

National Stadium

Members of the Honourable House are aware that in August 1960 the Honourable House approved an interest free loan of £400,000 to National Sports Limited to assist that organisation in financing the construction of a National Stadium. The intention was that the Stadium should be completed in time for the Ninth Central American and Caribbean Games to be held in August, 1962. While difficulties have occurred resulting in delays, it is confidently expected that the stadium will be ready for the celebrations attendant on Jamaica's attainment of Independence and for the 9th Central American and Caribbean Games which will be held just after the Independence Celebrations. It is hoped that no further delays or interruptions of work will take place which may result in the builder not meeting this timetable. It will be readily appreciated that the availability of the stadium for the Independence Celebrations will provide an ideal site for many of the functions that will be put on and at which large crowds are to be expected. The alternative to using the stadium would mean the erection of extensive temporary accommodation at a suitable site with the expenditure of anything up to £200,000 from which no permanent amenity will result.

2. In undertaking this major project, National Sports Limited had anticipated, on the basis of the best advice available to the Company, that considerable revenue amounting to approximately £600,000 would have accrued to it, which would have been utilised towards meeting the cost of construction of the Stadium and repayment of the debt to Government. The major portion of this revenue is to accrue from the sale of commercial lots. Government is being asked to make an advance against the time when it will be most advantageous for these lots to be sold.

/Regarding....

Regarding the other revenue, it is expected that around £100,000 will be realised from raffles, pre-sale of seats, souvenir programmes and other miscellaneous activities. The net shortfall is therefore approximately £500,000

3. National Sports Limited, seeing the shortfall in the anticipated receipts, decided to modify the extent of the venture as much as possible. To this end the Company regrettably deferred the proposal for a swimming pool and a sports arena (for boxing, basket ball, fencing, etc.) which are normal and, in the case of Jamaica, necessary adjuncts to a National Stadium. In the meantime, however, on putting out the various projects to tender, the lowest tender received and accepted for work and equipment to meet the standard required for international games was for a sum approximately £200,000 in excess of the estimate on which the Company had based its plans.

Furthermore, the Company found itself faced with expenditure of approximately £130,000 for internal roadways and external site works. No specific provision was made for these works in the original estimates. At the time when the Stadium was designed it was hoped that it would not have been necessary to have provided any complicated or elaborate layout prior to the Games, but experience has shown, particularly after rains, that it is absolutely essential for the site to be graded, proper roads put in and essential anti-erosion works carried out. Proof of the necessity of this was seen during the October 1961 rains when over £20,000 of damage was caused fortunately covered by insurance.

In addition, provision had to be made for street lighting of all roads, and the flood lighting of car parks. The street lighting provision had to continue on the intensive basis originally proposed as it was an integral part of the development of the area for commercial use.

And again, the construction of the Stadium by the original contractor to whom the tender was awarded, has been retarded by inadequate supervision, poor workmanship, frequent strikes and "go-slows", and the award of higher labour rates. The contractor, as a result, had to be relieved of the contract. National Sports Limited has had to

/set....

set aside a sum of £68,500 to meet the additional charges arising from increased labour charges.

4. Members will recall that when approval of the Honourable House was sought last year for the advance of £400,000 an opposition amendment was approved which proposed that Government considers the desirability of adding a swimming pool as part of the scheme for the Stadium. However, in view of the fairly large outlay involved, on the basis of preliminary estimates received by National Sports Limited from their technical advisers, the proposal, for a swimming pool was deferred in the hope that the swimming pool at the University College of the West Indies could be adapted and used for the Games. It has now been pointed out to the organisers of the Games by the two coaches who visited Jamaica recently from the United States, that it will prove well nigh impossible to hold swimming, diving and water-polo events in addition to practice sessions, all at the University Pool only. Enquiries have indicated that a pool in two parts, one for swimming and the other for diving, could be completed in time at an approximate cost of £60,000. The Cabinet has supported this proposal.

In view of the essential nature of this amenity which will be an important acquisition for the development of swimming in the country, National Sports Limited propose to construct a swimming pool to meet international standards, provided the funds are made available to the Company as a further interest free loan.

5 To meet all the expenditure required, including the swimming pool, National Sports Limited have accordingly applied for a further interest free loan of £560,000. The circumstances surrounding this request are explained in the preceding paragraphs which deal with the immediate shortfall in revenue and the extra expenditures facing the Company. It is contemplated that over a period of years the Company will be able to repay the sums owed to the Government, but as the Company points out, the full support of all sections of the Community will be required in order to achieve this aim.

6. A Resolution seeking the approval of the Honourable House to the proposal contained herein will be moved by me in due course.

Glendon L. Logan
Minister of Welfare & Culture
20th March, 1962.