

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 15th November, 1977.

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

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P. (Speaker); Mr. R. St.C. WEEKES, J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Labour and Community Services); Hon. F. G. SMITH, Q.C., S.C., B.A., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M.; Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Communications and Works); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Caribbean Affairs, External Trade, Industry and Tourism and Leader of the House); Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Culture); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.Sc.

Prayers were read.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Hon. Miss. B. A. MILLER and Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS entered the Chamber and took their seats.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: Hon. members, you have before you the Minutes of the meeting of 1st November, 1977. These Minutes you will recall were not confirmed at our last sitting because we were satisfied that hon. members did not have enough time to familiarise themselves with the contents thereof. If there is no objection....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, in these Minutes I see where the Leader of the Opposition has a Resolution which is given notice of though it is not on today's Order Paper. I would like that straightened out since you

disapproved of this matter. On page 4 of the Minutes of 1st November, you will see that Hon. F. G. Smith gave notice of the following Resolution: "Be It Resolved.... etc." I think a subsequent ruling of yours states that that Resolution is not in order, so I want the Minutes straightened out. If it is in order it should be on the Order Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think the Leader of the Opposition would like to note that I am just having the Clerk check on my ruling to which he referred. I understand the Leader of the Opposition to say that at a subsequent meeting I had ruled his Resolution to be out of order. My own recollection is that the hon. member's Resolution was ruled to be not in order, instead of being out of order.
12.25 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of November 1, 1977 be confirmed.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I would like to find out what happened to the Resolution of which I gave previous notice.

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition that if a motion is ruled to be not in order that simply means that it is a resolution which yet has time to be put in order and may be brought up at a later date; but if it is out of order it goes over board.

There being no objection, the Minutes of the Meeting of November 1, 1977 stand confirmed.

Minutes of the Meeting of 8th November, 1977.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, before we confirm these Minutes, I am appealing to you to clear the air with the procedure on Resolutions. I am a bit worried as to how

that Resolution got on the Order Paper. I would think that if you had seen a Resolution and had intimated to a particular member that it was out of order it should not at any time be placed on the Order Paper. I am always willing to learn and would like you to intimate to me what is your opinion on such a matter, having allowed it to come on the Order Paper. When one sees a Resolution on the Order Paper, it appears to me that one would come to the conclusion that it has your approval and blessing and that that is how it got there. But now I am hearing your ruling today. I have no grouse with your ruling, but for the information of myself, if not others, I would be grateful if you would clear the air on this matter so that in future no Resolution or question could be placed on the Order Paper unless it is a legal one or that you have given it your blessings.

Mr. SPEAKER: I believe that the hon. member for St. Philip South has every right to be familiar with what in Parliamentary language is referred to as the Order Paper. That being so, the Chair will be most grateful if the said hon. member could assist the Chair by making available to the Chair an Order Paper, as he has stated, bearing the Resolution to which he has made reference so often. From my own knowledge the Resolution only appears in the Minutes, and as the hon. member ought to have heard, at a subsequent meeting a ruling was given with respect to the said Resolution.

Mr. WEEKES: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the explanation which you have made. I apologise for having said Order Paper. I think you have explained the matter fully to me.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of November 8, 1977.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that the Minutes of 8th November, 1977, be confirmed.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no objections the Minutes of 8th November, 1977 stand confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Training Report for the year 1st April, 1976 to 31st March, 1977.

Also, I beg to lay Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) (No. 4) Order, 1977.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay a report on the Vital Statistics and Registrations for the year 1975.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to give notice of a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) (Amendment) (No. 4) Order, 1977. 12.35 p.m.

RESOLUTION RE THE LATE SIR STANLEY ROBINSON, C.B.E.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the death was announced of the late Sir Stanley Robinson, who was a member of this House for a number of years and President of the Other Place. Sir Stanley was a born Barbadian, who came from a well-known planters' family and, in the course of his life, he spent a considerable period of time in public service, not only in the Vestry of St. George, the parish from which he came, but also in the House of Assembly and in the Legislative Council. He was, in addition, a member of some of the wealthy trading companies in Barbados. I am sure that all members of the House would like to join with me in extending to his relatives our deepest sympathy, and to place on record the public service of this gentleman.

I had the privilege of serving in the Senate in the period 1966-71, during which time Sir Stanley presided. I can testify to his very great knowledge of Parliamentary procedure, to his humanity as a gentleman, and also to his patience and efficiency in his dealings with matters relating to finance.

Accordingly, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I should like to join the Hon. Leader of the House, the Deputy Prime Minister, in paying tribute to Sir Stanley Robinson, who passed away recently. My father, before me, knew Sir Stanley, and I have had the privilege of serving under him when I returned to Barbados in 1966 as Attorney-General and was then in the Senate of this Country. During that period of time I have had an opportunity to assess Sir Stanley in the sense that I could appreciate the contribution he was then making to the political life of this country, and by his past history and by his association with agriculture. One can also assume and, I think, quite rightly, that he made a contribution to Barbados in the sphere of agriculture.

Sir Stanley Robinson belonged to a class and group of people who, when adult suffrage had increased the participation of the masses in the electoral and parliamentary processes of their country, went into the background. I think it is a tribute to Sir Stanley that, even in the light of the changes which had been made, he was still able in the 1960s to play some part in the political life of this country. I think he was rewarded and

honoured by Her Majesty the Queen for the contribution he made both in agriculture as well as the political life of this country.

Mr. Speaker, the death of any citizen of any country, from whatever walk of life and however humble, must be a source of regret. I, personally, would regret the death of my worst enemy, and we regret to hear of the death of this gentleman, who, for many years has played his part in the life of this country, and who for some time, whatever the electoral system may have been and whatever the restrictions may have been, was part of what we boast of today. He was part of the democratic process of Barbados, because he was elected a member of the House of Assembly after a period of years from 1928-32 and served at even a later period. It is good to find that Sir Stanley has achieved the acclamation of his colleagues in the electoral process even today in this era.

Mr. Speaker, I too, on behalf of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, would like to pay tribute to Sir Stanley, and to pray that he rests in peace and that light perpetual will shine on him, and his sorrowing relatives be informed of our sincerest condolences.

Mr. ODLE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the Hon. Leader of the House and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition in paying tribute to Sir Stanley Robinson. I am sure the record would show that, as a member of this Chamber, he has made a very positive contribution and has always conducted himself with dignity in this House. Even though he was a member of the plantocracy, he was able to cross the bridge successfully under which turbulent waters were flowing as a result of the political change which took place in this country. It is to men like Sir Stanley that we must be very grateful that the change over was not as violent and turbulent and damaging to this society as it could have been.

Mr. Speaker, Sir Stanley was one of those men who was always willing to listen and to do something about the just cause of the workers. He was always willing to make a compromise somewhere along the line. He was always willing to attend to the day-to-day problems of the people who worked with him. It is because of these qualities that, I believe, he has been able to make the contribution he has made in this country. I wish he may rest in peace.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I should like to add my personal remarks to the expressions of condolence made in this House today. I have known Sir Stanley for the past 17 years. Before I became a Minister of the Government, I was personal adviser to his family on legal matters, and I worked for several companies with which he was associated. Hon. members have spoken of his contribution to the parliamentary process in this country. I should, perhaps, like to underscore the fact

that he also made a contribution to the commercial life in this country. He was at heart a good planter and, perhaps, his first love was for planting, but his knowledge of commercial practice and his knowledge of management were also qualities which marked him out as a man of outstanding ability.

12.45 p.m.

Hon. members will recall that he was associated with Plantations Limited for several years, and indeed was Chairman of the Board of Directors of that company and various subsidiary companies owned by Plantations Limited, or Plantations Limited being the majority shareholder, and in this respect he was able to influence the commercial affairs of several transactions, several persons and companies in this island, and indeed to help shareholders in his company and employees and other business people to appreciate that business can be an honourable profession or honourable calling.

He will be much missed by the sugar community in this island. His knowledge of the sugar industry was equalled or rivalled only by that of people like the late Julian Mahon and the late Mr. Cuke, and I think it is significant that within a few short years we have lost some of our outstanding people in this field. I refer particular to Sir Archibald Cuke, Mr. Julian Mahon, and in the commercial field, the late Mr. Victor Goddard. They were all persons whose word was their bond; their integrity remains unchallenged, and they sought not confrontation but compromise in the right interest of Barbados as a whole.

I think, Mr. Speaker, it is necessary to restate that the white community in this country has made a contribution to this country, and in these days when people look for confrontation and polarisation, it is good for us to be objective about factors such as these and to recall the lives of great people like Sir Stanley Robinson, Sir Archibald Cuke, Mr. Julian Mahon and Mr. Victor Goddard, because despite the historical past of the plantocracy and slavery they saw men as men and not as chattel, and it is in this respect that it gives me a feeling of grief and yet a feeling of satisfaction in saying "thank you for a life well spent not only in your own self-interest, but most important in the interest of your country and fellow citizens."

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to be associated with the expressions of sympathy made by hon. members on both sides of the House on an occasion such as this. Sir Stanley Robinson was a member of our House of Assembly, representing the parish of St. George from 1906 to 1926, a period during which we know that there were many challenges facing himself in his own field as a planter and those whom he employed and others employed amongst the masses on the sugar estates in those days.

I am glad moreso to be associated with those sentiments expressed which show Sir Stanley to be a fair-minded man who was prepared to give the worker a fair chance and his just due, and if he had done no more than this during his tenure here we should rest satisfied that he had laboured and that his labours would not have been in vain.

His sorrowing relatives, I am sure, that all of us extend our deepest sympathy to them, and I will now ask hon. members as a mark of respect that they rise in their places for two minutes' silence.

(Hon. members rose in their places for two minutes' silence).

Mr. SPEAKER: I declare this Resolution passed, and as we know, instructions will be given that the necessary steps will be taken to inform his sorrowing relatives as to the action taken here today.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move, Sir, that Government Business be now taken and that Your Honour now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply for the consideration of a number of Resolutions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant order of the day.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division; Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

12.55 p.m.

RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE NOTE TO ITEM 1, FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Head 109 – Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Item 1 was called – as Resolution to amend the Note to Item 1 – Financial Institutions, under Head 109 – Ministry of Finance and Planning, of the 1977–78 Capital Estimates.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, this is a very short matter. When the Caribbean Development Bank was built there was a small balance that had not been paid to the architects. The amount has been certified as correct by the Ministry of Communications and Works and should now be paid. The treaty establishing the Caribbean Development Bank did say that expenditure on it was statutory expenditure not requiring a particular vote of Parliament; but it does appear from this note that it is to be covered by a vote of Parliament.

In the circumstances I would ask the House to accept this very minor deviation, the particularity which the note should contain especially the light of the fact that the expenditure should be by statute and should not be before the House at all. I am asking the House to pass this Resolution so that the sum of \$32,155.58 can be paid to Messrs McMorris, Sibley, Robinson, Architects of Jamaica.

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

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Hon. Prime Minister to note something in dealing with Caribbean Institutions. I have always been an apponent of a lot of people in the West Indies expecting to have privileges which international bodies can afford. Here is an institution in our midst which is prompt to initiate debate on the improvement of the poor masses in the region, and yet you find that officers of these institutions enjoy tax free privileges and other benefits whereby they can talk about wage increases and wage limits when some of them draw \$40,000 a year.

I want to ask the Prime Minister to take a note of this in the future financing of these institutions. In the Caribbean region, in our own territories are people who can talk glibly about the masses and who are still demanding and getting special privileges – some of them nationals of their own country. I agree with the Prime Minister. If West Indians are going to make a sacrifice for the West Indies, whether in Barbados or any other territory, then they must by their actions show this by the type of privileges that they seek to get. Some of the people of the Caribbean Development Bank travel First Class. Some of the people in these institutions are the biggest culprits of all; and I think that the time has got to come when we in the West Indies have got to face these facts.

Pay people for the expertise and for the jobs which they perform. I have always been an opponent of giving people from the West Indies who say that they love their region, who got their education in the region and who demand rights and privileges and terms of service that exist in international organisations in developed countries, when we know that we are unable to pay.

I would like the Prime Minister, just as he had the gumption to tell the World Bank to cut out the idea that because Barbados has a certain standard of living we are not eligible for certain loans, that when he goes to conferences dealing with West Indian Institutions to make it clear that Barbados will no longer be a party to perks and privileges that our own West Indian Nationals are demanding to serve the region which they claim they love, and the same region that gave them the education to enable them to enjoy these privileges in their poor community.

He may not be able to change it overnight, but he can from time to time erode these privileges that we West Indians demand when it comes to serving our people. It is not a question of jealousy on my part. I am not asking you to give them a pittance. I am asking you to pay them for the talent and expertise which they are bringing to their jobs; and which because of the limited expertise in the region, we have to take out from time to time.

The Caribbean Development Bank is doing a good job. I do not want it to be thought that I am criticising the Bank; but it is not right to make good speeches about the poor people when you yourself are living off the fat of the land, and those same poor people cannot enjoy the privileges that you enjoy.

1.05 p.m.

You should pay them a reasonable salary, pay them for their expertise, pay them for what they can contribute, but I think we have got to stop at this point where in our region we are creating a new type of bureaucracy, a new type of Civil Servant and elite who expect to get things which they are really not entitled to, if they are as patriotic and as concerned as they pretend from their utterances. I agree that you have got to pay people; I agree that in the West Indies there is a shortage of managerial and technical skills because of our past educational experiences and training. I am not criticising the Government for it, but you should pay a man for the job and what he can contribute, but I think the right approach is that it is not a good thing to give in to the type of demands, perks and privileges that our young people are asking to serve the region which gave them the education which they now enjoy. I can think of a lot who got an education at the taxpayers' expense and forget after a time that it is the same poor people whom they are now serving who caused them to possess that experience.

I am not opposing this, but these are my personal views, and I think we should be careful on every occasion in any job to look at it, see what it merits in terms of remuneration, pay if you have got the right man, but you cannot give everybody tax free whiskey, tax free rum, tax free allowances, tax free car, tax free house, tax free this and tax free that. This has got to stop, and I am thinking as a concerned person about the region. You hear that the economy of Barbados is in trouble, the economy of Guyana is in trouble, and yet at the same time we can afford to support certain institutions to get extra privileges in the circumstances. This is no criticism of your Government. You came and found the salary scales, but if you can turn it around, turn it around because it is in the best interest of the Caribbean community if you can persuade people not by the salaries and all the big perks you give them. You must persuade them from the bottom up by a commitment to the region which gave them birth.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I am not claiming my right to final reply, but I would just like to give the Government's attitude to this matter. Other members can speak after and I am hopeful there will be no need for a further speech from me. I know hon. members may want to speak, but I think it is only fair to say that I have seldom heard a speech from the Leader of the Opposition so cogently argued and containing so much solid good sense put forward in the interest of the people. It has been a matter of concern of many politicians for years that a certain, I would not like to say, certain grasping attitude, but a certain acquisitive attitude has been demonstrated at the topmost levels of our society, although it is clear to all that the acquisitive attitude may not be supported by the resources of Barbados or of the Caribbean. I am not blaming any Government for acceding to the demands of the regional organisation when the Caribbean Development Bank was set up.

There is unfortunately the habit with regional organisations — we have seen it with CDB, Caricom was set up on this basis and the Caribbean Tourist Research Centre and I think with very little justification — of holding out to all the Governments of the regional territories that if they do not give them every conceivable concession that the headquarters or whatever they have to offer will be taken elsewhere. There is undoubtedly some logical justification for treating the taxation of regional civil servants differently from the taxation system of any Island within which these regional civil servants are working, otherwise it would be almost impossible to get anyone in the West Indies working in a new organisation to agree to work anywhere but in Antigua where there is no income tax. It is obvious that people will not willingly work in a place with high levels of income tax and perhaps consumption tax if they can work somewhere else where there is no tax, therefore a case may be made out for differentiating between forms of taxation as applied to regional civil servants and those for the remainder of the population, but in my opinion the worst differentiation has been chosen.

It has been chosen that regional civil servants of the West Indies will pay no income tax at all. This results in a situation where the President of the Caribbean Development Bank is paid \$US25,000 per year tax free, is given a house fully furnished, all utilities paid, all transportation and first class travel around the world, all of these tax free emoluments very much in excess of those of our own Governor-General, not to speak of others of the great offices of State in Barbados. His deputy receives total emoluments of I think \$US24,700 also tax free. This is a Barbadian. There are other persons working there in positions which may be thought to carry no more responsibility certainly not as much responsibility as Permanent Secretaries in the Government of Barbados receiving salaries in excess of \$3,000 a month

tax free, and when I hear the public complaining about members of Parliament getting what is called a duty allowance on which they pay no tax and out of which they have to visit their constituencies two or three times a week, answer complaints, perhaps in many cases employ somebody or set aside somebody's time to deal with matters affecting their constituencies, when I hear members of the public complaining of this, I realise that the members of the public really are sadly misinformed as to the extent of our privileges as previously misinformed as to the extent of the privileges in other areas of our society.

I know of one international organisation which when it was made clear to it by the Government that its employees would have to pay income tax, they then proceeded to pay salaries in excess, the top six or seven employed, of \$75,000 a year, and I have been able to discover one expatriate gentleman very little older than I am, born the same year as me whose only qualification is matriculation from high school in South Africa, that is, G.C.E., who received a salary of over \$7,000 a month and is not at the top of his organisation. So although I am not putting forward any case at the present time for the public service or members of Parliament or anybody, it should be realised that there are grievous inequities in our society in the matter of salaries. (A VOICE: What about the Governor of the Central Bank?) I do not think that the Governor of the Central Bank is overpaid. I heard an aside relating to that. The present salary of the Governor of the Central Bank is \$3,000 a month with an entertainment allowance of \$400 a month, and I do not think that that is excessive. I believe it would bear comparison quite favourably with the salary of the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union. I do not think it is particularly in excess of salaries paid in workers' organisations in this country, and I mention this specifically because the aside comes from the hon. member for St. Lucy. I do not know if he would care to be as straightforward about the salaries paid by the Barbados Workers' Union when he gets up to speak as I have been about some of the salaries to which I have so far adverted.

1.15 p.m.

To get back to the Caribbean Development Bank. This matter of tax free salaries is not working well. There has been considerable resentment at the lower levels and a situation has grown up which is very prejudicial to the employment opportunities of Barbadians in the Caribbean Development Bank. There was a certain cut off date at which it was agreed that no more Barbadians would be employed on a tax free basis at the Caribbean Development Bank. Those already receiving this privilege would however continue to do so. But what has happened is this; the level of remuneration for secretaries and librarians is set a little lower at the CDB than levels

prevailing outside, so that those at the librarian and secretary level get less than secretaries and librarians in Barbados, with the result that the salary levels offered at CDB are not attractive enough for Barbadians to consider applying for jobs; so staff has to be brought from abroad with the consequent expense of travel, overseas allowances, etc., and in the end you get an even more distorted wage and salary structure. The attitude of this Government is that like other international organizations, these regional organisations should have their own tax structure; their employees should pay tax on a scale to be assessed by the organization itself, and thereby relieve some of the burdens on the Treasuries of contributing Governments. This would do away with consideration of the desire to work here or there because of taxation. Civil Servants in the organization should pay income tax on a scale which CDB thinks fit. This principle is accepted in the United States. The Minister of External Affairs who is more familiar with this would be able to tell you better; and the principle should be accepted for the very reason the Leader of the Opposition gives, that is, that everybody should carry a responsibility for some degree of taxation. We cannot go on with a system where those at the top have unlimited privileges while those at the bottom bear the burden of supporting welfare programmes, education etc. There are people from Canada and England, who want to come to Barbados to retire and we don't find them making application for exemption from income tax; and yet we find our own West Indian civil servants cannot accept those conditions. And it does not only extend to income tax. They buy properties and apply for exemption. They used to be exempted from the sales tax; they had cards they carried which exempted them. They have the privilege of diplomats in not paying local taxes, but unlike Canadian or American diplomats they do not pay home taxes either. This Government agrees totally with the sentiments of the Leader of the Opposition.

If hon. members want to raise any other questions, I shall be glad to deal with them but I am happy to have been able to clear the air a bit on this matter.

One final word. They do not seem to have taken to heart the experience of the Federal government in Trinidad where there was very great jealousy between the Federal government and the Trinidad Government over this very area of differences in privileges; people who live in our midst buying the same food and other items, but subject to a different set of privileges and benefits which natives of the country could not enjoy. We are all West Indians and must have an equal spirit of sacrifice.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, the Leader of the Opposition and the Prime Minister have spoken on one area of the functioning of the Caribbean Development Bank, and that relates to the privileges and immunities of officers of that institution. I do not want to deal with

that particular aspect of it; I want to advert to the question of the way in which the bank functions in the Caribbean. It is one of the major regional institutions, one of the institutions for ensuring development in the region and one for developing the consciousness of the Caribbean people. I do not want to beg the question; what I want to find out from the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance is whether he believes that the Caribbean Development Bank is carrying out to the satisfaction of the present Government its functions of being a regional financial institution. As far as the development of Barbados is concerned, if we take that particular aspect of it first, is the Government satisfied that Barbados is getting maximum returns from its participation in the Caribbean Development Bank; whether developmental funds are being acquired from sources both within the region and outside for stimulating development in the country; what are the projects approved as far as this country is concerned and what are those which may be pending which may have an impact on development in this country. Any Minister of Finance must be concerned not only about financial institutions within the country, such as the banking system, development banks, other financial institutions, as well as the Central Bank but he must also be concerned with regional banking institutions which have a part to play in the development of the countries of the region. I would have hoped that the Prime Minister would have adverted to this problem somewhat as he sees it. After all, the Resolution here which we have to deal with relates to a sum of money, \$32,155 for the completion of work relating to the building housing this bank, and we would certainly want to know whether the Government believes that the institution is performing to the satisfaction of the Government.

1.25 p.m.

We have heard criticisms from other countries about the slow pace of disbursements of funds which may have been approved by the bank. The President of the Bank itself has given a creditable explanation about the rate of the disbursement and, apparently, there are problems involved in certain countries. There are problems where funds have been approved and problems relating to the capacity of the countries to disburse those funds and so on. We would like to hear something about Barbados' problems in relation to this matter. I do not wish to speak at length on this particular matter. This matter concerns the Caribbean.

Sir, I believe that the Caribbean Bank is one of the very vital institutions in the region, and there should be a regional approach to Caribbean problems. Those who were the fountain of advice in that particular institution saw the need for developmental banking in order to assist the development of the regions, and I think a tribute should be paid to those who have worked on the foundation of such an institution, and an attempt should

be made to see that a maximum consensus can be reached for the regional institution to be established. Sometimes we do not always remember that to get a regional institution functional it become necessary not only to get accepted what one particular territory wants, but to get the greatest possible consensus among the number of territories which, today, may have slightly differing viewpoints.

I sincerely hope that the contribution of the Leader of the Opposition, as indeed the Minister of Finance and the member for St. Thomas, would not be interpreted as an attack on the regional institution. Heaven knows that the institutions are needed in the region at the present moment, and we, certainly, would not wish to extend the area of criticism, or the area of conflict, to bring into the arena a Caribbean Development Bank. Looking at the forceful way in which the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister put forward his views in terms of the privileges and ammunities of the officers serving the Caribbean Development Bank, we would certainly expect that these views would be voiced in the board rooms of that Institution. It is a very important Institution.

Sir, only on Sunday last I had occasion to pass in that area where the Institution is situated with its modern architectural facilities, and we certainly would hope that, in addition to the beauty of the architecture, the Institution should be able to play an important role within the region. I am very grateful to know that the Institution is there. I have read, from time to time, reports coming out from the Caribbean Development Bank for the information of the general public, and I certainly would like some reaction from the Government side as to whether it believes that the Bank is fulfilling its role, and whether it is fully satisfied that it is playing a useful role.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I think I may begin by saying that the Ministry of External Affairs has been examining the whole question of diplomatic privileges and ammunities granted not only to regional institutions, but to international organisations as a whole. Hon. Members should be aware of the fact that Barbados, although not being a party to some of the conventions on diplomatic relations, has tried as much as possible to conform with the international norms and practices. For instance, we have not yet subscribed to the convention on Consular relations and so on. I hope that shortly we will be in a position to make a substantive statement for acceding to this amendment.

On the other hand, we are part and parcel of the convention dealing with diplomatic missions, and to that extent we are bound, not only by agreement, but by customary international law, to grant certain privileges and ammunities to missions sent to us, not only by Sovereign States, but also missions sent to us by

international organisations. What has happened in the Caribbean is that the countries have taken the precedents which were established for the functions of Sovereign States and which the early international organisation adopted. These have served very well in some instances, and have become the norms for other regional organisations.

Mr. Chairman, there is another argument, which is more attractive, which deals with the salaries of individual persons be they diplomatic officers, politicians, or people in that field. It is argued that politicians have to make a supreme sacrifice even to the extend of giving the best years of their lives at a low or no salary at all, whereas the same norm is not adopted for other persons who merely have to take action at an official level. What we have to recognise in the review is the fact that the people who man the Caribbean Development Bank, or the regional institutions, are Caribbean people. However, they feel that they are entitled to the same privileges and immunities given to people in a similar position.

However, we have to recognise the fact that you will draw a reaction from those citizens who feel that no taxation will be obtained from the salaries paid to these people. This problem has been solved in some countries by the national law, say, of the United States of America where the tax of certain officers is paid by the Government, or in some cases the salary of an officer is raised so that the officer can pay the tax directly. That is one solution.

1.35 p.m.

Another solution is the solution adverted to by the Hon. Prime Minister where the organisation itself has its own form of internal taxation. But I certainly would not like hon. members on either side of the House to be under the impression that this country does not also pay for the salaries of people working at international organisations other than regional organisations.

It is a fact, for instance, that the income accruing from World Bank loans and investments is the income from which the salaries of World Bank employees are met, and to the extent that we pay interest to the World Bank, to that extent we, like other developing and poor countries, are contributing to high salaries, some of them tax free, of international civil servants as a whole, so I do not believe that one should lay an undue stress on the fact that we are contributing to the salaries of people at the Caribbean Development Bank. The income by and large is coming from the loans being made either to the public or private sector, and it is no different in this respect from the situation occurring in the World Bank.

We have gone into these with an objective rather than an emotional approach to the question, because we must be very careful that we do not in our anxiety to put right the understandable complaints of politicians about

how the public view the politician in terms of self-legation, that we do not go the other way and frustrate ourselves by getting the top people in order to carry out the very difficult job of development banking in the region as a whole, and it is in this light that the submission will finally be made to Cabinet.

Let me say that some of the views held by the Government of Barbados are also held by the Government of Jamaica in relation to other regional institutions, and ourselves and Jamaica have reserved our position on this whole question, and we have requested the CARICOM Secretariat to make its own independent study, and together we hope to work out a satisfactory programme which would allow the international civil servants to have the freedom of action which they want without abusing too much the taxation privileges that exist in particular countries.

I thought I had to throw this into the debate to let the hon. members know that the points are not taken in a personal or emotional way, they are going to be taken to achieve the maximum benefit for the country so that we will have access to the top expertise which we want, and we do not find that we are losing our civil servants and getting seventh, eighth or tenth rate civil servants from outside the region who have no more skill than our civil servants, and losing our civil servants to these international organisations.

Hon. members must be aware that most Governments are today moving from a position of bilateral relationships into a position of funding loans through international organisations. Moreso this will become the norm of international intercourse, therefore the international organisations, whether regional or otherwise, are today in a position to influence political decisions right through the whole realm of the public life of several of our countries.

In relation to the role of the Caribbean Development Bank, I am saying that the Caribbean Development Bank has been fulfilling a very vital need in this region, and it is perhaps one of the institutions which is vibrant, and despite the remarks — some of them not so favourable — that have been made about the Bank from time to time, I think that each one of us in our heart recognises that the Bank has played a very vital role in development, particularly for the LDCs, and the Bank has come to be recognised as a financial institution of rectitude and a development institution with a great deal of knowledge about this region.

I see the Bank developing outside the Commonwealth Caribbean to bring in other countries truly in the Caribbean such as Surinam, if you like, Haiti and the Dominican Republic in due course, and therefore you have a much more regional stamp than is at present.

But the Bank operates under certain constraints. One of those constraints is that the Bank's funding comes from various sources and various donors. The donors themselves sometimes lay down stipulations about the lending policies of the Bank and the sort of collateral necessary, but it is a banking institution as well. It is not there to give away money gratis, or indeed to put up money in areas that there is not only a high risk but which are certain to be failures, and that those of us who use the Bank must recognise its bankable nature and must try to improve our own procedures for using the funds which the Bank has available, rather than to see the Bank as an obstruction of our developmental process.

Mr. Chairman, I can state that Belize is one of the best users of the Caribbean Development Bank. Its projects are quickly executed, it takes up its loans on time, it reports properly, it does good feasibility studies, and it proves that money lent from the Bank is put through the economy. Barbados has a reasonably good record in this respect, but not all of the countries have the same level of project expertise that they can make maximum use of the funds that are available, and one of the points which I made when I had the honour to represent the Hon. Prime Minister who could not go to the last meeting of the Bank was that we need now not to restrict the Bank from going on to the world market in looking for other sources of funds, or indeed we should tell donors like Venezuela, for instance, and the United States that they must not stipulate that only soft funds can be used for LDCs, because the LDCs have a capacity which is limited by various constraints, and that soft funds should also be made available for regional projects involving both the MDCs and the LDCs, and also on a bilateral basis if we are to get true development on a regional level.

As a result of this the funds are waiting there to be drawn down and you find countries hiding behind the fact that the money is there and not putting up any more money that is accessible for minimum use by other countries which may be able to use them in order to increase the flow of the Governments in the region. It is a point which I would very strongly not like stopped, and I believe it was well recognised by itself and the donor countries.

Barbados is having its benefits from the Caribbean Development Bank. I believe the Minister of Industry spoke about a \$5 million loan to the Industrial Development Corporation which should shortly be made for the building of factories, expanding our industrial programme. The Barbados Marketing Corporation has negotiated a loan of \$4 million at interest rates of 4% in order to revamp the Marketing Corporation and its other outlets, and its other areas of business in which it operates. There is money available to do a rural project for Springhall which should shortly, I hope, be taken up,

and there is some money available for housing under the guaranteed housing programme. We are studying this, we are not fully satisfied with the rate of interest at which it must be lent to the man in the street, although we have not closed our minds to the whole thing. It is money coming through a guarantee made by the United States, and unfortunately by the time it reaches you it may be as high as 13% interest.

1.45 p.m.

It may hold no attraction for us. Indeed, I have said to the USAID people that if they wanted to help, then let us get a bilateral programme to aid housing in this country established which will be a genuine sign of their intention to help Barbados rather than go through intermediaries which make for higher cost to the port worker, the sugar worker etc.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that I welcome the recommitment in that part of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, the hon. member for St. Michael South Central when he said that the bank is performing a very good job. I am not in a position to disclose to the House at this moment the negotiations going on about the Caribbean Aid Consortium or the Consultative group idea initiated by Dr. Eric Williams and taken up by the USA and other countries; but within the last couple of months I have been having discussions with various institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Caribbean Development Bank, Caribbean countries and other countries like Canada, United Kingdom, Venezuela, Japan and, I believe, even Germany about a Consortium of donors; and it is hoped that the Caribbean Development Bank will play an important role in the handling of funds from these institutions in assisting with the long term, short term and medium term problems facing our region.

It will also help with the problem of not having enough people trained to do project evaluation and project implementation. I hope that it will provide some loans and may be even grants in some sectors, in countries which need pushing so that unemployment can be dealt with. Small countries like our own have been singularly unfortunate in not having attracted aid on a bilateral basis from the U.K., and the USA. Indeed we see sometimes that our best friend has been Canada.

The reply to this is that Barbados always give the impression that we wanted nothing. Perhaps we are paying for our pride. Whatever the reason, I think that we have a need, and that need should not be minimised because of differences between two political parties and without the extremism in other countries. There is a new breed of persons who believe that the only solution to the problems of their countries is the totalitarianism that exists in communist countries. Indeed we have the example of Scandinavia and the United Kingdom which

shows what can be achieved under a system of unbridled free enterprise; and I think that the United States appreciates the views that Barbados has on this matter.

I am happy to say that I have been in frequent consultation with other Foreign Ministers in the region to get a consensus on this matter. We will also have a dialogue with Surinam as well and with the Dominican Republic. Only last week our permanent representative at the United Nations had consultations on this matter. We are not pinning all of our hopes on this. Too often we have had fair promises, and not only from our neighbours in the Western Hemisphere; but to me the word seems to mean much more than it has done before; and I know that Mrs. Carter has thrown her weight behind the scheme.

Trinidad has shown some thinking. If there is a person who has at heart the Caribbean region, it is Dr. Eric Williams. Many of the others have been misthinking; and the tragedy is that too often we have allowed our personal attitudes to blunt our appreciation of the greatness of the man of Trinidadians in general as to where they are going. Trinidad has to depend on the primary markets of the region just as Jamaica, Guyana and others have to depend. To that extent there is a greater need for inter-dependence in the Caribbean region.

This party remains welded to the concept of Caribbean regionalism. I want to ally the fears of the hon. members for St. Michael South that if the member has spoken movingly, he is equally dedicated to Caribbean regionalism and will do all in his power to get true West Indian regionalism.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1977-78 PART I - CURRENT, No. 19

Item (b) was called - A Resolution to grant the sum of \$63,857 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates, 1977-78 Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1977-78, No. 19, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.
1.55 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: An amount of \$2,000 was provided in the Estimates under this item and at the end of September \$1,885.66 had been spent on repairs to various items of furniture and equipment, and it is estimated that a further sum of \$800 will be required.

Under Item 15 - Furniture, Fixtures and Fittings, a supplementary provision in the sum of \$5,000 is required to provide office furniture and to convert one of the

units of the Harbour Cluster Block into a Customs and Excise Department. The building in which the Excise Department was housed was declared by the Ministry of Health to be unfit for human habitation. It is an old building on the wharf, and rather than to seek refuge in the doctrine that the law does not bind the Crown, we thought it best to show a good example, and arrangements have been made with the Industrial Development Corporation for the Excise Division of the Customs to be housed in one of the units at the Cluster Block on the Harbour Road temporarily while the new Customs Office and Administration building which is in the course of erection is completed. It is the building in which the small business units are established, and we are using some of these units temporarily. This will only continue for as long as the new building which is in the course of erection is uncompleted.

I beg to move that Head 9 - Ministry of Finance and Planning (1) Direction and Policy Formulation, stand part.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Just a small point. The Minister did state that some building has been declared unfit for human habitation and I am wondering if I got him correctly that some new facilities are being provided for the Customs somewhere in the Harbour Extension and they will be temporarily housed in the new Cluster Block. May I ask exactly where that building is?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The building is just opposite the Harbour Road. There is a new building going up. That is the administration blocks being built there.

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

HEAD 14 - MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND WORKS (8) WATER RESOURCES

Head 14 - Ministry of Communications and Works (8) Water Resources - was called.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution seeks to increase the amount which will be paid to Codrington Estate for the water which is to be extracted from that area as a result of the natural springs. In the Addendum you will see where it is said it is for rent. I certainly hate the word "rent" and would prefer to see at some future date the question of royalty rather than rent because I always take it that the question of resources of the earth are matters that should be always vested in Government, and I hate to think that we see resources in terms of rent. I do not know if there will be anything for me to explain in detail on this Resolution

which I have today, but I commend the Resolution to you.

I beg to move that Head 14 — Ministry of Communications and Works (8) Water Resources, stand part.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

HEAD 19 — MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND COMMUNITY SERVICES (1) DIRECTION AND POLICY FORMULATION

Head 19 — Ministry of Labour and Community Services (1) Direction and Policy Formulation — was called.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, under the Rules of this House it is now 2 o'clock and this Resolution cannot be finished in ten Minutes' time. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I believe it can be finished in ten minutes.) I tell you it cannot be finished.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, Parliament reigns supreme. It is 2 o'clock but I am quite sure the Leader of the Opposition is quite willing to extend it at least for forty-five minutes because I am confident the member for St. John is not going to come back and I wish him in here. He is going to leave and I am quite sure the Leader of the Opposition will assist him. Let him remain here. Let us talk about "O" levels today and the corruption and these cheques I have here for you. You must stay in here, you nuisance.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have already indicated that I will report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again. (*Asides*)

Will the hon. member for St. James behave himself?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am sorry. I apologise.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Well please be seated.

Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: The time is now past 2 o'clock and this sitting stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. today. 2.05 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. I am advised that there are no Questions, and so we move on to Private Members' Business. The hon. member for St. Philip North.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item 1 of Private Members Business be now dealt with. I have risen to move formally the passing of a Resolution for an Address to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of the Opening of the Second Session of this Parliament. Under the terms of the Resolution an humble Address is presented to thank Her Majesty for the Message delivered at the Opening of Parliament on 1st November, 1977. According to my information this is purely a formality which is done as a mark of appreciation and thanks to the Sovereign whenever the Sovereign opens Parliament. I believe it was done in 1975, the previous occasion she was here. I have great pleasure in moving the passing of this Resolution.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I am seconding this Resolution concerning the passing of a Message to Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her opening the new Session of Parliament. Barbados is still under a monarchical system of Government along the lines of the Westminster model and the Queen is Queen of Barbados just as of England. So when she visits our Parliament she has as much right to exercise this function as the Governor-General does on her behalf. In 1975, during the Democratic Labour Party administration, Her Majesty visited this country and performed a similar function. I therefore join in the Resolution expressing thanks to Her Majesty for the gracious manner in which she performed this function, and the Opposition associated itself with this humble address to Her Majesty on the occasion of the opening of Parliament.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: We are still on Private Members' Business. The hon. member for St. Philip North has a Resolution congratulating the Government on the far-sighted proposals contained in the speech from the Throne.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, in moving this Resolution congratulating the Government on the contents of the Queen's speech delivered on November 1, 1977, I find myself in a privileged position in that Private Members' Business contains two Resolutions coming from the Government side, and I wonder if the Opposition plans using this part of the Order Paper for Questions and Resolutions. Of course, I have noted that of late they have taken to the streets, and as distinct from the

contents of the speech delivered by Her Majesty, the contents of the speeches recently delivered on platforms outside this Chamber have not caused anyone any degree of concern whatever. Perhaps one could say that we are hearing empty mouthings every week from the Opposition. And so, with that background, I would wish to compliment the Government on certain aspects of the speech which was delivered, and in due course I myself may have to question Government on certain aspects of the speech in terms of specifics, and I will anticipate the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues because I know what they will have to say.

Of course the speech must be regarded in the light of the fact that it comes one year after the Government has started on its programme and therefore it is not a speech initiating policy such as the speech delivered by the acting Governor General last year. Rather, this is a restatement of certain areas and policies which have been outlined in greater detail on previous occasions. The way it was put together was simple but it carries a great deal of value. There were aspects which struck me as a bit faltering; in this type of speech the kind of language, the kind of proposals and specifics that one would expect and particularly that part of the speech which seems to have come out of the Ministry of the Attorney General; these gave me a bit more to hold on to than other aspects of the speech. But by and large it seems to me that it was designed as a restatement of Government's proposal for the next few months.

Now in particular the Resolution which I have tabled requests this House to take note of the Government's plans for education, housing, and the physical development of the country, and I would start with the proposals dealing with education.

I believe that critics of the Government over the past year have been prompted by members of the Opposition to spread the rumour that Government is doing nothing.
2.55 p.m.

One of the first acts for which this Government can take utmost pride is the policy of the Ministry of Education, now headed by a more youthful, dynamic personality than in the past, to keep some of the youth between the ages of 14 and 16 from off the streets by taking them back to the schools with a view to extending their educational possibilities. I had the privilege of seeing some of the work that came out of the Vauxhall School just before the end of last term, and I would wish to take this opportunity to praise those teachers who have been redrafted into the system to train the 14-year olds. I was glad to see the quality of the work that has been produced in that school under the guidance of those teachers, and it is something of which we can all be proud. I will counsel the Minister of Education not to

continue this programme on an *ad hoc* basis. This programme is necessary, and it should be integrated into the school curriculum in the years ahead.

Sir, I recall that, in the Queen's Speech, mention was made of the establishment of trade centres for the encouragement of light cottage industries. This would give the 14-year olds an opportunity to assist in the future development of the vocational skills of some of the youths in our community.

I must confess that I heard a conversation arising out of an article that was written in the *Sunday Advocate* headed "In Perspective" dealing with the question of school buildings, but I must confess that I do not read the articles under "In Perspective", and I was not aware of the ramifications that were being discussed but, surely, the Government should be congratulated for the establishment of a Secondary School at Trents, St. James, to accommodate a large number of children. I understand that work will commence before the expiry of the current financial year. This is in addition to the constant extensions that are taking place elsewhere as well as the necessary maintenance of school buildings.

Sir, I think the time has come when there should be greater decentralisation, not only in educational facilities, but in the use of other facilities that we have in this country, in particular the western part of this Island. Apart from the Coleridge/Parry School in that area, there is a need for secondary school facilities. It is good to see that some attempt is being made to extend school facilities in the rural areas. It is appreciated, no doubt, that the construction of a new school for 1,200 students will provide some fillip to the construction industry and have some bearing on the reduction in unemployment.

When one looks at the whole of the speech — that is why I worded my Resolution very carefully — it is clear that at the back of the drafters of this speech was the desire to reduce the level of unemployment in this country. Not only will there be an increase in school building and construction of the school at Trents, the maintenance work and so on, but secondary schools would be built outside of Bridgetown.

At page 4 there is one specific project —

"The Government has pledged itself to build by the end of 1978 a housing project for the low-income worker fairly close to the environs of Bridgetown."

I wish to say a little on this. There has been a great demand for low-cost rented units in Barbados. The records of the National Housing Corporation revealed that there are about 6,000 applicants for rented units still outstanding and that, at the moment, the sub-committee to the Board which deals with rents has, in fact, approved

200 people for accommodation in rented units, but the units are not available. There are no available units because from the 1st April, 1976, the planning for that type of public housing had been very shoddy, with the result that a sufficient number of units were not built to supply the demand.

In 1975, according to Central Bank's Annual Report, it is said that the former administration only managed to build 595 houses. That is in 1975 when this country experienced a boom from the prices which were available for sugar on the World Market at the time, but the long-term planning that was necessary for improving the number of houses in Barbados never got off the ground. There are several other reasons for this. You cannot just decide that, in a specific year, you are going to put up 100 units or 20 units. First of all, people must realise that land in appropriate areas have to be purchased, according to the Ministry of Lands, and then the lands should be vested in the National Housing Corporation so that a statutory body can go ahead and do the necessary surveys for roads, water, lights, and so on. It will be noted that the present Government had to come to the House and ask for the approval of sums of money to finance various areas in the Corporation.

3.05 p.m.

Some of them are poor house spots, and the National Housing Corporation has not got the title vested in it even today, which brings me back to what I was saying about the question of planning. The Departments need to be properly coordinated, and I do not envisage that it is an inhuman job when you consider that both the Ministry of Housing and the Ministry of Lands are located in the same building at Marine House, and have been located there for some years now. So that the problem of coordination of policies does not seem to me to be a super one.

Having got your land vested in the Corporation, the Corporation must have a proper management team and a proper technical wing which can do the necessary for replanning, so that if the money is available and you have a date set to start construction all the preliminary work would have been done. In the past this was not so. I can tell the House that, for example, at Oxnards there was no plan, they were just told to go and put up some houses, and the result is that the National Housing Corporation lost \$1,000.

I want to say something about Wotton too, because some of the empty mouthings at night have included some comment from Mr. Maurice King at Gall Hill concerning the Wotton project. I wish to make it very clear. This Government took over and found roads cut at Wotton costing over \$200,000. Certain tests were carried out, and even from pure observation it was found that some of the land on which it had been proposed to build

was totally unsuited for construction, and especially construction of stone or concrete houses.

On the day the Queen left Barbados, I think it was a Wednesday, I went to Wotton with officers of the Corporation, and it was then three days after the most recent floods, and I saw a beautiful lake set out at Wotton. There were two particularly flooded areas which have caused us great concern at the National Housing Corporation. They have caused us concern because in those areas it has been proposed to build concrete houses, but it has turned out now that it would be an unsafe and unwise exercise to proceed to construct stone houses on certain of the areas at Wotton. Certain parts of Wotton, you need only go as far as 12 feet and you hit water, and so when Mr. King could have given the public the impression before the floods came the same night he was speaking and washed him out.....

Mr. SPEAKER Left the Chair and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was saying that the tests carried out both by local engineers and consultants as well as by people from the OAS show quite clearly that the land at Wotton, especially that closest to the road, was very good agricultural land and totally unsuited for the construction of some of the terraced units, and members of the House are free to visit there and see. We have started about four to five weeks ago on the rocky part of the land, and it looks as though the spots closest to the road will have to be used for the erection of timber houses. Certainly any idea of using concrete houses there is out at this moment in terms of the reports we have in hand, and we have had to revise in the light of the floods.

It is a good thing that the floods came before we got too far into the construction of the houses at Wotton, because it enabled us to see very clearly the settlements of water on various areas, so that we have now to reorganise our thinking to make the programme very effective and efficient.

It also appears that enough wells were not sunk at Wotton, and only yesterday I authorised that as many more wells as are necessary be dug so that the place can be properly drained. Faced with a situation where, notwithstanding the several protests of the Barbados Labour Party when we were in Opposition that good agricultural land should not be taken out of production for the purpose of house building, the former administration pressed ahead and developed Wotton. Mr. Maurice King said it was a worthwhile development — I am paraphrasing here — but as I say, he was washed out that night by the flood waters. He lives in Christ Church and I am sure that even if he did not read the Nation and

see the photograph of the flooded area on the Wednesday after the flood, he would have visited there and he would now have the benefit of revising his comment which he made at Silver Hill or Gall Hill on the Sunday night of the rains.

I have taken some criticism from Mr. King for a comment I made on CBC when I was interviewed for some programme in August, Issues and Answers. The question was put to me, what are you doing about Wotton? And I said, "Me?" I made no statement about Wotton. When I was in Mauritius at the CPA conference the Minister, I believe the Parliamentary Secretary, and others visited Wotton and they expressed the view that Wotton was not the best possible site for housing development, and we still feel so, but it is a question of whether you are going to let \$200,000 go down the drain or whether you are going to make an effort to put up housing to satisfy the demand which is there, and we thought it was really Hobson's choice, it was there already, they lost money at Oxnards, and we would have to go ahead with the development at Wotton.

The 100 unit project which is planned for St. Michael, or at any rate within easy reach of Bridgetown, has a number of things. In the past the technical officers of the National Housing Corporation were not encouraged to experiment with new systems and new technology, they were not encouraged to experiment with the use of local products. I believe it was in June this year that a request was made to me to provide some money for the technical officers to experiment and to bring to bear on the construction industry of Barbados some of what they had learnt by visits abroad and talking with people who had come down from abroad introducing new systems to public house units.

3.15 p.m.

I made \$35,000 available and we decided to experiment with 7 houses at Free Hill, Black Rock. The 7 houses should be completed by Friday this week; and we feel that having given the staff of the corporation encouragement to develop their talents and initiative that we can come up with houses that will satisfy our needs in relation to people who are in the greatest need of houses in this country, houses that are serviceable efficient and effective. That is not all. In so far as St. Andrew is concerned there seems to be an abundance of places which need to be looked after having regard to housing. Like other parts of the region, and other parts of the world, the Government has decided that the technology side of Government will carry out investigations into the use of clay.

Already in your constituency two more foundations have been done experimentally, one foundation made of clay and one of concrete blocks with a view to determining the structural efficiency, cost factors and all

the other problems obtaining in the housing system in any ordinary house in Barbados under construction today. Especially now that the clay block factory is making blocks to the same specification as concrete blocks, the experiment will prove successful, we have no doubt.

In the Throne Speech housing was touched on very briefly, and I thought that I would give the House some further indication of what is happening; but, Mr. Speaker, I have the feeling that the days of the Oxnards type of houses may be running out. Because of the present level of the cost of building a house as expensive as the Oxnards type of house, we have modified the plan for middle income houses in Barbados. We have modified that because of the level of mortgage money that is available in Barbados.

The people who criticise this Government fail to appreciate that it was in January this year that the Prime Minister raised the level of mortgage borrowing from \$32,000 to \$50,000 thereby opening a greater opportunity for the middle income group who need housing. People seem to forget a matter like that, which in my view, has alleviated a lot of the pressure that people who wanted to purchase houses in the \$40,000 bracket were experiencing. With the level of mortgage money at \$50,000 and an Oxnards house costing \$44,000, the leeway for the purchaser is very narrow. There is no elbow room if he has to borrow money and pay on deposit, and if he has to pay hire purchase on his domestic fittings and equipment etc. We have therefore got to design another type of house that will probably sell in the vicinity of \$36,000.

To that question, Sir, the National Housing Corporation is being conscious of the burdens of ownership which are being placed on young people who wish to buy or build houses, but because of the financial constraints are unable to do so. We are trying to design a different kind of house, not necessarily smaller, but not with all the facilities which the Oxnards houses have. We are trying to suit the need for housing without causing additional financial burden.

I wish to say for the benefit of the uninitiated, and those who are just plain ignorant or malicious, that on the Sunday night prior to the Queen's visit there were some units in Wildey which were severely damaged on account of flood waters washing down from the Parkinson School area, and because of a ridge up there they were flooded. Now, I have heard some malicious Dems say within the last week that the Barbados Labour Party was responsible for the building of those houses. On the Monday morning, the morning after the flooded. I went with the Permanent Secretary and the Minister and I heard people abusing the Barbados Labour Party for having built these houses.

The houses were built by the Democratic Labour Party against the advice of the engineers. Further than that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, can you imagine — you know something about building because you are a big property owner — having foundation without one piece of steel? Do not let it be said that the Barbados Labour Party had anything to do with those houses that collapsed. All that we did was to assist these people, and within a few days we had these houses under repair.

I have been telling the Prime Minister that we need a new law in this country so that anyone who tells lies on a political platform should be given six years in jail.
3.25 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member's time has just about expired.

Mr. SIMMONS: I will just be two more minutes. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have dealt enough with housing. Let me now move on to industrial and physical development.

Sir, in respect of physical and industrial development as you have appreciated, having talked to me, the policy of the Government is very clear. We have got to export more in order to earn foreign exchange, and in order to provide employment for the people of this country. There is in my view the greatest level of unemployment among young women. According to the Prime Minister's figures last Friday night on television it would seem that there are 6,000 unemployed men. I can tell you that in my constituency and I believe throughout the length and breadth of Barbados the greatest level of unemployment rests among young women, and therefore it is gratifying to have heard in the Queen's Speech plans for the industrial expansion of this country in terms of the establishment of two more factories built by men to provide work for the women.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member's time has expired.

Mr. SIMMONS: I am obliged to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, in rising to second this Resolution I have got a few comments to make. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this speech which was delivered by Her Majesty the Queen was quite mistaken by some members of the public, more so by members of the Democratic Labour Party. This speech was one of several speeches which sets out at the beginning of a Parliamentary Session to state what the Government's programme for a particular period of time, a year or so, would be. It was not intended to be a speech which would reflect the comprehensive policy of a

Government. Therefore it is quite obvious, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Her Majesty in delivering the speech would not have included every individual policy of this Government. So to begin with we must understand clearly what the Throne Speech was all about.

No one who has followed the policy and the programme of this Government since we assumed office on September 2 can and should expect more from us. We have not only reduced the number of Ministries and Parliamentary Secretaries, but we have been able to live up to the great task which has been set us after September 2. It was not an easy task for us and yet we have managed to do a magnificent job. We have campaigned long before the 1976 election about the fourteen year olds being asked to leave school in neglect, untrained and unqualified. I have on several occasions called upon the then Government of the Democratic Labour Party to do something to have these children remain in school so that they could equip themselves, but despite my appeal they allowed the children, class room after class room, to be sent out of school.

You may remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I produced reports on the platform and in this Honourable Chamber showing how the former administration cared very little for the fourteen year olds. It is no wonder that a member of the Democratic Labour Party could go into Six Roads on Sunday night and talk about who got "O" levels and who did not get "O" levels, because the hon. member who was Prime Minister of this country ought to know that he should be the last person to talk about who had "O" levels. I want him to understand that when he talks about a member of this Government not having "O" levels that is no shame because young boys and girls went to school under his fifteen year regime and came out with not one "O" level at all. He should remember that. What I have said and I will repeat today is that it is a shame to find boys and girls in Barbados between 15 and 19 years untrained and unqualified, and all these boys and girls went to school under the regime of the Democratic Labour Party, and if these boys and girls did not have the necessary four or five "O" levels they have only got to blame the Democratic Labour Party and the Ministers responsible for Education for not devising a proper educational policy so that these young boys and girls could have equipped themselves.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure that the general public in Barbados welcomed the return of the 14 years old and we must be complimented as a Government for taking the bold step despite the mouthings of the Leader of the Opposition who got in St. Barnabas and said the fourteen year olds had to come out of school because there was no room in the schools. That is what

the Leader of the Opposition said, but we have put the lie to that because we have found room and lots of room, and we were able to have them return to the form rooms. It is no sense developing a country industrially or otherwise and not having trained and qualified people to take up the jobs. I have said repeatedly that in order to make full use of the industrial progress we must concern ourselves with training young boys and girls of this country so that when job opportunities in the industrial sector become available they will be able to fill them, and nothing will satisfy me more than to see the day when we have got the trade school and these schools set up throughout the length and breadth of this country in order to give the fourteen year olds or those children who were not privileged to have a proper academic education an opportunity to equip themselves. We must understand that in planning we must provide for the young people because they will have to take over this country and we have got to make in our plans programmes which will benefit young people. So it is no sense thinking on an *ad hoc* basis, turning children out of school not qualified and coming in here as the hon. member for St. Michael South who claims that he writes in perspective and claiming that they did something for the fourteen year olds. Surely they have done something for them, that is, turned them out of school.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have decided in this Government to have a properly planned educational policy, a policy which has got an objective. We are thinking of development both in agriculture and in the industrial sector and that is why we have laid stress in the school curricula that agricultural science and the sciences related to agriculture must play an important part.

3.35 p.m.

We understand that we must be ourselves, and we believe that the young boys and girls should be made to look at agriculture as a saviour to the economy of this country and we will not in any way use the various deterrents that were used by the former administration. We are going to encourage the young boys and girls in realizing that they have their role to play in this society.

My colleague, the member who introduced this Resolution, spoke about housing. Since I am Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Housing, I feel it is my duty to explain to this Honourable Chamber that this Government believes that housing is a very vital sector and that we realize that lots of people in Barbados are thinking in terms of home ownership. And the Prime Minister has made it abundantly clear from the very first week he took office that the housing programme must be speeded up and that everything should be done to ensure that

Barbadians who could not own a home before be now able to own one. And one of the first things the Prime Minister has done is to move the ceiling from \$32,000 to \$50,000. Several people have come to me asking how they could go about getting a house because they could not find \$10,000 to deposit on the houses which the National Housing Corporation was building. After this was drawn to the attention of the Prime Minister he decided that the ceiling should be raised to \$50,000, and lots of people have benefitted from this venture. So you can see the interest and concern of this Government as far as concerns people who are interested in getting a home. We do not believe that we have to go around politicking and engaging in needless publicity. We believe instead in proper planning.

Now in recent weeks the Minister of Housing and representatives from the Ministry and myself have been going from area to area looking for suitable sites where we can build more houses. We have visited areas in Clapham, Pilgrim Road, Deacons Road and other places, and what is significant is that we have been looking at areas recommended as suitable by the Town and Country Planning Department. So we are not building like the former administration, going into Wotton and throwing away taxpayers' money and leaving us a basket to carry and then criticising us for a programme which they started. They should have known whether it was suitable to build in Wotton, yet they carried out a building programme there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to go too deep in the area of housing. There are lots of misdeeds not yet unfolded which the public of Barbados will read about in due course. But one of the things we have got to be careful about is that we do not run into the pit falls that the former administration ran into, that is, sloppy planning. In order to carry out our programme of 800 houses a year we must reorganize the National Housing Corporation, because we have inherited the same man-power and management, and that is why we have been very reluctant in going forward immediately after September 2 to effect our programme. We have to look and see after careful analysis whether the project is going to be beneficial to the entire country, because we have got to realize we hold the nation's purse and have to account for every penny. So I do not mind people criticising the Queen's Speech. It is a speech that sets out to show what we will do over a period of time and we will let those on the other side see as the years roll by what the great combination will produce, because we are sitting high in the saddle.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make this point abundantly clear. The people of Barbados must understand that we are a responsible Government. The

former administration could not boast of Ministers of the calibre of what we have on this side. If they had, they did not demonstrate it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must point out that we have got a programme, and every possible programme and policy which this Government is about to pursue calls for careful analysis, and nothing at all will move us from steering that course.

I have heard remarks from the Opposition benches that when the Leader of the Opposition was on the television programme "Issues and Answers" he said that they did too much too fast. We are not going to do too fast; we are going to watch, learn and proceed with caution; this is not an *ad hoc* government. We are going to plan carefully because the people have given us the reins of Government and they are convinced that in our ranks we have men of ability and integrity to run the nation's affairs.

The Throne Speech as delivered by Her Majesty sets out that we in this Government intend to develop a defence force. Now one of the things that concerns me up to 1976, was the fact that the former administration was thinking in terms of defence force. But Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear that the kind of defence force which my Government intends to establish is not similar to the one which the former administration intended to set up.

3.45 p.m.

They believe that we will be setting up a Defence Force similar to what they have in mind, but that is not the case. We are planning to have a Defence Force which would look after the Security of this country and at the same time give the members of this small Force and opportunity to develop their skills and their individual talent. We know that they will have a vital role to play. We are not going in for any conscription in order to put our boys and girls into a National Defence Force to use the guns for shooting down people! We want them to work in the national interest and use their skills and energy for the betterment of this country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have referred to some of the areas mentioned in the Throne Speech. We must look carefully at the construction industry. No one in Barbados can deny that when the former Government was in power there was a continuous shortage of cement, and construction was at a virtual standstill. Firms were closed down, people were out of work, and it was only after this Government came into power that various business people, who used to invest money here, regained the confidence in Barbados and its economy as a whole and decided to invest money here more rapidly

again. No one can deny that more industries have been brought into Barbados recently. No one can deny that more people have been employed in the various industries than before. It is time that those on the other side should stop going up and down the country talking nonsense.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we intend to create more and more employment in this country. As the hon. member for St. Philip North has said, the building of more schools will create more jobs for people. The access road to be constructed from Wildey going through Haggatt Hall will create more employment, and more Barbadians will be able to get work. We have decided to resite the Polytechnic at Wildey, but the Democratic Labour Party had decided to put it in Constitution Road where the area is flooded whenever the rain falls. We would not attempt to put a building like that there, because we would have to throw away a large sum of money trying to correct foundation problems. That is why we had to criticise those who thought of building a Polytechnic in Constitution Road.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the hon. member for St. Michael South is one of those people who said that we should have built the Polytechnic in Constitution Road. When we decided to move the people from Emmerton Lane, the members on the other side said all sorts of things. It is now known that those people who have been resited at Wildey are quite satisfied with conditions up there, and we are glad that we had taken a wise decision. We know that criticising the Government is part of the Opposition's duty, but it is the duty of the public in Barbados to understand that it is the duty of the Opposition to criticise the Government when there is really something to criticise. It is the duty of the Government to formulate policies and to implement them, and we are doing that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I must say that the resiting of the Polytechnic was a wise decision by the Hon. Minister of Education and Culture. I feel that he has made a rather imaginative step in deciding to put the Polytechnic at Wildey. No one can criticise him for that, because we know that there will be no foundation problems at Wildey. Surveys have been carried out and everybody agreed that the Polytechnic should be resited at Wildey.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government has decided to lay emphasis on agriculture. I want to state that, contrary to what members of the Democratic Labour Party have been saying about their responsibility for the high yield in sugar cane production this year, it does not go down well with me as well as other people in Barbados. I have said repeatedly that they were not interested in agriculture when they allowed some of

their friends, lackeys, supporters and henchmen to cut up good agricultural land and give it to members of the Democratic Labour Party during the last Election in 1976. Some of them boast that they belong to the Agricultural Society and they have certain farms that are being run in a certain fashion. We know about a lot of things, but it is extremely difficult to get the facts. I see the Leader of the Opposition smiling. He went and took land that should have been left for the poor people, but he comes in here talking about what the poor people should get and so on. (*Asides.*) He has land at Husbands, and he was a Minister.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Why not quarrel with Ezra? He brought land up there and he has a house on it. You are dishonest.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. L. St. CRAIG: On a point of order. Am I to understand that the Leader of the Opposition is referring to Ezra Alleyne, the Deputy Speaker of this House?

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the facts.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please continue with the matter before the House.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Government now has a task trying to get people interested in agriculture again, because the former administration had allowed their friends to cut up good agricultural lands and use it for another purpose. We are now on the hunt for land. It is not the policy of this Government to buy land or any property from any friend or supporter of the Barbados Labour Party. 3.55 p.m.

We will first examine whether the price is right and whether the taxpayers of this country's money will be worth spending on that.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member's time has expired.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you know, we paid tribute this afternoon to a member of this Hon. House. I am to represent the Opposition at that funeral just as, I think, the Government is being represented, perhaps not by a parliamentarian, since the Government has more resources than the Opposition in terms of civil servants and other persons.

I am slated to make a speech for the Opposition on this address or the hon. member for St. Philip North. I wonder if the Government would grant me in

the particular circumstances of this case the postponement of this debate to another day. The House needs to adjourn in some cases for a funeral. (*Asides.*) I accept the utterances of the Government and I think it augurs well for this administration that on a request like this the Government in the best spirit of democracy will grant this particular request, so if the hon. member will move the postponement and get back to their business, I would like to express my gratitude personally as well as on behalf of the Opposition.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir, we have no intention at all to attempt to prevent the hon. member from representing his party, and we will be waiving the reply, so I will move that further consideration be postponed.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Resolution is hereby postponed.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am deeply grateful, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now time for Government Business.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House resume Committee, and for the purposes of the remainder of today's sitting, that the hon. member for St. Philip North be the Chairman of Committees.

The hon. member for St. Philip South very kindly consented, but there is a particular matter which he would like to discuss, so therefore I do not want to deprive him of that opportunity.

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

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is my duty to clear the air on this matter. As you are aware, I am always willing and ready to serve my country in any way I can, and while it is true, Sir, that I would accept to deputise for the Chairman who has gone to attend the funeral, I decided in advance to speak on the Resolution which deals with housing. Consequently I do not find it possible to accept the position to deputise for the Chairman, but I can assure the hon. members of the Government that on any occasion and it is possible for me to act I shall do so with great pleasure.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Your Honour, I am quite sure that we are well aware of the capabilities of the

member for St. Philip South He acted as Chairman of Committees on more than one occasion, but I am quite sure that he — and probably a number of my colleagues here are familiar with the Westminster model — but the Lord Chancellor while proceeding to address the Chamber stands by the side of the Chair and not actually standing before the Committee or the House of Lords at the time. This is customary. I see my Advanced Level colleague on the other side is startled by this non-O level boy here telling the House what the Westminster model is like, and this is merely a constitutional approach.

Since the side looks kind of depleted, I do not know if this is why the hon. member for St. Philip South does not want to adorn the Chair on this occasion, but I assure you that it is done in the Commonwealth, and the model is there in the House of Lords where you can stand by the side of the Chair and not in Woolsack.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not know what all this talk about "O" Level and "A" Level is all about, but I know of no precedent for the Speaker of the House of Commons in Westminster or someone to stand by the side of the Chair. That could not work in here.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Parliament reigns supreme, anything can happen in here. The hon. member for St. John is here now and anything can happen here.

The question that Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply, Mr. SIMMONS in the Chair, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 19 — MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT — DIRECTION AND POLICY FORMULATION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, first let me welcome you, Sir, to the Chair. I am quite sure you have brought this afternoon a degree of your legal knowledge and your parliamentary experience, short though it may be, for the time being to this Committee, and I would think I would be failing in my duty if I did not make a passing comment.

This Resolution seeks to provide \$5,000 for the purpose of assisting in the carrying on of the Thelma Vaughan Memorial Home for handicapped children. There was a figure of \$18,500 as a subvention, and since the Thelma Vaughan Memorial Home is doing a pretty good job, under very trying conditions, we on this side, the Cabinet decided that it is advisable to give them an additional \$5,000 since they have applied to us for this amount of money.

4.05 p.m.

The house has some 17 children at the moment under the supervision of the Child Care Board and the Cheshire Home; and I am quite sure that we in Barbados who are more fortunate will appreciate the effect of a Resolution of this nature and that we will have no problem in its passage.

I would draw to your attention that the conditions at the Home are not as good as they might be, but the staff is doing a good job on which I am offering them congratulations. It is not the best for people who are conscious of these things, but the former administration did not do much to improve these conditions. I can assure you that as long as I hold this portfolio, I am quite prepared to give assistance to the Home. I know that the former Minister of Education should have some special interest in this. I know that he has some relative — I cannot remember his name — and I am sure that he has a special interest in this. Whatever we can do to assist these unfortunate children, I am prepared to do.

There are a number of children who have been abandoned and who have been found by the wayside and brought into the Home by members of the Child Care Board; and I would like to publicly congratulate the Board on the wonderful work that they have done.

With those few remarks I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Head 19(3) — Welfare was called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution is for the purpose of staffing the Senior Citizens Home at the old Quarantine Station in Black Rock. We propose to have some 28 persons in the Home. Now, there is a big problem in Barbados which we have inherited and which we are setting out to solve; that is, that there are a lot of people living in the District Hospitals as well as in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital who can be still of a little help to themselves.

It is because of this that in conjunction with the Ministry of Health we have been forced to draw upon certain areas whereby we can assist these people. There are a number of people who need this care and we are embarking now on the proposition of introducing day care for these unfortunate persons. By that, families will bring to the centre persons who are aged and indigent and them come back and collect them in the evening.

We are going to expend the Golden Rock Senior Citizens Home, and we also plan to have another Senior

Citizen Home within our term of office. It is regrettable, however, that the needs of these people are so great that Government finds it impossible to cater to all the needs; but we will try in any way possible to relieve the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and the District Hospital of these unfortunate people. We hope that by December we will find room for these people, and we have asked the National Assistance Board to encourage District Hospitals and these Senior Citizens Homes to do their work in handicraft. Quite recently we had some of those exhibits during the Senior Citizens Week and it was a success. I hope that we will have more time whereby these persons will not seem to be forgotten.

On the next item I will have to speak on the treatment meted out to some of these people during the last regime, and it may be in very forceful language. I do not think that my colleagues will object to this Resolution having a safe passage, and I therefore beg to move that Head 19(3) stand part.

Mr. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I have no objection to the provision of additional staff for the Ministry responsible for Welfare as set out in this Supplementary Resolution. It is for a very deserving and humanitarian purpose, and we hope that when the staff is provided it will really mean that services will go to the aged persons in terms of what may be behind this particular part of the Resolution. If that is so, we can certainly support that. I merely wish to state that the provision of housing for the aged and the indigent is a matter that the Minister or any member on the other side would try to deny that provision was made by the former administration whenever the circumstances permitted; and there was a programme of repairs to houses of the aged; so this is merely a continuation of that programme.

What is happening now is that the matter has been transferred fully to the Ministry of Welfare and this will be specifically a welfare function and hopefully there will be better co-ordination. It will be a development of a policy which was started before, because there is no doubt at all that when the financial problems of the country start to bite, those who are aged or those unable to work and who have no source of income suffer the most.

4.15 p.m.

There is no doubt at all that the financial problems of the country started to bite, that they affect those who are aged, those who are on pension and those who are unable to have any settled source of income the greatest. Those are the ones who suffer most and any provision whether it is in terms of the staff to improve the facilities of this category of our citizens would be most welcome.

While I am on my feet, and this relates to the question of the aged, I would like to appeal to the Minister. No doubt he has started a review already and I would like to appeal to the Minister to take a look at the means test currently operating as far as payment of assistance to the aged is concerned. I believe the ceiling or the floor I should say is now at \$15 and this is built into the regulations, or in the operation procedures, but I would like to ask the Minister to take a look at this particular area to review it. Attempts have been made in the past to raise this floor and I would like to draw to the attention of the Minister that this is a problem facing the aged, and maybe in his commitment to the aged and his concern for the aged this is one area of policy which he would give consideration to and favourably have a review. I am not making any political point out of this because I do not think that we should use the problem of the aged as a political football. I am merely asking the Minister to look at this particular problem. It is a problem that has been with us for some time and I do hope that he would be able to look at it and do something about this area. If many of our senior citizens were able to earn additional income or to make themselves useful, and I have heard the Minister make statements in this regard, it may be that their demands or their need for governmental assistance might be to that extent reduced; but I am merely appealing on behalf of the aged in this country for a review of the existing flooring as far as that particular test is concerned and see what the Government can do bearing in mind the financial circumstances of the country.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the hon. member who has just sat down for drawing to my attention the need to look at the means test. We do not only look, we do, and we are going to be bringing before this Assembly very shortly a means test when we can stand up in here and debate it. What is interesting is that the hon. member himself for the past fifteen years in the party in Government in this country is now saying that it is on the floor; we are going to take it to the roof for you. That is what we promise you. After fifteen years he is admitting on the floor of this House that as a Cabinet Minister himself it was on the floor, and with the millions of dollars at their disposal he has the audacity to come here and admit that it is on the floor.

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation. I am grateful to the hon. member for giving way. We are not generating any heat over this. The means test had been raised by the previous administration and we are asking you to raise it. You know, if you are talking about the floor, if it was raised and it is now on the floor, it must have been under the cellar under your administration, but I do not wish to get into that. It was \$5 and we raised it to \$15, but I am not really going into that. All I am asking.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I believe the hon. member for St. Michael South rose on a point of elucidation. I will allow you to elucidate, but I do not want a speech.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am not making a speech. All I am asking the Minister to do is to review it. He has said he is going to review it and this is in keeping with the indication we had on this particular matter.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, he goes on to say that it was under the basement, but I know there is a floor in the basement. He has admitted in here that it is on the floor but it was on the floor in the basement under their administration for the past fifteen years, and we are going to look at it and bring it to this august Assembly. We are not going to look at something as you have been doing. You have been looking at corruption too long. All the \$500,000 and the \$4 million that you wasted could have been giving the old age pensioners a better deal, but I will deal with that in the next Resolution and the head of your party, whether it is the Leader of the Opposition or the Deputy Head of the Academy. He is going to know whose house was repaired this evening.

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, I would like to get this quite clear for the hon. member for St. James who has been saying that I have been looking at corruption for too long. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, I have said that.) Well the only person I am looking at is the hon. member for St. James.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I can appreciate that he could not be looking at corruption, it was around him. He has been looking at the corruption on his right in particular.

The question that Head 19 – Ministry of Labour and Community Services (3) Welfare – stand part – was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1977–78 No. 18

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution for \$190,000 seeks to meet the needs of some of the most unfortunate persons in this society. All over the world the State sets about to look after those persons who have made a contribution. It burns me deep inside to have to introduce this type of Resolution this evening, and I am going to draw to the attention of this Committee the scandalous approach to the spending of public funds by the last administration, and Sir, I would like to draw to your attention and have your guidance since, as I am told there is an enquiry going on and not the sitting of a court, and therefore the enquiry is going

on into something, and so whatever I may say that may relate to an enquiry would not be the same as if it were a court. I would like your ruling on that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am only going to counsel the Hon. Minister in his speech to avoid direct references to any of the current enquiries in this country.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I shall abide by Your Honour's ruling, but maybe in passing I may brush on them. I may have to ask your pardon.
4.25 p.m.

I have before me figures which show that something like \$475,115 was spent between the months of July, 1976 and September, 1976 to repair 349 homes. There is a feeling that under the former administration headed by the hon. member for St. John this money was used for purposes of election campaigning. This is known in here as special supplement. Now in other years they spent \$120,000 in one year, \$95,000 in another year but in the two months former administration allowed this large sum of money belonging to the taxpayers of this country to be used to protect the former government's political interests.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, Sir. To begin with I would like the hon. member to know that Parliament votes money for specific purposes. I have never been a member of the Housing Authority and I have never directed the Members of the Housing Authority or the Housing Corporation over what time period they were supposed to spend the money.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am saying that in the space of two months this enormous sum of money was spent by the Housing Authority and only a dishonest person.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, the member is imputing improper motives.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the Hon. Minister take his seat. One at a time please.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I said dishonourable person, not the member for St. George.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member is not referring to me he would be referring to the Chair, so he would have to withdraw the remark.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I take it the remarks are addressed to the Chair; the member must withdraw the remarks.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I withdraw, Sir. Now, Sir, the member for St. John got up and said that sums of money have been voted by this Parliament for use in Housing. But I know that a Minister presents his proposals and the Chairman of the Cabinet must know what the money is for, and as Minister of Finance he was in a position to decide whether the Treasury could carry that amount of money.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am surprised that the hon. member is supposed to be sitting as the Cabinet Minister for over a year and does not understand up to now that Parliament votes appropriations during the Estimates and that these appropriations are for specific purposes and Cabinet Ministers do not go into Cabinet meetings and change the proposals. If money is voted for the Housing Authority it is for the Housing Authority to spend the amount of money Parliament has voted.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order. As I understand it the Minister was making a point that Ministers present information to Parliament when funds are drawn out.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this sum of money never even came to Parliament, yet you call it a special vote.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: If the member is trying to show that money was spent without Parliamentary approval, that is incorrect.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is this a point of elucidation?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The member is speaking on something diametrically opposite to the Standing Orders....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am accusing the hon. member of spending taxpayers funds in a scandalous way.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I have never spent any public funds; I am not an accounting officer.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: In 1974-75 we find a \$150,000 spent; in 1975-76, \$160,000; 1976-77, \$200,000, and in the same year the sum of \$411,715 was spent under what is known as special supplement between July and September and I say the hon. member as a former Minister of Finance was responsible for this expenditure.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, the hon. member is accusing me of spending certain moneys over three years. If Parliament votes a million dollars to a Ministry and that Ministry can spend it all in three weeks, I will have no way....

(Uproar; many members standing and speaking at the same time.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Everybody please sit. I cannot believe my ears when the hon. member for St. John says that so long as money is voted the Ministry can spend all of it at any time. The hon. member knows that the money could not be spent by a Ministry without the Minister's approval.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of elucidation, Sir, it now appears that there is more than one person who does not understand the procedure. When Parliament votes a sum of money, let us say a million dollars to be spent through the Ministry responsible for Housing, the money is released by the Accounting Officer after submitting the matter to the Minister of Finance to see that the funds are available. What I am saying in simple terms is that Parliament voted this money.
4.35 p.m.

What I was saying in the preamble is that...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not want a speech from the hon. member from the hon. member from St. John. You got up on a point of elucidation and explained how the various Ministries conducted certain business with the Ministry of Finance and how funds are used when they are voted by Parliament. We have accepted how things were done under your administration. According to what you have said, there appears to be a different procedure under the present administration. Perhaps it will be better to air this matter more fully when your time comes to speak.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member accuses me of spending the Housing Corporation's money. I have never signed a cheque in connection with that Department during the 25 years I have been here.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I accept that.

Hon. L. R. TULL: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. What the hon. member for St. John says is an entirely different matter. At one time he said exactly what I said when I rose and pointed out that before any Ministry can spend money, even when it is voted, it has to make a requisition to the Ministry of Finance which would have to be approved by the Minister of Finance before further action could be taken.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Hon. Minister of Labour continue his speech.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member said that I agreed with him, but that is not so.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will you please take your seat.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I said that the Ministry of Finance together with the Minister of...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member, please, take his seat.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this is no vote; it is a collective decision taken by the Cabinet. The file states:

"The Cabinet further concluded that..."

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege. The Minister cannot come in here and read the conclusions arrived at at a Cabinet Meeting. It is an offence against the law. I do not care how much open Government you have, but when it comes to a question of breaking the law, I think the Minister ought to be told that he cannot come in here and say that the Cabinet concluded this or that and read it out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Minister has not said that he is reading a Cabinet file. Time and time again we have seen certain things in the newspaper and heard on the television that Cabinet decided so and so. Is there anything improper in a newspaper carrying a story that Cabinet concluded so and so? I rule the Hon. Minister in order.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He is reading from a Cabinet Paper.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I have ruled.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the Cabinet approved — and it was a collective decision — expenditure in the sum of \$411,715 to be spent on repairs to houses. The Hon. member for St. John was present at that meeting. The money was spent between the months of July and September. He called the General Election on the 2nd September, 1976. For three years they were only able to repair 120 houses for the aged, but between July and September they set out to repair 349 houses at a cost of \$411,715. I am saying it now that many of those people's homes were never repaired because there are still 1,616 persons whose homes have not yet been repaired. I think I will have to come here and ask for \$½-million to repair these homes before the Financial Year is out.

Mr. Chairman, I am putting forward a case for the aged and the indigent. I fall into that group. I am happy to be in a position to look after these people. I wonder if the member for St. Philip South is here? The member for St. John talks a lot about the people in Barbados, and he was born in a prison in Bequia. Those who are doctors and lawyers can talk about...

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I would like to refer to Rule 28(5) which states:

"It shall be out of order to use offensive and insulting language about Members of the House."

I am submitting that it is offensive and insulting to refer to the member for St. John as having been born in a prison in Bequia.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I did not hear the Hon. Minister say that the member for St. John was born in a prison. I believe that I heard the member for St. John say that jail was not made for dogs. I do not think that if it was said that he was born in a prison it would necessarily be something insulting.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, either during this Debate, or at any other time, have you heard me make that remark? It would be improper for you to say that when you have not heard me making such a remark in this Chamber.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Not in this Chamber, but outside of this House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, he cannot question you. You should not have any dialogue with him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the Minister sit and calm himself. I have ruled that the remark relating to his having been born in prison does not, in my view, constitute any offence and is not insulting, especially when it was not made in relation to a specific member of this House.
4.45 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order. I just want to say that that is now a ruling, but I say that was an improper remark coming from the worthy position of the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You cannot tell me how to rule.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Make him sit down but do not send him out. In my opening speech I should have drawn to the attention of the Chamber that this is the first time in 16 months that the member for St. John has been so much in here, and this is good, because I have been able to tie him to that seat for such a long period. Now he is talking about somebody being born in prison. Even if I said that somebody was born in prison, there is nothing wrong with that, but I know that that person can only have a prison mentality.

I am not satisfied, Mr. Chairman, that justice was done to those unfortunate people and to you, Mr. Chairman, who paid your taxes into the Treasury to take up \$411,000 and use it for the purpose of trying to prop up a party during an election. That is what I could not understand, because that is all this money was spent for. Between July and September, they called it a special assignment, but the election in 1976 was the special assignment, and I cannot understand how members on the other side can sit down and associate themselves with the former Minister of Finance, after carrying on such a scandalous affair in this country.

I want to say this, Sir. We are going to repair and replace some 55 houses — note the difference — by way of \$100,000 and we are going to spread it across the country. We propose, as you are well aware, Sir, that the housing welfare section be separated from the National Housing Corporation, and I am quite sure you as Chairman of that Corporation will do everything in your power never to have that Corporation tarnished the way it has been tarnished. I have my confidence in you, so we are separating this, and because of that we are seeking this amount of money for the purpose of separating it.

We propose to make sure that those people who are in charge of the repairs of the houses are people with experience, people who we can respect and people with some degree of integrity in the society. It is going to be under the jurisdiction of the Chief Welfare Officer, Mr. Lionel Clarke, a man in whom I have the fullest confidence, and who suffered under the former administration because of the deeds of some people, and from the Minutes I have read, from all they have thrown upon his shoulders over the years. I will say at this point, contrary to what a lot of people believe, that the civil servants feel a little relief from the pressures which were brought upon them. The nonsense you are seeing in the papers and all the talk about the Jack Rufus report and this kind of report, we will know all about these things just now. You will hear about all these reports, about the south point, those who do not like meetings at night and those who used to pollute the air, and all those things, but what you have to tell the people is what you did with that half million dollars during the months of July to September last year, and there is hardly any record to show that people's houses were repaired, for then you would not have a backlog of 1,116 applications in the office.

I have no doubt in my mind that between now and the end of December we are going to try very hard to bring a degree of relief to those persons, many of them coming from St. James, and if there is one thing I am going to do it is to see they get a good deal because they have made a contribution which none of us in here will ever be able to make. They gave their blood to this

country so that we should succeed. I want to say that those who misused the funds and who took it upon themselves to rob old people — because that is all that happened — when you are given money to buy something for an old person and you do not do it, all you have done is to rob that poor person, and that is what that administration did between July and September last year, spent half million dollars as the taxpayers' money.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I will ask the hon. member to withdraw that the former administration robbed old people. If he has any such evidence he should take it to the Director of Public Prosecutions. I would invite him to come outside and say all these things he wants to say in here.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I can say anything about him outside. I beg to withdraw. Whatever you hear me say in here I can say outside about you, because you said that prison was not made for dogs.

Now, Mr. Chairman, with those few remarks, I beg to move that the Resolution for \$90,000 do now pass.

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

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, firstly I must say how happy I am to see my colleague in the Chair. I do hope that he will let justice be done.

I sat here and listened attentively to all that was said about the repairs to the old people's homes under the regime of the former Government, and I am going to make my contribution to this debate on this subject, but before doing so I would like to say that this is no new scheme by either Government. I have served in Local Government, and it was always the policy of the Local Government to assist certain people who were in straitened circumstances to repair their homes. Therefore, regardless of which party may be thinking that they used their initiative in bringing about this new scheme, I am here to say that it has been going on for several years.

The position is this. There was a department in those days called the National Assistance Board, and in those days, and still today, we get a large number of people who have not attained the age of 68 — and recently the age of 65 — who were always entitled to such help.

4.55 p.m.

Therefore, I consider it my duty to draw to the attention of this House that when it is said in here that there were certain people who are not old age pensioners and whose homes were repaired, I am saying that that was quite in order because there are many people who received National Assistance weekly, and they have been

receiving it for 10 to 15 years or even 20 years. Some of them were never able to work, and if you saw the deplorable conditions under which these people live, you will come to the conclusion that no Government could only think about old age pensioners. They also have to take it into consideration those who have been receiving National Assistance for years and who live in conditions which are not suitable for animals, and help these people too.

That is why I am here to enlighten this Hon. House that when you are talking about people's houses which are repaired and who were not old age pensioners, you have to be very careful in making such statements; because I am here to tell you, Mr. Chairman, that some of these persons who receive National Assistance from the Government, their condition is worst in many cases than those of some old age pensioners.

Mr. Chairman, I have heard an hon. member speak. He said that approximately \$½ million was spent on 349 houses. He also went on to say that he will repair 55 houses at a cost of approximately \$100,000. Now, if you, Sir, check back on what I call the average, you will find out that the present average for each house is higher than the average which the former Government had.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I will draw to the attention of the hon. member that there has been a rise in the price of material and a rise in the price of labour etc.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, while I agree to a certain extent with the hon. member, I want to say that it is approximately a little over a year that these houses were repaired. What I am saying is that we who are representatives of the Government, and the Government especially, when funds are voted for a particular ministry and the funds are being spent it is not the Minister who commits an offence if the funds are badly spent. It is the persons in charge, and not the Government. Regardless of how careful you are it is not possible to prevent employees from doing certain things which are illegal.

It is only when these things are brought to light that you will find out that certain things were going wrong. I am saying that it is non-sensical that when money is mis-spent in any ministry to attach the blame to any Minister claiming that he was responsible for the money that was mis-spent. The reason is that while it is true that he is head of the Ministry, it is impossible for any Minister to find himself going through this island checking on every possible thing that is done in his Ministry; and therefore I want to say to hon. members that you have to be very careful when you are attacking a Minister or any person who was in charge of a Ministry.

I am not saying that checks should not be made. All that I am saying is that regardless of how careful you

are you will get in some cases dishonest servants. When you read certain things, what do you find out? You find out that you had a number of dishonest employees. (Asides. And Governments and Ministers). I am not responsible for that. I am saying that you will find in your Ministry, in any Ministry dishonest employees. Therefore it is our duty to support this Resolution because it is in the interest of the people who have caused many of us, including myself to be in here.
5.05 p.m.

A Voice: What about "O" levels?

Mr. WEEKES: I do not want any "O" levels. I have my birth certificate, but I am saying.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member would address his remarks to the Chair. Do not mind the cross talk.

Mr. WEEKES: I am saying that regardless of birth certificate or school certificate I am a member of this House. Mr. Chairman, I want to say that I regret very much that the Minister did not find it possible to increase the number of houses to be repaired. I am aware that it takes money to do so, and that you will have to go about this scheme in a number of phases, but I am here to let the Minister know that in this Island you have hundreds of people who receive National Assistance for several years whose houses are in very bad condition and therefore I would like the Minister to look into the matter and find out in the very near future if it is possible to increase the number of houses to be repaired.

I think, Sir, that I should let the Minister know this so that he would be able to look at his plans and to increase such numbers. But there is one point I would like to draw to the Minister's attention and it is that many people who have attained the age of sixty-five or sixty-eight might have half an acre of land, two roods or an acre. You are aware how costly it is in these days to cultivate land and because these people have this small portion of land, their application is not approved and are therefore not on your list as old age pensioners, yet their houses are in very bad condition. I hope the Minister in looking through all aspects of the matter will do something to alleviate these people who have reached the age of 65 or 68. They are not receiving old age pension because they have a small portion of land. The time has come when we as members of the House must look into this matter.

In addition to that I must let the Minister know that certain people who are receiving \$15 from the National Insurance are not being considered for old age pension. The time has come when we the members of this Assembly have got to realise the hardship, inconvenience and everything when it comes to a pauper

is centred around these people, and it would take some of us to visit these homes and see how many people are being turned down. Their applications are not being approved and yet when you look at them some of them have not got a water toilet, they have not got a shedroof, and yet the officer is telling them that they cannot get the old age pension. I know that it requires funds, but I feel that we must make a sacrifice in some of the other things and do something to assist these very poor people who have contributed to the economy of this country.

Mr. Chairman, when you consider the agricultural worker who has toiled morning, noon and night, his perspiration like dirt, because that man is receiving a pittance from National Insurance, he is not eligible for old age pension. I feel, finally, that the Minister should appoint a Committee to look into all aspects of this matter to make some necessary changes in the interest of these former workers. I also feel that the time has come for a survey to be taken in this Island and let the Minister have first hand information of the number of old people's houses which are in need of repair so that you will be able to plan well and not only to select fifty-five houses, because you are one who represents a part of the rural area and you are aware that the 55 houses will only put you and your Ministry in confusion, and it is going to give you a very bad name if you are not careful, because 55 houses in 24 constituencies is approximately 2+ houses for each constituency and therefore I am not pressurising the Minister yet to say where these houses will be repaired and so on. I know from his policy that in the future he will be quite willing to give the names of all the people who had their houses repaired and the constituencies where they resided.

5.15 p.m.

I have no doubt that the Minister has listened to me carefully and that he will do his utmost in the future to help to increase the number from 55.

Mr. Chairman, my opinion is that if funds are available, no less than five hundred old people's homes — those people receiving national assistance — should be repaired; but I know that funds are not available, so I am grateful that the Government has done something and I wish them success and hope that in future the number will increase by one thousand per cent.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I have always held the view that a society which shows no consideration for the aged and underprivileged, is a heartless society, and I equally feel that no Government that shows little consideration for the hardships of the aged and underprivileged is fit to be a Government. I am not, like my colleague the Minister of Labour and Welfare, going to show any righteous indignation at the

fact that over \$400,000 has been spent — supposedly on housing — between July and August last year. For me it does not matter that it was spent at the time of an election campaign. If that was the cause of the expenditure, I would be happy if there was an election campaign every two months, so that \$2½ million a year could be spent on old people's homes.

I have gone through my own constituency in St. George and have seen the rather difficult circumstances in which some people live, and it came home to me in a very pointed way, especially during pre-election days, that there are numbers of people in Barbados who are living way below the property level. Despite the fact that there are the appearances of relative affluence in Barbados, far too many people in this country are suffering. I know that in the parish of St. George, the biggest agricultural parish in Barbados, are some of the most depressing living conditions anywhere in this Island. I agree with the hon. member for St. Philip South that the repair of 55 houses is merely scratching the surface. I also appreciate the fact that funds are not available to repair all the houses to the extent necessary, but I will be forever making my voice heard in the councils of Government that greater funds would have to be made available to improve the living conditions of those less fortunate than ourselves. I am speaking of the constituencies of St. George South and North, I cannot understand how over the years that part of the Island which has made such a major contribution to the economy of the country have received so little in return. I do not know what criteria the Minister of Labour used in determining these 55 houses. And I want the Minister or whoever is responsible not to start further repairs until I have had an opportunity to examine some of the worst houses in Barbados. I have a responsibility as a member of the Government, and over and above that, to the people who elected me, and I want an assurance that the people in my constituency are going to be given an adequate opportunity in getting their houses repaired when the money starts to flow. I have seen some of the houses that were supposed to be repaired last summer — that is before the elections — and I can understand why \$400,000 was spent in a matter of two months. I do not know of anybody who carried away money, but I have seen the quality of the work done and I am sure that I am on good grounds when I say that some of the money was spent on some of the same houses as earlier in 1976. People here are not fools. They know that money was spent at election time in the hope of bolstering the Democratic Labour Party. But it is my experience that a number of these people still did not support the Democratic Labour Party. This is a new era; you are dealing with a different type of mentality in Barbados today, and nobody is going to fool people in this country with crash programmes just before elections to win votes. And I am hoping that at the

next general elections, and the one after that, the people in this country will treat with contempt any efforts made by any political party to buy votes at election time. The people of this country are entitled to have the services of an honest Government.

I believe too, Mr. Chairman — though I do not go as far as you in asking that people be locked up for certain offences — I believe the time is right for Parliament to sit down and consider what type of conduct is proper at election time and what is not. I believe that whether it is a Government that rushes in at the last moment to do some roads or fix a few houses, or whether it is a politician who goes into a constituency just before election time and licks out a lot of money trying to bribe the people, there should be a law against this. I know that already under the Representation of the People's Act there is a penalty for people using money to try to buy votes. But that needs to be beefed up a bit because it is difficult to trace the indirect expenditure.

5.25 p.m.

I think it is time that the people of Barbados — as they have done during the last Election — make it abundantly clear to politicians and to Governments that they will not be bribed by any show of largesse or generosity at election time with a view to fooling them. I heard the Hon. Minister of Labour and Welfare talk about the money that was allocated to repair old people's homes in 1974–75 and 1975–76. I do not remember the figure exactly, but I believe that one hundred and something thousands dollars was spent in 1974–75, and one hundred and something thousands dollars was spent in 1975–76, and in 1976–77 over \$400,000 was allocated to be spent in a period of two months.

Let me make this absolutely clear at this stage. The hon. member for St. John said that I was misleading the House when I was talking about certain things. I would like the hon. member for St. John to understand that I do not intend to get on the Floor of this Assembly, or to get on any public platform and mislead the Chairman or the general public of Barbados. For too long in this country the people have experienced hypocrisy, deceit and lies which have been the hallmark of politicians. However, there is a new breed of politicians in this country today. I am not interested in any seat; I am not interested in any vote; I am not interested in any popular acclaim, and I will tell the truth at all times. I cannot understand why the hon. member for St. John should get on the Floor of the House and say that I am seeking to mislead anybody in this Chamber.

I know that money is voted at the beginning of a Financial Year, and every Government Department in Barbados will have certain areas of expenditure. For a Ministry to spend money, it must get the approval of the Ministry of Finance for the release of funds. The hon.

member for St. John, as Minister of Finance in the last Administration, knows that his Ministry was responsible for the release of money from the Treasury to be spent on old people's homes. I think the amount of funds released was something like \$400,000. The hon. member for St. John cannot get in here, at this stage, and hide behind the Ministry. He must know that the Minister has accountability for everything that happens in his Department. It shows a sign of weakness on the part of the hon. member for St. John to get in here and say that it was not he, but his officers in his Ministry who were responsible for what took place.

Sir, I will go further and say that the Minister of Finance directs his officers in the Ministry of Finance as to exactly how much money should be released each quarter for expenditure. The Minister of Finance is the person who must say exactly how much money should be released in any given quarter. Sir, the hon. member for St. John gets up in this Chamber and insults me by saying that I am misleading the House. He must admit that he must have given the officers in his Ministry instructions to release a fixed amount of funds every quarter. He must not try to shift out of this embarrassing position. The hon. member for St. John says that, maybe, in two years I will understand things. In two years I will understand a lot of what the hon. member for St. John knows and, probably, forget a lot of it. I am not one of those who are so proud that I do not admit that I do not know everything. I am saying, categorically, that what I have said in relation to the release of funds from the Ministry of Finance is a fact, and it is based on the Financial Rules to which he has referred.

Sir, the hon. member for St. John must understand that his brains are no better than mine. If he can read and understand the Financial Rules, I can also read and understand them, because my brains are not ossified and static.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member has one more minute.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, there is one other point I should like to raise. The hon. member for St. Michael South West at the last meeting of the House said that, under the former Administration, the Minister had a discretion to give old people old age pension in addition to National Insurance benefit. He said that in this House last week, but I do not have the natural propensity in me to get up and interrupt the debates, and I allowed it to pass. The hon. member for St. Michael South West, who was the Minister of Welfare, should know that the Minister had no discretion to give old age pension to people who were receiving National Insurance benefit. He could not give it to anybody who was at the time earning \$15.00 a week from any source. Other members on that side heard him, but the hon. member for St. Michael South sat down here and allowed his colleague to mislead the House and he did not get up to correct him.

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of order. It is the people who have the responsibility for the Government and this Administration who must get up and put things right. I observe that the Minister is making a better speech from the back bench than from the front bench.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have about thirty seconds.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The hon. member for St. Michael South looked me in the face while the hon. member for St. Michael South West was misleading this Chamber, and he knows that no Minister has a discretion to do what the hon. member said he could do. Nobody who is earning \$15.00 a week from any source can get old age pension and National Insurance benefit. It would be a breach of the law of Barbados if a Minister gave authority to pay old age pension to anybody who was getting more than \$15.00 a week.

5.35 p.m.

But as the Hon. Minister said, we on this side are taking a look at the present provisions to see whether we can apply a means test that fits the reality of the cost of living of Barbados at this period in Barbados.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, poverty in this country has long been the lot of old people. Poverty among old people is nothing new in Barbados, but I think the sent day position with old people reflects the resurfacing of an old problem, with a difference, and the difference is that they are not only poor for the most part and distressed, but they are also lonely, and I think that if we are to understand precisely how this dimension of loneliness has come in, we have to appreciate that we are suffering the effect of mass migration in the 1950s and early 1960s in this community.

In the past when a person became old in this community they could always fall back on the extended family, the sons and daughters, even the grandsons and the grand daughters, but we suffer from mass migration from this country to the United Kingdom and to a lesser extent to the United States and Canada in the days when their immigration policies were more liberal. Up to 1963 or thereabouts we sent about 50,000 Barbadians to the United Kingdom and many families have lost to the United Kingdom all their sons, all their daughters, and in some cases all their grandsons and all their grand-daughters. The result is today that we have many old people in this country who twenty years ago were 50 years old and today they are 70 years, and they have no one to whom to turn.

The extended family has virtually collapsed in certain circumstances. There is another problem too. When people first went overseas, sons and daughters, they were sending back money to Barbados on a scale which they are not now sending back. In the early days remittances came back at

very high rates, and it was not unusual for a person to receive £10 a month from one son in the United Kingdom, \$25 (Can.) from another son in Canada and so on, and many of them are only receiving money at Christmas time, birthdays and perhaps at Easter time. The result is that we have poverty and distress, but we also have loneliness.

As much as I would like to commend the Minister for having brought this Resolution to Parliament seeking to assist the repairing and rebuilding of old people's homes, I want to let him know that I am not terribly impressed with this piecemeal approach to the problem. It is a real problem in this community, and as the hon. member for St. Philip South has so rightly pointed out, when we really look at it on a constituency basis each constituency could get no more than two houses, so it is really a useful beginning and one which we really need, but it is nothing that we ought to overpraise. It still is a piecemeal measure, and what we would like to hear from the Minister is a package of measures, a clearly defined policy and programme to deal with the problem of the old and the elderly in our community.

I have long been the spokesman in the Barbados Labour Party, from the time I came back from overseas, for proper housing in this community. I do not think there is a single voice that has spoken more frequently and more often for a housing policy in this island, and I have always drawn attention to the need for a proper housing policy. Indeed, in my election brochure which I sent out to the people of Christ Church East, I emphasised good housing for the elderly, and I particularly identified the area of Silver Sands which is ideal in my view for the erection of an old people's home, and I want today to draw to the Minister's attention that I still consider that Silver Sands is an ideal location, the part nearest to the sea under the hill, as it were. It is still my view that it is one of the finest settings for an old people's home, Government sponsored. Indeed there are already two privately run old people's homes in that area.

I would like to appeal to the Minister to ensure that these benefits are widely spread. I hope that not one or two constituencies will benefit to the exclusion of the others, and I would like to make the point that there are large pockets of poverty and distress of the elderly in Christ Church East too and that Christ Church East is entitled to have some of these benefits. To that extent, I would be grateful if in the course of his reply he would let us know what criteria are going to be used to determine whose homes are going to be fixed. I hope that he will let us know that so that I can have some reassurance, and indeed the people in my constituency would know that they are not going to be left out of the action, as it were.

With respect to the means test, there is considerable dissatisfaction throughout the country in respect of the fact that it is only \$15. Indeed, given the high cost of living in

the country, it is argued to be very unrealistic and in relation to the times when it was \$5. Perhaps it is even worse now even though it is \$15, because the value of money has declined rapidly in recent years, but more than that, the persons who administer the means test are not all of them people who used their discretion in a humane way. That is a very important point in my view. People who administer these things must always use some sort of humanity, and particularly in Central Christ Church and in Christ Church East there is great dissatisfaction with the manner in which the means test is administered in Scarborough, Christ Church. I do not know the particular officer involved, and I do not want to say anything unkind about him, but I just want to record here as the representative of the people in that area that there is considerable dissatisfaction over the manner in which the test is administered.

My time is about to expire, Mr. Chairman, but I would just like to make one or two points in conclusion. One of the points I would like to make is this. For a long time we have been hearing — and I think that it was the former Prime Minister, the right hon. member for St. John — who used to talk of his great ambition to make this a just society, and that is very admirable indeed. But to the extent that there are still so many pockets of distress and inequality in the society, it seems to me that he was only copying the words of Lyndon Johnson with respect to the American society..... (Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That was long before Lyndon Johnson said anything about that).....but there was no positive and sincere attempt being made to make that a reality.
5.45 p.m.

One of the avenues of distress presently in this society relates to the elderly, and I would like to join the hon. member for St. Philip South and those who have spoken in support of this attempt to bring benefit to the aged and the elderly in the Community. This is a beginning on the part of this administration and I welcome it; but although this is a significant step, I would welcome the day when the Minister responsible for the elderly in this community will create a well thought out programme which would provide benefits for the aged and elderly of the community.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I would first like to congratulate the hon. member who has just sat down although he did not speak on the Resolution, although the Minister did not speak on the Resolution and although the member for St. Philip South did not speak on the Resolution. In fact none of the previous speakers spoke on the Resolution.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do not cast aspersions on the Chair indicating that I allowed irrelevancies during the 15 minutes allotted to each member.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: No. I am suggesting that you gave them the maximum latitude that was permissible. I may be wrong, but I understand that this is a supplementary Resolution....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are discussing Item No. 8, Housing Welfare Programme.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am sorry. May I withdraw my remarks unreservedly? I was listening and I did not look at it before I got up. Now, first of all, I want to tell the hon. member who said that the last president of the USA, President Johnson spoke about the "just society" before I made any such enunciation, that the "just society" formed part of our Manifesto in 1966. About a year and a half later, the President of the United States running for the Democratic Party spoke about the "real society" and he was not original in that because if the hon. member goes back he will be aware of a book published by Laski in which there is a chapter dealing with the "just society", to use the same expression as the Prime Minister of Canada Mr. Trudeau. I asked him if he had had a chance to read our Manifesto.

What I want to say is that in the first place the hon. member came over to this side of the House, and in front of the Leader of the Opposition and waved his hands in my face. The Leader of the Opposition has now returned to the House and he is the only witness except for the hon. member for St. Lucy who has to depart for Surinam. In a loud and obstreperous voice and manner he said that I had made certain references to Ministers. The Minister made the same remark on a public platform.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I must draw to Your Honour's attention that we are dealing with a certain Resolution. I would slap him in his face. We are dealing with a Resolution concerning the welfare of the aged.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He is concerned about his own welfare.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The Minister said that he would use the occasion to deal with me and then proceeded to say that certain of my Ministers used to vote money which was not spent by the National Housing Corporation, but that some 349 houses were repaired from July to September or from July to August. He is trying to insinuate that this money was spent for political reasons. (2) that it was not spent at all. (3) that it went into somebody's pockets.

When I was in the House in 1955 the Housing Authority was established, and these were the functions with which it was endued:

- (a) erect, construct, maintain, repair or improve or cause to be erected, constructed,

maintained, repaired or improved (whether by or on behalf of the Authority or persons other than the Authority) houses and gardens, factories workshops, places of worship, places of recreation and other works and buildings for, and for the convenience of, persons of the working classes and other persons and generally do all such matters as are necessary or desirable for, or incidental to, such powers or are necessary or desirable for, or incidental to, the development of any property as a building estate;

- (b) acquire land or buildings or any interest therein for all or any of the purposes of the Authority and for all such matters as are necessary or desirable for, or are incidental to, any of such purposes and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions, the Authority may –
- (i) acquire land or buildings, or an interest therein, for the purpose of the development of the property acquired in any way which, if a scheme had been applicable to the property, could have been properly provided for in such scheme;
- (ii) acquire land or buildings, or an interest therein, adjacent to a slum clearance area or re-development area, which in the opinion of the Authority it is desirable should be acquired for the satisfactory further development or use of the slum clearance area or re-development area, as the case may be;
- (iii) acquire land or buildings, or any interest therein, in any area suitable for the purposes of a contemplated scheme;
- (c) carry out, in connection with any property acquired for the purposes of any scheme, the purpose of that scheme;
- (d) subject to any general or special directions that may be given by the Minister, carry out, in connection with any property acquired under sub-paragraph (i) or (ii) of paragraph (b), the purposes for which the property was acquired;

5.55 p.m.

(e) subject to any general or special directions that may be given by the Minister, carry out, in relation to land or buildings or any interest therein belonging to the Crown, any purpose which could properly be provided in a scheme in relation to property acquired for the purposes of the scheme;

(f) without prejudice to any other powers conferred by this section, let or lease any land or buildings vested in the Authority.....”

Now let me deal with the funds of the Authority which is very important. First, in the Estimates for 1976–77, and the Hon. Minister of Labour and Welfare was a member of the House, under Capital Head 116 the House of Assembly voted \$4,005,000 to the Housing Authority to be spent over a period of twelve months, that is, between 1st April 1976, and 31st March, 1977. The House of Assembly voted the \$4,005,000 to the Housing Authority, not to the Minister of Finance or to the Minister of Housing, but to the National Housing Corporation. Now that was not the total budget. This is the whole point. This was not the total budget of the Housing Authority, and when I say “Housing Authority” I am using the old genetic name under which the National Housing Corporation was set up, and all that was said in the note was that “Provision is made under this item to assist the National Housing Corporation with its programme of housing development. Also includes housing accommodation for public officers.”

I return to the Act under which the Housing Authority was established which became the National Housing Corporation, and this is what it says: “Finances and Property of the Housing Authority –

There shall be paid to the Authority an amount of two million five hundred thousand dollars by way of capital for the purposes of the Authority to be paid to it out of the Consolidated Fund or out of moneys raised.

(b) such amounts from the Labour Welfare Fund.....”

I believe it was last week that we allocated some part of the \$40 a ton to be given direct to the Housing Authority, and that is not voted for in the Estimates because that comes after the Estimates, and that goes into the Housing Authority; and thirdly –

“(c) such further amounts may from time to time be provided by Parliament.....”

These are the three sources of the funds, but there are other sources of funds because the Housing Authority builds houses and sells the houses at some kind of profit although they are not supposed to do it at the same profit as a commercial developer would be expected to make. They also collect rent from over between 3,000 and 3,700 houses; that goes into the Housing Authority, so the budget of \$4 million that you see here is only a part of the funds which are at the disposal of the National Housing Corporation. I do not know how they are running it now there is a Minister in charge, but

having set up the National Housing Corporation with the power to collect rents, to build and sell houses and then using the revenue which accrues to them from the Labour Welfare Fund, plus \$4 million that is voted by Parliament, they then look to the Act and apply the funds to those purposes; but the actual allocation of the funds is not dictated by Parliament. In other words Parliament has at no time that I can remember said in this \$4 million or in this \$2.5 million you are to spend \$100,000 on old people's houses, another \$50,000 on young people's houses, another \$25,000 on persons who are able-bodied but who are out of work and whose houses may be in need of repair, because the amount of \$479,000 or whatever sum the Minister was claiming the National Housing Authority spent during a specific period last year was not for old people's houses alone; it was for old persons' houses and persons who were on welfare, and that is why the Resolution which I erroneously referred....

Mr. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is totally misleading the House. The money that was voted, this \$500,000, was voted specifically for old persons' homes.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The hon. member will have to withdraw that remark, but quite apart from that, the point I am making is that this money was not specifically voted anywhere. I spent the last fifteen minutes in words of one syllable trying to explain to the simplest person, and the hon. member gets up and tells me I was misleading the House. It was never voted. How, when you are getting money from the Labour Welfare Fund? You are a school master....

Mr. BRADSHAW: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the hon. member did say that this money was used for old people's homes and welfare and I got up and said he was misleading the House because nowhere did he see for welfare. The money was voted for old persons' homes and he knows it.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Because the hon. member can get hot and cannot repeat the error, he tries to come around and say the money was voted for old people's homes. The very point I am making is in trying....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order on the Government benches. I can hear the Minister of Health. I do not want to hear her voice for the time being.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It is no wonder that our private secondary schools get such poor results when I see the inhuman conditions in which the pupils have to try to study and the kind of people that they have trying to teach them.

Mr. BRADSHAW: You came and asked me to teach you too.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Which year was that?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I wish to draw to the attention of the hon. member for St. John that his time has expired.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: If you read the rules that does not apply to the Leader of the Opposition or the person replying on behalf of the Opposition.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I thought members of the Opposition had spoken already. I was not aware you are the Leader of the Opposition.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am not leaving that in mid-air like that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The rule is, as I recall, fifteen minutes for any member other than the Minister or the person speaking first for the Opposition. The hon. member for St. Philip South spoke first on behalf of the Opposition.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: How much time do I have? What time did I start? Don't forget that I was interrupted several times. The point which I am making is that \$4,005,000 was voted according to the Housing Act. The Housing Authority gets money from Labour, Welfare, from rents and from the sale of houses.
6.05 p.m.

It has the authority subject to the direction of the Minister who suggests the proportions that will be spent on the respective areas; it is not Parliament or Cabinet that directs this; I just want to make that point clear. If the hon. member says that 349 houses were supposed to be repaired, there is no specific time set as to whether it takes three weeks or eleven months. The fact is the House of Assembly voted \$4 million for the Housing Authority and the Housing Authority decided to repair 349 houses with part of the money. Of course, I agree with the hon. member for Christ Church East that we should have done 3,000 houses instead.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At this point gentlemen I want to turn over these proceedings to the substantive Chairman of Committees.

Mr. ODLE took the chair.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, it is only fair that this House be told the truth about the Welfare fund and the money allocated to the National Housing Corporation for repairs to old people's homes during the last financial year. I have listened to the hon. member for St. John and he is trying to make this House believe that his figures

are accurate and correct. Mr. Chairman, I submit that his figures are not accurate. During the 1975-76 Estimates a sum of \$4 million was voted or allocated to the National Housing Corporation. In February 1976 a sum of four and a half million dollars was released to the National Housing Corporation. This money came from the Sugar Export Levy Fund. Again in July of the same year 1976 a further \$500,000 was released to the National Housing Corporation making a total of five million dollars. The hon. member for St. John has given the figure as \$4,500,000 as the amount allocated.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of explanation, Mr. Chairman. I read the Estimates and the figures was \$4,500,000 voted. If the hon. member checks, he would see it is \$4,500,000. There is a difference between voting and releasing. I also pointed out there is income coming in to the Housing Authority, so the overall budget is not just what we voted, but considerably more; I said perhaps as high as \$8 million after the release of \$2,000,000 from the special sugar levies in respect of the building of houses for resale. The member is mixing up voting and releasing funds.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I have the 1975-76 Estimates in my hand. Four million dollars was voted and the further \$500,000 was voted with the explanation "this provision is required to provide housing accommodation for public officers".

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Chairman. The member is looking at the 1975-76 Estimates. I am asking if the member said 1975-76 Estimates. I do not want to accuse him wrongfully, so I would like him to explain what Estimates he is reading. If he is reading from 1975-76 Estimate he may be correct, but I was referring to the 1976-77 Estimates. Why not answer a simple question?
6.15 p.m.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, are you calling on the hon. member for St. John to withdraw the remark? I will continue. The position is that they were two separate releases of funds from two separate funds: the National Export Levy, and the Welfare Fund. It meant that that money was spent by the National Housing Corporation just before the last election in 1976. It is not merely a question of \$½ million.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order. This is a completely misleading statement. Money was released to the Housing Authority right from the....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not agree with your point of order.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the \$500,000 to which my colleagues referred was supposedly spend on

old age pensioners' homes. That is the first set of funds. I am now referring to the second set of funds that were released by the Ministry of Finance when the hon. member for St. John was the Minister of Finance. He released two sets of funds. I am not talking about the funds voted by Parliament. The position is that this money was released on July 2, 1976, and within a few weeks \$½ million was spent.

Mr. Chairman, since I have to resort to the file, I will have to read what is stated in a letter dated July 13, 1976, and it comes from the Secretary, Ministry of Housing, Lands, Labour and National Insurance. It states:

"To the Manager of the National Housing Corporation,

I am directed to inform you that the Cabinet has approved the release of funds for the use of the National Housing Corporation in respect of repairs to old persons' houses as follows:

- (a) \$500,000 from the Sugar Export Levy Fund in respect of loans to general workers.
- (b) \$500,000 from the Labour Welfare Fund in respect of repairs to old persons' houses."

Mr. Chairman, what I am saying is that \$1 million was put in the hands of the National Housing Corporation. What you have heard about in this Chamber today is the second release of funds. What is significant about this whole situation is that the money was administered by two single officers: Mr. Modest and....

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I merely want to say that Mr. Modest is already before the Kangaroo Court. I would suggest that the hon. member should refrain from calling names. Mr. Modest was sworn in last Saturday, and I was chased out because I was trying to protect him. Are you going to condemn Mr. Modest before the Kangaroo Court is finished with him?

Mr. BRADSHAW: I am talking about old age pensioners. I know of one person who lives at Edghill, St. John, in the constituency of the hon. member for St. John, who has a brand new house, and she is only 45 years old. She got a house from this same fund. Another girl under the age of 20 years received a brand new house valued at \$3,750. Both houses are valued at \$3,750 each. The hon. member for St. Philip South should know that houses built at Gemswick, or Penny Hole, at a cost of \$3,750 each were given to people in his area.

Mr. WEEKES: On a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what has the hon. member risen?

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. I want to state here unequivocally today that I am not aware of any new houses which were built in the district in which I reside, and I want to refute the statement made by the hon. member. If any new houses were built up there then they were carried somewhere else. (*Asides.*)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I am speaking from a report which is in my possession, and it was presented to me by the officers in the National Housing Corporation. I am merely saying what the situation is. As a Parliamentary Secretary, I am entitled to ask for information, and this is the information that was supplied to me. I want to assure the hon. member for St. Philip South that the information I have in my possession reveals something more astonishing than what I have said.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of explanation, Mr. Chairman. I am not aware of any house in Edghill, St. John, in my constituency, where.... (*Asides.*) I give the hon. member an undertaking that if he can find a house that was given away by me, or was illegally given to anybody, he can bring a tractor and push the house or houses off the groundsill.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, the point that must be taken in this Honourable Chamber today is that the hon. member for St. Michael South, the Leader of the Opposition, and the hon. member for St. John have given their approval to this sort of thing.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I did not know that to be a member of the Senate was against the law in Barbados!

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should keep less noise.

Mr. BRADSHAW: The three hon. members on that side were members of the Cabinet, and they all agreed to the release of the money. How can they get in here and tell the public that they had nothing to do with the release of the money? It was the duty of the hon. member for St. John to see that the money he had released was properly spent.
6.25 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, Sir. The hon. member must appreciate the distinction between releasing funds and spending funds. There is a fundamental difference.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, do not mind what he does, he is not going to cause me to wobble. The position is that the hon. member was the Chairman of a Cabinet that took the decision to release \$1 million within a couple of months' time, and as the custodian of the public purse as Minister of Finance he should have shown some interest and see that the money was properly spent.

The money was released on 2nd July. Elections came in September and the Hon. House was not even treated with the courtesy of knowing or being informed that \$500,000 was remitted to the National Housing Corporation. That goes to prove beyond any shadow of a doubt the contemptuous way that the former administration treated the people of this country by not coming to the Hon. House and informing them how that half million dollars of the people's money was spent.

People had applied to the National Housing Corporation a couple of weeks before the elections in September, 1976, and they were given \$1,000 and \$2,000 as part of the loan which they applied for. In other words, it seems to me that these people were given a little bite so that they would feel that if they get a little piece they would be able to get the whole thing if they did certain things. The people have no homes, and if you check at the National Housing Corporation you will find that they were promised as soon as the elections were over they would have been given the remainder of the money.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order. I would like to ask the hon. member who made those promises, whether an officer of the Housing Authority, a Minister or who. If you are going to be so specific let us hear. Since you are conducting the enquiry now, let us hear.

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, if the hon. member does not understand, I will go a bit further, because it was from this very money that a club house was to be set up.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I would like to read from Rule 28(3). I have my own idea about the enquiry going on. "Reference may not be made to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending, in such a way as might in the opinion of the Chair prejudice the interests of parties thereto." (*Asides.*) I agree it is not being conducted judicially when the Commission of Enquiry has some powers of the High Court Judge to lock up and do things to witnesses. It is not judicial, I know, so if you agree with me that it is not a judicial enquiry we are *ad idem*, but this is a rule here which prevents calling names, prevents saying certain things. The Commission of Enquiry is going to discuss how those funds are spent too?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the hon. member making a speech?

Hon. F. G. SMITH: I am relating to the rule. If he is going to tell this House that money which is the subject of enquiry, how used, illegally or unlawfully, this rule has to be applied.

Mr. BRADSHAW: As I was saying, Mr. Chairman, you yourself suffered, and I am sure you would know that before the election campaign the public of Barbados felt that the pavilion that was put in Charles Rowe Bridge in your constituency in Parish Land was put there at the expense of one Dr. Richie Haynes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You have two minutes more, but for the sake of the interventions you can carry on a little longer.

Mr. BRADSHAW: The people of Barbados and the people of St. George North were told that that pavilion was put up at the expense of Dr. Richie Haynes, but the discoveries reveal that it was put down out of the money that was voted to repair old people's homes. (*Asides*). It baffles me somewhat when members from the Opposition who ran with the same Dr. Richie Haynes can say they do not know about that.

What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that this Resolution and this sum of money which the Hon. Minister now seeks to rectify the housing situation with has come somewhat late, but there were reasons and there are reasons for its lateness. One is that as a young Government, as a new Government, we were convinced that the machinery at the National Housing Corporation was not properly organised and was not effective and efficient enough to administer the funds and to carry out the programmes, and that was one of the concerns of this present administration, and that is why it was decided that it be transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Community Services.

We know that the old age pensioners have been begging us, and have been asking when they are going to have their houses repaired, but we have had to explain to them that it would not have been wise for us to place another sum of money into the National Housing Corporation to be exercised and misspent, so we today are asking that this sum of money be approved so that we can rectify part of a situation — note I said part of a situation — a serious situation. We feel that with the administrative set up, with proper staff and proper housing officers, proper plans and proper checks that we will be able to implement a much bigger programme in the next five years.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I am a little amazed at the stand being taken by the hon. member for

St. John on matters with respect to housing. Why I say this is that the hon. member can only have himself to blame, because the hon. member well knew that for a long period of time the National Housing Corporation was characterised by incompetence and other matters which are now the subject matter of an enquiry.
6.35 p.m.

I remember specifically that when the hon. member was warned in this House of Assembly by a gentleman who is no longer a member when he brought in a Resolution asking in the interest of the taxpayers money that the then Government should bring an inquiry on what was going on, he said that it was a Resolution brought by the wrong member in the wrong place at the wrong time. The history of maladministration is nothing new to the hon. member.

The records show that on the 25th June the then Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Lands, Labour and National Insurance wrote a letter to the Ministry of Finance and Planning. The hon. member who was Minister of Finance, had a competent staff, and I am sure that the letter would have been brought to his attention. The letter said: "I am directed by the Minister to request that the amount of \$500,000 be urgently released for the National Housing Corporation from the National Welfare Fund for financing the work of repairing homes of old age pensioners."

In June, 1976 an urgent request was made to the Ministry of Finance for the repair of the houses of old age pensioners. As the Permanent Secretary said, \$500,000 would be released for the repair of old aged people's homes. It had an urgency about it because of what would happen in the not too distant future. To show the urgency of it, an unusual situation took place because the Housing Authority did not carry out this work. One Henry Phillips and Dyal were the two people charged specifically with carrying out the urgent repairing of old people's homes by September.

I am not going into that because I am confident that whether this money was spent and how it was spent or how it was used is the subject matter of an inquiry right now. The hon. member cannot get up here and expect anyone to believe that he was not responsible. The hon. member rejected efforts from the Opposition to bring up the standards of what was going on. So now he must take the blame.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I shall not be very long. Mr. Chairman, I find it difficult and very strange that the release of money for the repair of old people's homes should be a source of condemnation during the election year when the Government loses. I am sure that the public will get a lot more in 1981. They have not done anything yet; so you have only about three

years to do it. Can you really condemn the former Government for releasing money for the repair of old age people's homes? I agree that if the money went into people's pockets it is a different kettle of fish. Did not the general worker and old aged people need help in 1976? Did not the situation get progressively worse? If the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance decides to release money for this purpose during election year, and the money is properly spent, is that a reason for condemnation? No one can argue with any degree of reason that the purpose for the release of the money was wrong. No one can argue that if that need arose in 1976 that the former administration should be subsequently accused of doing something because it was election year.

Repairing 55 houses is nothing to be proud about. They have not done anything for old age pensioners since the election. Now because an inquiry is pending, they come with this Resolution. Part of the Addendum reads: "The cost of repairs to some 55 houses is estimated to be \$100,000 but there is no provision in the Ministry's Estimates for this purpose."

They will then go around and boast about voting \$100,000 when you will know that houses especially of old aged people are in a bad way. I would like the Chairman of the National Housing Corporation to inform me if a single house has been repaired in 1976. I know that a lot have been held up because of this so called inquiry which they have going on now. In any country where it is admitted that there is need for housing, there is a need for a sensible, overall evaluation.
6.45 p.m.

The money in this Resolution is going to repair 55 houses. Divided roughly this is a little less than \$2,000 per house which is a drop in the ocean in contrast to the fact that no old people's houses were repaired for the last fourteen months under the Barbados Labour Party, because they were reviewing the scheme and looking at ways and means to speed it up in the future, so let us get the facts straight. Do not let us boast about this. Furthermore it is true, and if it is not true I stand to be corrected, that no progress has been made in a very vital area of development except for this token 55 houses that you can say you will repair in twelve parishes and 24 constituencies. I support it even if you were going to repair one. The money for the Hanschell Commission would repair thirty more, because if you are repairing 55 for \$100,000 and the Duffus Commission will end in 1979, and the only reason why it will not end early is because you cannot make a no case submission in these enquiries, but that is going to cost another \$30,000, and this money could be used to assist poor people. I agreed with the Cubana Enquiry because that was necessary; it is a disaster which we all regret and I would not quarrel if you spent \$100,000 on that, but you are paying the Hanschell Commission \$67,000 which on your assessment

of \$2,000 per house could repair 30 to 35 houses more, since all you can touch for fourteen months is 55 houses, and you could have done 30 more. The money for the Duffus Commission would probably do 40 or 50 more, so if you have money to spend on that you could have brought a Resolution before this House to do 140 or 150 houses. I would like the Minister to tell me where these houses are, and I hope they are not all in St. James.

I share the view of the hon. member for Christ Church East that every part of the Island needs it and as he has suggested there should be certain basic criteria for a priority list of houses. I want the Minister to give me the assurance that everybody is going to get a piece.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, I won in St. James and I was not a Minister to repair the house, and I am going to win for a lot of years despite the houses they did not repair. I will treat them as they come. Don't worry about me in St. James; I had a nuisance running against me.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: As I say, the hon. member for Christ Church East in a calm and dispassionate manner gave an assessment of what are the problems facing old people in this country and it is not only bad housing. As a matter of fact I think we all agree in this House, those who have done any house to house canvassing, that there is need for housing in this country among all the people, so do not let the Minister think otherwise. If you were honest and would read the files, you would tell the public that the last Government has always maintained that housing was priority number one. Unless the civil servants took out the files, there are the records of meetings we had under the Chairmanship of the then Prime Minister with a man called Dr. Pribisch from a Latin American group where we had emphasised countless times what are the priorities of Barbados. We need a massive injection of capital to improve the housing needs of this country, but I think the Government is now running into the same problems that we faced of getting money from international bodies for housing to improve the lower income groups, something that the international financial institutions are not prepared to do. They are not prepared because they say the defaults in terms of repayment are going to be fairly heavy, and they cannot take up international financing and put a massive injection into any developing country for the purpose of housing development; and I think developing countries have run into this with the international financial institutions when it comes to housing. You may get \$10 million from America, a drop in the ocean, but I am talking about a massive injection to make an impact on the housing needs of Barbados.

You will find out and you are probably now finding out that you will never get easily, unless there is a complete change in the attitude of these international

organisations, money to tackle housing in Barbados in a real serious and meaningful way. If you stayed in power for 100 years you cannot solve the housing needs of Barbados for a multiplicity of reasons. You are living in the tropics where you have termites, and you have a million and one reasons why every year your houses will deteriorate among old people and young people, so you have a continuing problem in meeting the needs of housing among the masses in this country, so I want it to be quite clear.

I make no apology for repairing houses in an election year or asking for money to be released. If the Cabinet did it, it was a sensible and laudible purpose. The Cabinet is no watchman, no carpenter or mason, no Housing Officer. These are people you pay. You do not keep a dog and everytime somebody comes to your house you come out and bark too. I have dogs downstairs and when somebody comes they bark. I feed them. You as a Government are paying thousands of civil servants because you make your decisions just as we made our decisions in the Cabinet Room upstairs. I would not expect the Minister to go to the Sanitation Department and see how often or when the trucks came in. I would be surprised if she did. It is not a function of hers. You are paying managers and supervisors to do that, so let them do the job or get rid of them. Similarly with the houses and on the buses. I would not expect the Minister to put on an old pants and go in the bus stand peeping behind the conductors. He should get a crank handle in his head. This is not the function of a Minister. Some may steal money from the Transport Board; if you catch them, dismiss them. If you catch people carrying away \$500,000 illegally or wrongly, put them before the proper tribunal. (A VOICE: Suppose the Minister himself carries it away!) You have to prove that too, but if the Minister carries it away, lock him up.

What we are talking about is that we voted money for a laudible purpose. The mere fact that it was an election year is no condemnation of any Government in power. You have some sort of enquiry going on now which will give you some answers, you have appropriate decisions to take, but do not let me hear that I personally made any policy in an election year for giving to any elector something to which he is entitled and from which he can benefit. Nixon did it; Carter will do it; Trudeau will do it; Eric Williams will do it. It is part of the political game, and Governments will do it when they are in power. You increased old age pensions in 1961 but it did not help you on the eve of the election; so do not tell that in 1981 you will play you are Mr. Cool It. You will be hustling bad enough because this is part of the political game. So do not let me hear you are more righteous and self-righteous and when it comes to 1981 you will play straight down the wicket. You might be swiping like blind Elder because you will be in trouble. There is nothing to be ashamed of in the Ministry or the

Cabinet releasing money. I am not ashamed of that, and I want you to be honest with yourself and if the enquiry shows that people have carried away money, take the appropriate action. I have nothing to be ashamed of; it is part of the political game which you will play and which any Government will play. You are playing political games already.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, sometimes when the hon. member speaks he convinces only himself, and if one listened to the specious arguments one may very well be carried away by them. As I understand it the indictment against the last Government about the \$500,000 is not that it was issued in an election year, but the manner in which it was spent in an election year without record and a proper accountability.
6.55 p.m.

The fact that it was done in an election year was *de minimis*; but when it is coupled with the misspending of public funds, it becomes *de maximis*.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is now 7 o'clock, and I will report to the Speaker progress and request leave to sit again.

The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chairman of Committees has reported progress and asked for leave to sit again.

Hon. F. G. SMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to inform you that I would not be able to return to the House after resumption as I have to attend a function at Combermere School. I am informing you of this because I don't want it to be felt that I am just walking out. I am therefore asking to be excused.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now 7 p.m., and this Sitting is suspended until 8 p.m.

On resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to announce that I have received copies of the Auditor General's Report dealing with the accounts of this Island for the year ended 31st March, 1976. My reason for taking this opportunity to make this announcement at this particular moment is due to the fact that it is the first time in about 20 years that we have found ourselves receiving an Auditor General's Report so up to date. We are not boasting, but praying and hoping that future Auditor General Reports will be even more up to date so that we do even better as we go on.

The House resumed Committee, Mr. Odle in the Chair.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The Leader of the Opposition having spoken and gone to see a star perform, I will not keep this Committee much longer. I will reserve some of the comments I had for another occasion when he is present and we are looking at housing policy in greater detail. But I want to correct one of his mistaken assumptions, one which he has made very often in recent weeks in this Chamber. He is under the mistaken impression that money spent in investigating certain practices in Government's structure is money misspent, and he tries to equate that expenditure with expenditure on old people's homes or other aspects of Government action.

Let me make the position clear. One of the reasons necessary to have enquiries, especially such as the present housing enquiry is because had the Housing Authority been properly run the hon. member would not have come to the conclusion which he came to, which is a very serious indictment on the past Government. The hon. member accepted the statement of the hon. member for St. George when he said that Housing today in Barbados is in the worst possible state.

8.05 p.m.

This must be a very serious indictment of the Government of which he was a member. After 15 years he can get up in this House and talk seriously about the housing in this country being in such a bad state, and criticise this Government for not doing in 13 months what his Government was unable to do in 15 years! Something must be wrong when he can get up in this House and say things like that.

Obviously, we will agree with him that the Democratic Labour Party Government did not leave housing in a state in which we could be proud. We agree that it would take a massive effort, not only to deal with the construction of self-help or low-income houses, but to get International Institutions and Organisations to help us to ensure that we are rapidly removed from the present standard of housing for the people in this country. I think the House should be reminded that the Government is engaged in tapping International Institutions for money. I think the hon. member for St. Philip North and the Hon. Prime Minister have said that it is proposed to introduce the first phase of a Sites and Service Programme at Parish Land. It must be conceded that, within a year, members on the other side cannot expect this Government to get assistance on a global scale from International Organisations and Institutions.

Sir, we have a special programme for Bridgetown with regard to housing, and we believe that this is going to take time. We will take care of urban areas, slum

clearance, and so on. I cannot pinpoint the areas for hon. members at this stage, but let me say that it is a mistake to believe, or to make the country believe, that within 13 months a Manifesto such as the one we have put forward as a programme of action for our country can be accomplished in 13 months. The human resources of Barbados are such that, if you want to plan properly, it will take you at least five years to implement most of your urgent programmes and to lay the foundation for further development in the next five years. The DLP must acknowledge that. What was almost a tragedy in this country is the fact that the DLP left no plans, and we had to start from scratch when we came into power.

With regard to housing, within a couple of weeks after we came into power, we managed to get people down from the UN to help us. Only a couple of weeks ago another UNDP official, who is a Barbadian National, came over to help us. Plans are being made, and I do not think the hon. member could be serious when he tries to convince the country that nothing is being done by this Government. We will avoid the mistakes that were made by the past Government. Although I may concede that in an election year there is a tendency to spend big in order to fill the crevices which have existed before and to cover the cracks, yet it is a mistake to overspend in the election year. Now, \$500,000 was spent in circumstances where the whole vote was exceeded, and the money was not properly accounted for. So far as welfare of the people was concerned, the benefit was very marginal indeed. It is on those grounds that the hon. member for St. John should have acknowledged his own responsibility and his failure as Minister of Finance to see that the money was properly used under the circumstances.

I believe that the Welfare Programme upon which we are going to embark will be properly established by this Government. So far as the Housing Corporation is concerned, it has a history that none of us can be proud of. Mr. Chairman, it is a sad commentary to make that people in this country stood by and saw all sorts of wrong things going on in certain Departments and no one has been convicted for these things. The DLP must be held responsible for this. It has been said that we may, probably, not remain in the Government until 2197, but we will remain long enough to ensure that the proper foundation is laid and it will be difficult for anybody coming after us to change the position in this particular aspect of Government.

Now, it is known that by the end of March a Minister will have to come to the House and ask for a further vote to carry out his programme during the coming year. I am sorry the hon. member for St. Michael South Central is not here, because I have brought along a document for him called "Land For Human Settlement" and it is a UN publication. It tells you how to tackle problems, and about the problems that exist in other

countries. It refers to El Salvador and other countries. It shows that 80% of the housing population in certain countries need housing, and it tells you how they are tackling the problem.

Each Minister of this Government is trying to work as a co-ordinated team, and the hon. member for St. Michael South must try and understand that. Each Ministry is a significant part of the whole area of this country. We have the Ministry of Finance and Planning, the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Health and National Insurance, the Ministry of Communications and Works and the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs all working together in the interest of the country. This is a global Government thrust, and co-ordination is taking place. I hope that when Barbados moves into the 21st Century it will have a record of housing in which we can truly feel proud. I look forward to being still alive to witness that the words I have spoken this afternoon can be proven as absolutely correct.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, we have had a debate on this particular Resolution for almost four hours. There was no doubt in my mind, when I introduced this Resolution, that we would have had a heated debate. I enjoyed it, but I should like to inform members on the other side that the 55 houses we set out to repair is estimated to cost \$100,000. This will carry us to the end of the Financial Year. I hope that next year when I come back to Parliament to ask for more money, I will have a proud record to show.
8.15 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, I do not think there is anything else I have to reply to. I could safely say that this is the first time that the member for St. John has spent so many hours in the Chamber on any one occasion, and I find that I have tied him down today with argument. He was here with us for lunch, he left us at dinner time, and as the Leader of the House has said, all this could have been avoided if the former Minister of Finance had accepted the cries at that time by the members of the Opposition, but he said that it was the wrong Resolution brought by the wrong people at the wrong time for the wrong reason.

It gives me great pleasure, therefore, Mr. Chairman, to introduce the right Resolution by the right party at the right time for the right reason.

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

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of three Resolutions in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and agreed to.

THE OVERSEAS SERVICE AGREEMENT ACT, 1977

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister under whose portfolio this Bill falls, I ask for leave to deal with it.

Mr. SPEAKER: There being no objection, leave is granted.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the object of this Bill is to amend a Schedule contained in an amendment to the Overseas Service Agreement Act, 1977, No. 1, and it is a very short amendment. We have had a debate on this already and I do not anticipate that the principle of the Bill or the contents of the amendment should cause any problems.

We are substituting a new Schedule for the Schedule that was passed earlier this year to tighten up the terms of the Schedule, in that there was no provision made for the commencement of the Schedule to the Act, and we have to amend it so as to include a commencement date.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

The clauses of the Bill were called and passed.

The Schedule was called.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that this be the Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report the passing of one Bill in Committee.

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN reported and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

BILL TO AMEND THE INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS COMPANIES (EXEMPTION
FROM INCOME TAX) ACT, CAP. 77.

The third Order of the Day was called – The Second Reading of a Bill to amend the International Business Companies (Exemption from Income Tax) Act, Cap. 77.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, in its manifesto the party which now forms the Government set out as one of its policies that it would seek to create in Barbados certain legislative decisions which would have the effect of attracting service industries and other industries which are described as tax haven industries. An examination of the existing legislation in Barbados showed that the International Business Companies Act in Barbados did not provide the attraction for companies which exist in other territories in the Caribbean area.

After a very careful analysis by the Ministry of External Trade, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of the Attorney General together with submissions by people who have an interest in coming to Barbados, from their respective lawyers and with the advice of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and the Central Bank, we decided that the concept of a tax haven in Barbados should be pursued with a two-pronged attack.

The gist of the amendment to the International Business Companies (Exemption from Income Tax) Act is to make it clear that where a company establishes its headquarters in Barbados and it buys or purchases services in Barbados for export to persons abroad outside Barbados or the CARICOM area, that the fact that it purchases these services in Barbados does not make it ineligible for the benefits of the International Business legislation.

This was necessary because the existing Act stated that if services originated in Barbados and were sold to people abroad, the fact that they originated in Barbados made the company eligible for taxation; and this had a bad effect on encouraging international business companies because the reason for that legislation is to

encourage companies to come to Barbados to hire local labour; and the services and the demands made of local labour mean that we gain some of the benefits. So, by the amendment to the definition of "exempted company", and the replacement of the new definition, would seem to make it clear that once the service originated here that would make that company eligible.

We think that this amendment would make it easier for Barbados to be used as an attractive base. A survey repeatedly made of our unemployment problem, and an analysis of our unemployment shows that we have a historical legacy; and it is that we are very good at producing people who can do a wide range of clerical and administrative work. In the days of emigration numbers of Barbadians went to Great Britain, U.S.A., and Canada where doors were open to our people and it is precisely the kind of employment that they obtained in other countries which was not open to them, because of the immigration barriers, that we are now trying to attract here.

So in other words what we are doing is trying to attract those companies here to take up some of that labour which has earned for itself a reputation in those countries of which we can be definitely proud. In addition it has been found that double taxation conventions – in the U.S.A., in particular – although we do not tax them in Barbados, these companies were still eligible for taxation in the U.S.A. So although we relieved them of taxes here, the U.S.A. treasury still benefitted.

In this Bill we have clarified that now, and Clause 1 makes that clear, and so does Clause 2. Clause 2(5) makes it clear that for the purposes of subsection (4) an international business company shall be deemed to be managed and controlled in Barbados where it holds its annual general meetings and the majority of its other meetings of directors and shareholders in Barbados will be deemed to be resident in Barbados.

8.35 p.m.

I also hope that by giving them this method of becoming residents that we will encourage them to hold their meetings here so that there will not be any doubt at all in the minds of the taxation authorities abroad, because they will be able to prove that they held a general meeting in Barbados. It will also have the spin off effect of utilising the hotel industry and having people come to Barbados as well as the numbers of tourists who come here.

Now the other provision on that is that having elected to have their headquarters in Barbados they can claim a tax clearance from the United States, so that will also make it abundantly clear. I may say here we had a

complete analysis of one of the competitive countries in the area, namely, Curacao, who has attracted well over 1,200 of these countries, and one of the reasons for our unattractiveness vis-a-vis Curacao legislation is that the terms of Curacao's International Business Companies Act are very clear on all of these points.

Now a review was also undertaken of the taxation rates in those countries and whereas Barbados legislation provided for a 2½% tax on the profits, that legislation had a sliding scale. Up to \$10 million in profits it was 2½%, but when you reached \$20 million it reduced to 2%, and when you reached \$20 million and you are under \$30 million in profits, it was 1½%, and in profits above \$30 million it was 1 per cent. Now we felt that we are not losing anything here at having a sliding scale of tax because the magnitude of profits is so much that to attract companies with profits between \$20 million and \$30 million it would mean that these companies would be so large that their headquarters would have to hire so many people that it would be really gaining more by getting employment for Barbados when you balance that against the kind of tax you collect. So we have taken the opportunity of amending the rates of tax for the vast majority of companies that are attracted in these things. I understand that the scale of profits is in the vicinity of \$10 million.

Now there are two other amendments which were necessitated because our taxation system has changed since the time when the first International Business Companies Act was passed, namely, we have now got property transfer tax, and we made it clear that companies who set up their headquarters in Barbados and are resident in Barbados, if they transfer any of their assets including securities, the Property Transfer Tax only applies to the real property and tangible personal property which is situated or held in Barbados, so that there would not be any argument in the future that if the headquarters have investments in Switzerland or any other countries and they transfer whether by way of take over or merger, on these assets overseas our Property Transfer Tax will not be paid on the overseas assets, but in respect of property situated in Barbados, real or personal or tangible personal property, they would have to pay like anybody else the normal property transfer tax here in Barbados. That was also necessary to clarify a situation which has developed since the passing of the International Business Companies Act and our own taxation structure.

The last point which gave rise to some difficulty was where a person abroad owned shares in an International Business Company in Barbados. He may be living in Switzerland or the United States and he transfers his shares in the Barbados International Business Company on the Stock Exchanges in New York or the Stock Exchanges in Zurich or Europe, and the transfer of the shares abroad by a non-resident living abroad that he can deal on Stock Exchanges without being eligible for

our property transfer tax here in Barbados. Again this is necessary because of the fact that since the passing of the International Business Companies Act the Property Transfer Act came into being. If on the other hand an International Business Company itself transfers property in Barbados to a person abroad, the International Business Company will have to pay the property transfer tax. That basically is the general objective of the amendments.

I think it should also be clear that the mere passage of this Bill will not automatically attract companies. The legislation has got to be promoted by the Industrial Development Corporation under the Ministry of Trade in exactly the same way that the legislation under the Fiscal Incentives Act which deals with manufacturing is promoted abroad. I must say that a considerable amount of interest has been declared in this Bill. We have been requesting copies of the Bill from as far afield as Switzerland already. Now there is also one thing I want to make clear. We have defined "services" in this Bill to exclude banking under the Banking Act. The responsibility for bringing down this part of the tax haven falls under the Ministry of Finance which administers the Banking Act and we feel that International banking is an area which has to be rigidly controlled, and if Barbados is to keep up its good reputation and earn a better reputation, banking has to be dealt with with all of its implications in a very highly technical and specialised manner, and it should be dealt with under the terms of the Banking Act.

With those few remarks I am very pleased to move that this Bill be read a second time.

I would certainly like to thank all of the various agencies of Government as well as those private persons who made submissions on it and who helped us by sending us legislation from the other territories. I do hope that the effect of passing this Bill will lead to the generation of employment of the type that we spoke on, and obviously the relevant work permits and foreign exchange guidelines will follow this Bill, because it is our intention to have a booklet setting out all of the advantages to Barbados.

One final point I would like to make clear is that this Bill must be regarded as being a current piece of legislation; the Fiscal Incentives Act deals with manufacturing and this Bill will deal with services. Sometimes within the Industrial Development Corporation and in the Ministry of Trade there is a very thin line of distinction between manufacturing and the provision of services.

8.45 p.m.

If a company was set up in Barbados to receive prescriptions from abroad and all they did with the lenses in Barbados was to grind and fit them, under the Fiscal

Incentives Act that service could not be counted as manufacturing because nothing would be produced different from what was there before. So we hope that by having this legislation that area of difference between manufacturing and not manufacturing will be removed and we will not have to stretch the Incentives Act. This does not involve the CARICOM area or any CARICOM Treaty, since everything would be produced for export outside the Caribbean area.

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

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

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

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Clauses 1 to 5 inclusive were called and passed.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, that concludes the Order Paper for today.

I beg to move that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 29th November, 1977, at 12 o'clock noon.

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

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

8.55 p.m.