democratic governments. Is this going to cure the insularity? Is this going to put an end to the scratch-back club? Has* this Prime Minister of Barbados spoken to the new President in Guyana to know if he is renewing and reaffirming his agreement to this? I looked on the front of the Resolution and the Preamble says:-

"AND WHEREAS the Prime Minister of Barbados and the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on behalf of their respective countries signed the said Agreement at the Meeting in Jamaica."

There is now a new dispensation in every sense of the word in the Cooperative Republic of Guyana. Do we know that this still holds good? In this whole concept of the Assembly are you going to have a renewal of assurances every time there is a change of Government? How do these things work? Do not bring any eurocentric comparative analysis to me in 1993. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker. It just will not work. There is no comparative analysis either that you can bring any comparison in respect of the UN. The UN is a talk shop designed for the specific purpose of talking so that you do not fight. We are not in a country where you have huge defence budgets and we are not at war with each other, at least not yet.

Mr. Speaker, the last objective at (g) that I see in the Agreement is the one that confused me the most. It says "to encourage the adoption by the Governments of Member

States of the Community of a common policy on economic, social, cultural, scientific and legal matters deliberated upon by the Assembly." To me this is putting the cart before the horse. What am I to understand this to mean that there is going to be a common policy agreed among the countries in the Caribbean and that somehow this Assembly by itself, *per se*, is going to encourage the adoption of this common policy that is already formulated? 1.40 p.m.

Or are they going to be the ones who are going to think out this common policy and then trickle, down or trickle across or wherever, however the hierarchy will be, to the individual Parliaments? I do not understand what this means. I really do not understand what this means. It is a lot of rhetoric, it is a lot of words which do not mean anything. If it had even a scintilla of relevance I think there would be a glimmer of understanding on my part. I do not think that I am any more ignorant than anybody else in here or anybody else outside of here.

If this were put to a referendum, if this were put to a national vote, Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no way that the majority of the people in Barbados would vote for this.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I cannot speak for the Cabinet because that is another scratch-back club. It is not getting the support of this side in here. I do not know what will happen in no man's land but it is not getting the support of this frontbench. I am going to deal with no man's land in due course but not today, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I really have deep-seated reservations. I have no confidence in the proposals that I see before me. I believe that at this time we should not be wasting energy and money on this proposal, that instead we should be looking for something that is workable and working. We should be looking for a working solution before we can come to this. We cannot afford this kind of luxury. We cannot afford this, now or in the immediate future that I can see. We want to look for something that is workable in the first instance and we do not think that this is workable.

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: The Honourable Member for St. Peter, I think, is quite rightly suggesting that it would be a parliamentary version of Sherbourne which we cannot afford at the national or at the regional level. Who are we? Where is this arrogance that we feel that we could superimpose this on the peoples of the Caribbean without their permission? We should not be able to try this on. In any country in the Caribbean today I do not think you can get a majority vote on this. I would like to see it put to that acid test.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot give my support to this. I have to support my colleagues on this side. I cannot see the usefulness of it to a Barbados Parliament even in its present mode. I cannot see the usefulness regionally. I cannot see and I have not heard a word about the hemispheric impact that such a Parliament would have. We hear about pacts. We hear about pacts in Latin America. There are groupings mostly north of the Equator. The United States of America and the Canadians have their trading pact. We have now a united Europe, if they can only get the Treaty going. But south of the Equator, in the black developing south where is the Caribbean - these are the things that should be employing our attention now - as a group?

There is a new Administration in Washington. This is what we should be debating in here. How are we going to relate to this Administration in Washington? What is the Right Honourable Prime Minister going to say to Mr. Clinton? There is no point asking what Mr. Clinton is going to say to him because we know what the position is.

The Caribbean as a grouping...

Aside.

Miss B. A. MILLER: That is no big thing. I spoke to him too. In a couple of weeks I am going to be back there speaking to him. That is no big thing to speak to him. It is what you have to say. We know where the Caribbean is with any United States Administration. We get lumped in with something called Latin America and the Caribbean and there is no policy. We tried with the CBI. We had the Initiative and now we have something called NAFTA. We do not know what is going to come next. These are our natural trading partners. We should be looking now to see where we can make Latin America and the Caribbean understand that the Caribbean is a part of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Where are we as a grouping now? We are talking about an assembly here that is going to be entirely internal, looking inward, picking at itself and generally making mischief within its own borders. Where is this outward looking? Where is the vision? Where is the horizon out there to which we are beaming Caribbean interests? We have discussed this all through my lifetime, Sir, and I am still no more comfortable with it. I am still no more convinced that this can lift off and go somewhere. The question I always have to ask when I see things like this is, What is this going to lead us to? What is it going to facilitate? What is it going to consolidate? Where will my money's worth come from, the \$1.2 or however many millions that would be spent on this? Where is the return on that investment?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, workable is not a word that I would apply to this, working is not a word that I would apply

to this and since they are my two watchwords for the 1990s I really do not feel it can go anywhere.

I would want to invite the Right Honourable Prime Minister to rethink this. He is not getting true, true support from his colleagues. Do not mind what they tell him up to his face. There are a lot of us on this frontbench who speak to them on a regular and first name basis. There is no support in CARICOM for this. When he goes with it, as a Barbadian initiative, he is carrying all of us on his coat tails with it. We are to be held up to be ridiculed again now.

Barbados was the leading light with a failed Federation. We are going to be the leading light now with a failed Assembly, I mean that failed to get off the ground. Because it is not going to get to the Assembly point. Nobody is meeting anywhere. Who are these people? You are dealing with a region in which you have a Parliament sometimes no bigger than 12 people and 11 of them on the frontbench. What is the relationship now in respect of Opposition parties? What is the size of the representation of Opposition parties and Opposition parties where there is a multi-party democracy and where some people even choose to sit in no man's land? How are these multiplicity of interests going to be represented in this Parliament? This has not been thought of. Because in the end, when this debate is finished and the reply comes I know and I will bring down my questions, I am not going to be able to get answers to these.

It would be better at this point and there is no shame or loss of face in rethinking something. There are new imperatives in the 1990s. There is new technology coming on stream every day and there is no shame in taking this back to wherever it first came from - and some people suggested, very rudely, that it came from a place which cannot be referred to in here - and rethinking it. In my submission you would have to tear up this and start over from scratch.

But I am not going to vote for something that my constituents have given me no authority to support On that note I sit,

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am going to be fairly brief but in pursuit and be in consonance with what I have determined within the past year or year and a half that I will always give my reasons when I am not supporting a motion. I will speak on this matter very briefly so that everyone would know the reason. 1.50 p.m.

The first point I wish to make, Mr. Speaker, before I get to the debate is that I would like to say up front that unlike the Honourable Member who just sat down, I do not believe in radically changing existing institutions just so. I

believe that there are certain things that although the need may be there for change, things have to be done gradually. Let us just say there is a time and a place.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the Honourable Member should interrupt the Member like that.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I just do not believe that one can just wake up one morning and decide on changing the institutions of bicameral legislature and things like that

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Honourable Member must recognise how the last Member was allowed to speak and was allowed to make the point. I do not know if that is an anachronism for Parliament but I think it is a decency that Parliament should accord to all Members. I have allowed all Members to speak, including the Honourable Member for St. Peter and the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, they all spoke and I allowed them all without any interruptions. The Honourable Member for St. Philip South is making his presentation, I am appealing to Honourable Members to allow him the same courtesy that he allowed you. I say no more.

Miss B. A. MILLER: I rise on a point of order, Sir. I did not for one moment suggest that over night these changes would I cannot be misquoted on that because it is something I feel very strongly about

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not take that as a point of order.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I was making the point that I do not believe that one can just wake up one morning and decide they are going to change the institution of Governor-General, the institution of a bicameral legislature and things like that. I believe that change must come and there are certain changes that have to take place over time and that was the only point I was making, that you cannot just get up and decide to change everything over night

Mr. Speaker, let us get back to this matter. When I first heard of this proposal for a Caribbean Assembly I was taken aback. I suspect that many other persons who were in similar positions to what I was in, were surprised as well.

Mr. Speaker, I do not propose or I do not intend ever to support anything because it comes from one of my colleagues. I must be convinced that what you are doing is for the good of Barbados, for the good of the people of this country. If tomorrow the Honourable Member for St. Michael East came with a recommendation and I did not believe that it was on behalf of the people of this country I would tell him that I am not supporting it.

I am wondering, Mr. Speaker, if this proposal had come from one of the other Prime Ministers in the Caribbean, if any person in Barbados, any person in this Honourable Chamber, would be supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking now, because I believe that to deal with this matter one needs only to look at Article 4 which says "Objectives of the Assembly"¹¹ and Article 5 which says "Functions and Powers". And Mr. Speaker, if I needed, I am not questioning any one's sincerity. I have listened in here to the Members who have spoken in support of this measure and I am not convinced by what I have heard because they have not convinced me that this Assembly was necessary or is necessary. So I am not getting at any one. I do not operate at that level. If I believe that it is beneficial for Barbados and the people of this country I would support it.

Mr. Speaker, let me get back to the matter at hand. If I had any qualms at all or any questions about whether I should support this or not, section 4 of Article 5 - Functions and Powers. That section has dispelled any sort of uncertainty I had about supporting this. This is what Section 4 says:

"It shall not be competent for the Assembly to discuss or adopt any resolution on any matter which is exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of a member state or associate member of a community."

Now, Mr. Speaker, if I had any doubts at all about supporting this, how can I support an assembly which in section 4 here says: "It shall not be competent for that Assembly to discuss or adopt any resolution on any matter which is exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of a member state".

What this is saying is that you are setting up an assembly and if anything wrong is going on in Barbados that assembly cannot touch it. Cannot even talk about it, because the Barbados representative, being guided by the Speaker, they tell you you cannot discuss that because that is a domestic matter in Barbados. This is a joke.

Let us go through the functions and the powers. It says here,

"The assembly shall be a deliberative and consultative body for the discussion of policies, programmes and other matters all within scope of the treaty".

Tell me something, Mr. Speaker, that is, that that cannot be done now by Heads of Governments or by any other assembly existing at the moment.

In carrying out its functions pursuant to this Agreement, the Assembly may,

- (a) make recommendations to the conference, the council, institutions, associate institutions and the secretariat.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this Assembly now has to make recommendations to those bodies but listen to (b). Section 2(b) says,

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"It should request from the bodies listed in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph, information and reports for discussion.

Now, tell me, Mr. Speaker, can't this House of Assembly, as presently composed request from bodies listed in the paragraph before, these same things, information and reports, for discussion. There is nothing at all, other than sitting down and setting up another body, nothing at all that this would do that the present bodies cannot do.

- (c) discuss and make recommendations on any matter within the scope of the objectives of the community. Discuss and make recommendations on any matters referred to it by the conference. Adopt resolutions on any issue and matter arising under the treaty.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the functions of this Assembly and I have listened, very carefully, to the support of this, no one has convinced me about the necessity for this body. Mr. Speaker, let me go back to the objectives. The objectives say;

- (b) to provide opportunities for involvement in the issues of the integration process by Members of Parliament in each member state and associate member state in addition to those who now participate:

So it has been admitted here that this assembly will do certain things in addition to those people who now participate.

The point is, Mr. Speaker, that you have people to day who are doing certain things but you are proposing to get some more people to do the same things.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me proceed. I would have felt better if any one had come up with a recommendation which said to me that I am going to set up a committee of Caribbean bureaucrats, technocrats, whatever you like in order to set out a common economic policy in the Caribbean. That would have more support from me. When you say that I am going to set up a Caribbean body to look at the economic situation in this country, to look at whether the currencies should be aligned or things like that, then you know that will give them the power to enforce those things. This one has no power at all apart

from talking. In fact, I have looked through this and the only power that I can see that this Assembly has is this which says at Article 5: "Subject to the provisions of this Article and Article 6, the Assembly shall have power to regulate its own proceedings including the adoption of Standing Orders." That is the only power that it has to regulate its own proceedings., 2.00 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if a suggestion had arisen in that you were putting Caribbean technocrats together to come up with a policy of the environment and enforce it, I would more lean towards that There is no way that I am going to agree to any recommendation which says that you are setting up an Assembly and the Assembly has to be selected by me and other people in here and the people out there I represent. Now they put me in here. They did not put me to elect anybody else to represent them. They elected me to represent them. I do not see how I can take it upon myself to go and sign a piece of paper which says, okay I select 6 other people to represent them too when they have put me here to represent them. How can I do that?

Mr. Speaker, this needs a lot of further thought. What is causing most of the trouble in the EEC today is precisely this matter where the EEC was moving too fast for the people in the respective countries. They people said that you are moving too fast Come back. Let us get some control here. You all are moving a bit too fast for me. We want to move-too fast even before we start.

Aside.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not want any Assembly at all. I have never said that I want an Assembly with full powers. I never said that I said that if an economic committee or an environmental committee with powers - that is what I said. Listen carefully to what I say because I listen carefully to what every single person in this House of Assembly say. So listen to what I have to say. I never said that I was going to support this. I cannot come in here and decide that I am to take decisions on behalf of the people out there in this country, when right now in Barbados people are totally turned off from Parliament. Today when I came in here the only people here were the children up there, not another soul apart from the media people. People are completely turned off from Parliament as presently exists in Barbados. You are telling me that I am to put on their backs an additional Parliament for the people to run about and ask me what I am doing.

People have to understand that this is serious business. When you are representing people, you have to get the decisions of people. For too long we have determined and we have decided that we are going to make

decisions on behalf of people. It has got us into real trouble now because we took it upon ourselves to make decisions on behalf of people instead of letting the people themselves make the decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to end where I began. It says here in Section 4, Article 5, Functions and Powers: "It shall not be competent for the Assembly to discuss or adopt any Resolution on any matter which is exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of a member state." Mr. Speaker, on that point, my answer to this is "no". Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that further consideration of this matter be postponed.

Hon. E. E. GREAVES: I beg to second that, Sir.

The question that further consideration of this matter be postponed was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, we seem to be having a little difficulty with the control of the environment in here. I think that in all the circumstances we are probably better off to adjourn.

I beg to move that this sitting be adjourned until next Tuesday, June 1, 1993. In so doing, Sir, may I point out that the air-conditioning in here was serviced yesterday by the people who have the contract for servicing it. It is not serviced by the members of Parliament and/or the Management Commission. So any inability to control the air-conditioning environment has nothing whatsoever to do with the administration of Parliament. The air-conditioning technology is not something within the peculiarity of Parliament. At least it is not so anti-diluvian that we do not have air conditioning.

Mr. H. deB. FORDE: Speaking on the adjournment, I would just like to say that I am most anxious to start some of the Resolutions under Private Members' Business. I would hope that at the sitting next week that I can start the Resolution on broadcasting and televising the debates of Parliament. I would hope also that the Government would see fit to allow us to use Private Members' Business at the accustomed time. Usually, Question Time is taken immediately after the House resumes and then Private Members' Business at that time, Sir. I am asking that the Acting Leader of the House will convey this to the Leader of the House and that Government organises its business so as to give Private Members an opportunity to get on with Private Members' Business.

Hon. B. M. TATTT: Before you move, Sir, I would like to give the Honourable Member the assurance that at the next sitting of Parliament there will be no difficulty whatsoever in putting Private Members' Business in the accustomed place.

The question that the sitting be now adjourned until Tuesday, June 01, 1993 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House accordingly. 2.10 p.m.

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