
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 12th December, 1978.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.12 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P. (Speaker); Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, LL.D., (Leader of the Opposition); Mr. R. ST. C. WEEKES, J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment); Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, M.A., (Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning); Hon. C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Minister of Communications and Works); Hon. H. deB. FORDE, S.C., M.A., LL.B., (Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs); Dr. R. B. CADDLE M.D., Ch.B; Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, M.A., (Econ.); Mr. E. E. GREAVES, B.A., Ed.M; Mr. D. A. C. SIMMONS, LL.M.; Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Health and National Insurance); Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Mr. M. C. C. WARD; Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry) (Leader of the House); Mr. V. L. JOHNSON M.A.; Mr. B. M. TAITT, M.A.; Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Culture); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT; Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.Sc. (Econ.); His Honour E. E. ALLEYNE, LL.M., (Deputy Speaker); and Dr. R. C. HAYNES, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P. (Edin.).

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, 21st November, 1978.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, these Minutes have been circulated and subject to any observations or

amendments by hon. members, I beg to move that these Minutes be now confirmed.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Those Minutes are now confirmed.

The Minutes of Tuesday, 28th November, 1978.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, these Minutes have been circulated and subject to any observations by hon. members and the accuracy thereof, I beg to move that these Minutes be now confirmed.

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

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

Mr. SPEAKER: These Minutes are now confirmed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MR. SPEAKER

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to report that I have received the Accounts and Statements for the month of October, 1978, as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Communications and Works, I beg to lay the Motor Vehicles and Road Traffic (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations, 1978.

Also the Road Traffic (Free for Permit) Order, 1978.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer for the year 1977.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$1,535,683 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1978-79, Part II - Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1978-79, No. 20, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay a Resolution to grant the sum of \$2,220,000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1978-79, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1978-79, No. 21, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Communications and Works, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend certain enactments relating to harbours.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act and also, a Bill to make provision for the registration of persons exercising or engaging in any profession, trade, business or calling and to provide for related matters.
12.25 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some misunderstanding about the Resolution for granting the sum of \$1.5 million for housing bonds. Notice of this was given subject to the Standing Order by being handed in last week and it should have been in the Order Paper today so I do not conceive that it is necessary for me to give notice again, but perhaps we will have to ask for leave to put it on the Order Paper, but definitely it has been circulated to all hon. members and it is the intention of the Government to deal with it today.

REPORT FROM SELECT COMMITTEES

Mr. ODLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the Report of the Select Committee appointed by the Honourable the House of Assembly to consider a Bill to amend the Barbados Horticultural Society Act, 1928-5. I believe, Sir, that the hon. member for St. Michael North West who is in charge of this Bill will seek leave to deal with it at the appropriate stage.

Dr. HAYNES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Barbados Harbour's Act be read a first time.

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

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

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that the Bill to amend the Income Tax Act be read a first time.

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

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

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that the Bill entitled the Profession Trade, and Business Registration Act, 1978 be now read a first time.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 42, 43 and 44 be suspended for the remainder of today's Sitting.

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 1 is the Instant Order of the Day.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee of Supply to consider the grant of the sum of money for the service of the Island.

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1978-79 NO. 19

Order No. 1 was called — A Resolution to grant the sum of \$42,016 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1978-79, Part I — Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1978-79, No. 19, which form the Schedule to the Resolution

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution has been rendered necessary because of the mix up between a former Minister of Education and the Boys Scouts Association some 2½ years ago. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that the first Caribbean Cuboree was held at the St. George's Secondary School in Barbados in August, 1976 and the then Minister gave an oral undertaking to the Chief Commissioner that the School Meals Department would cater to all the Cubs at the Cuboree.

As far as I have been able to gather, the Minister did not make a submission to Cabinet, there were no provisions in the Estimates of that Order for this expenditure and the figure in excess of \$41,000 was committed in the personal words of the Minister and the money was never paid. This, Mr. Speaker, is the reason for this sum of \$41,000 odd.

12.35 p.m.

I perhaps should give a bit more background to it. The Boys Scouts Association gave this personal undertaking to the then Minister, the former hon. member for St. Michael South Central, and on the basis of this he went ahead and served over 800 lunches, breakfasts and dinners for the period of the Cuboree. We have been trying for the last two years to get the Chief Scout Commissioner to pay the money that has been outstanding, and we have been besieged in the Ministry by letters from a number of businessmen in Barbados including the Barbados Marketing Corporation for goods that they had forwarded to the School Meals Department at that time. One of the continual problems that we are having in the School Meals Department, and believe me, Mr. Chairman, there are a lot of problems, but one of the problems that we have been having among the workers is that those workers who worked at that time were never paid, and we continually hear, particularly those who work in your constituency, Mr. Chairman, those up in the Gun Hill Centre, have been giving lots of trouble because they worked over this period and were never paid. What I am doing in bringing this Resolution is to finally get the Government to pay \$40,000 odd out of the Treasury to put right what was initially a very grievous wrong.

We have been hearing a lot in the last few weeks about the Financial Rules and Audit Administration, and we have been hearing recommendations being made for tightening up of these rules, and we have been hearing the hon. member for St. John, the Leader of the Opposition, saying that civil servants should be put in gaol and fined for breach of these rules. Well, he is

Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, and it might be useful for him to take a look at this particular matter and see whether he could not find his predecessor in office to be caught by the proposal that he gratuitously made about a week ago, because as I said, there is absolutely no authority for the expenditure in this particular case. As I said, there was no Cabinet Paper submitted. Indeed from my reading of the files the Minister then suggested that there should be no Cabinet Paper submitted until after the new Government was formed. Well, hope springs eternal in the human breast. What he was in fact saying was that when he came back he would straighten it out. That was not to be. So this sum in excess of \$40,000 we are asking the House to provide the funds for.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. There is a reference to a former Minister of Education and there are some suggestions and innuendos grave about expending money without proper authority and without the approval of this Honourable Chamber, and even suggesting that it might be a matter which the Public Accounts Committee might wish to look into. I believe I am the only former Minister of Education in this Chamber, and I think it would behove the hon. member for St. George South to make it clear what he is talking about, because I might consider that it might be a reflection on myself as a member of this Honourable House and in my capacity as a former Minister of Education. So I am asking either that the statements be withdrawn or he should be specific because there is a member in this House who was a former Minister of Education, and I find it difficult to reply to the matter until this is settled, because if I am to speak on this matter, I would like to be clear what the hon. member is talking about.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Minister referred to the Minister of Education at that time. Is the hon. member now saying that he was not the Minister at that time?

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, if I may be of assistance to the hon. member, I did say in my introduction that the then Minister was the former member for St. Michael South Central and I am sure he heard that, but the reason why the intervention has been made by the hon. member is to give me another opportunity to pour more coals on the head of the former member. That is how they play it over there. He wants to open up the way for me to make even more assaults on the former Minister and I am quite willing to do that. As soon as I am winding up I will be able to pour even more, if that is what the hon. member is inviting.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am glad for the clarification. I would like to say I did not hear any reference that it referred to the hon. member for St. Michael South Central, and I take the explanation in terms of that respect, and of course I reject categorically any suggestion that the question was raised so that he could heap coals on the former member for St. Michael South Central, because I am certain that when this matter is examined there will be no coals to be heaped upon anybody's head, but it would be a case of congratulating the Minister for assisting a worthy cause in this country, the cause of the Boys Scouts' Association or the Cubs of Barbados.

Mr. GREAVES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that I do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again, those in favour please say "aye"....

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am on my feet. I would like to speak on the motion.

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

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am on my feet. There was a motion put and I got up to speak on the motion.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will have your chance to speak. Please be seated.

Accordingly I do now leave the Chair and report progress to Mr. SPEAKER.

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, this is gross....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You are out of order.

Mr. SANDIFORD: If I am out of order, there is gross disrespect to the Rules of this House. If there is a motion I should be allowed to speak on it. I do not get hot in here, but I should be allowed to speak. If you want to send me out you can send me out. I am the only member who has not been sent out from this side, and I am right on this issue. So you can send me out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN rose.

Dr. HAYNES: On a point of order, if the hon. member for St. Michael South is not allowed to speak, we are all leaving this Chamber here today.

Members of the Opposition left the Chamber.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, now look at this. Instead of moving a motion of order, all the hon. member has to do is to ask you to recommit the matter, which I will move, that the matter be recommitted. That is all.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to second that.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any hon. member wish to speak on this Resolution?
12.45 p.m.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, the situation is that the motion in all the circumstances, since all those who wanted it recommitted have run and gone, the hon. member for St. Michael South is welcome to come back and speak, and indeed if for example a short suspension is needed that could be done. He lost his temper and ran out of the House, he does not behave like a child as a rule, he allowed himself to be ruled by the passions of one of our better known political idiots, and I would really suggest that the hon. member come back in here and deal with it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like to make a few remarks at this point. When the hon. member for St. Lucy entered the House, we are all aware of the fact that on the last occasion we were in here the Speaker ruled. I, as Chairman of Committees, have received no apology from the hon. member for St. Lucy and I feel it should be appropriate that I ask the Speaker to take the Chair at the appropriate time and that is exactly what I was seeking to do.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that we moved that this matter be recommitted, and that all hon. members who want to speak have obviously spoken, and also in view of the fact that you as Chairman called upon any hon. member who wants to speak and there appears to be no other hon. member who wishes to speak, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to withdraw my motion that you report progress, without the passing of the Resolution.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. CHAIRMAN left the Chair and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I want to record that I am abstaining on this motion.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the next Order of Government Business be the Resolution dealing with the guarantee of the issue of bonds by the Barbados National Bank in the amount of \$1.5 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Prime Minister is seeking leave to proceed with this Resolution.

**RESOLUTION DEALING WITH THE GUARANTEE OF
THE ISSUE OF BONDS BY THE BARBADOS
NATIONAL BANK IN THE AMOUNT
OF \$1.5 MILLION**

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: During the most recent budget, Sir, on the 12th April, 1978, I said at that time that for various reasons, including the provision of appropriate investments for insurance companies and the provision for the housing needs of the nation, the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company would become a whole subsidiary of the Barbados National Bank and that the Bank would issue housing development bonds on the local market as a means of raising funds for expanding housing programmes.

In the past the Ministry of Housing of the Government of Barbados has dealt principally with the affairs of the National Housing Corporation.
12.55 p.m.

It has seen itself as the civil servants' administering body for the National Housing Corporation and has not involved itself sufficiently, in the view of this Government, in the over-all planning for housing development in the Island. We believe that housing should be a unified matter; that the Government alone cannot undertake the housing projects as if the Government alone was building houses; we cannot operate in a vacuum. The housing needs of Barbados should be calculated as a whole, decided on as a whole and be satisfied as a whole. We have to accept that in this day and age housing is probably the last infrastructural area in which Barbados can be said still

to be a developing country. In respect of the other fundamental amenities of life we are a country that is almost wholly electrified; we are a country almost wholly with access to a central piped water supply that can be channelled into our own homes; we are a country abundant with telephone and other means of internal communication; we are one of the very few developing countries where letters are delivered to our homes and people do not have to go to collect their letters from central postal depots; we are a country well provided with surfaced all-weather roads; some persons may say we are too well provided with roads; our people have full access to primary education and in no more than two or two and a half years there will be sufficient secondary school places for every child of secondary school age in Barbados. We are planning at this moment to complete the physical plant for the total education of our children up to the age where they can take their places in the labour market.

But in one area alone there are still certain regions of deprivation, and I refer to the area of housing. On the one hand we are not a country that suffers over much from landlordism. Out of a total housing stock of perhaps 64,000 dwellings, only 11,000 are not owner occupied, and out of that 11,000 a substantial portion is not meant to be occupied as family residences at all, but is meant to be occupied as vacation residences or otherwise form part of the stock of tourist accommodation. We do, however, have a system where although for the main part we own our own homes — a much larger proportion of Barbadians own their own homes than for example Americans or people in Europe — we own movable homes; we have to rent the land and we have the difficulties of the comparatively rapid deterioration of wooden houses, especially in these days when the quality of wood work is not what it was fifty or sixty years ago. The fact that many householders in Barbados may not have houses standing on their own property means that although water, roads, light and telephones are available, in some instances persons on rented land do not have the opportunity to have the best roads and the best access to water because of the difficulties of land ownership and the land renting system. That is one point. The other point is that we are not attuned, as for example our brothers in Guyana and the United States are to the building of very large expensive wooden houses that are not intended to be moved. I think many Barbadians will be surprised to know that the majority of new homes being built in the United States are of wood, not of stone, of very elaborate construction and not intended to be removed from the site, but nonetheless, built of wood. And the prosperous suburbs of the whole north-east of the United States or of Los Angeles with huge elaborate wooden houses of the most expensive character bear little relation to the wooden houses standing on plantation lands or in the crowded tenancies of St.

Michael. The Government, therefore, has a duty, I think, to bear in mind the precepts of the Emperor Augustus who said that he found a Rome of brick but he intended to turn it into a Rome of marble, and we might say that we found a Barbados built principally of wood and intend to turn it into a Barbados of stone. Certainly we have to aim at permanent structures for the future.

I think I have given in the short space of time a broad outline of some of the housing problems that face us — the very large number of persons on rented land the large number of persons living in relatively small wooden houses, built small because of the question of insecurity of tenure.

Over twenty years ago the Barbados Labour Party formulated a programme — I believe I would be better able to discuss housing if the Chairman of the Housing Authority would allow me to hear myself to speak. We instituted the Housing Authority to bring a measure of housing development to the poor and deprived in Barbados, and we have an out-standing record in that regard. We built a large number of houses during our regime between 1955 and 1961 to provide for the housing needs of the poorest. Since then the Housing Authority has moved into different fields such as the putting together of a revolving fund to build houses for sale to members of the public, but we think that in this day and age we now need to integrate private and public housing so that the new type of housing schemes associated with the names of many private developers, as well as the National Housing Corporation housing scheme, will come under the purview of the Ministry of Housing. The Ministry of Housing has a new Minister who has been specially charged with this duty. There are now officers who have been made aware of the new thrust in housing, and we can expect that in the new year appropriate plans and the manner in which the Government's policy will be put into effect will be announced.

I do not intend, Mr. Speaker, to do more than touch on the outline of the policy, but broadly the aim of the Government is that in private and public housing 800 dwelling houses ought to be provided annually for the people of Barbados. The means of providing this will be multiple. On the one hand the National Housing Corporation is going to restart its programme of building houses for the poorer members of the community who wish a proper place to live for rent rather than purchase. If you go around the country, Sir, you will notice that some of these projects have already been started. At Haynesville in the parish of St. James and at Bagatelle in St. Thomas — that eyesore which was allowed to remain so long on the main road at the corner of Redman Village road and the main Highway 2A — that area is being cleared and I was very happy yesterday afternoon to see foundations and walls going

up and a number of enthusiastic persons admiring the work of the Government in this area. In Sion Hill St. James work has been started. We are also proceeding with what used to be called land schemes, because it is a vital and essential part of the Government's policy which was neglected in the last few years of the old regime but we must give people some where to put their houses. There are many people in private tenancies crowded up in many instances on less than 1,000 sq. feet of land, less than the standing set by the old Board of Health; without proper roads, without proper sewerage disposal facilities. There are many of these persons who we think deserve a land scheme with proper roads, proper pits to be dug and proper services generally. 1.05 p.m.

We are following a precedent in rehousing people from Chapman's Lane in the City. When we came into power, we found a decision in the book that only people who had water closets in Chapman's Lane would be given water closets at Clapham. We had to reverse that. It was down in writing. We had to reverse it and provide for pits in the Clapham area so that everybody who moved from Chapman Lane to the Clapham area — and I must pay tribute to the hon. member for Bridgetown who took a vehement attitude towards this — in some cases we even provided cash grants to buy the water closets and the wash basins and so on, necessary to provide a water borne sewage system.

All of this we have done since we have come into power. We have made decisions on the policy in respect of housing. The National Housing Corporation is preparing its plans in this regard; and on Friday I will have to move a supplementary vote to provide another \$½ million to cover some of the expanded work that the Ministry of Housing is doing at the present time.

In addition to the work being done by the National Housing Corporation to provide homes for the poor, we have to consider the situation of those persons of the middle income group who wish houses to buy. We have always subscribed to the policy of being a home owning society; and it is necessary that the Government, not only provide funds for the direct building of houses by the National Housing Corporation for persons in the lower and middle income ranges, but to buy houses, but it is also necessary to encourage private business by providing sources of funds which can be borrowed broadly at commercial rates, but not at exorbitant rates for house building.

The Barbados National Bank, having taken over the Mortgage Finance Company, is regarded as one of the principal needs by which we can give assistance by providing housing development funds on the local

market. I do not want to call the names of all the developers, Sir. I may be wrong. It is not my portfolio, and the names only pass across in the file; but we must ensure that commercial banks in Bridgetown and the Barbados National Bank have a stock of funds available to help Key Homes, Ideal Homes and persons who want to borrow money to buy land from Mr. Pillersdorf to put up a house, whatever the names of the development companies may be.

I see parcels of land being sold in St. Thomas. I see land being sold in Cane Garden. As far as we are concerned, we welcome this — parcels of land being sold to persons who want to put substantial wooden houses on them or to build small bungalows made of stone. We welcome this, and we have to ensure that funds are channelled away from some of the areas which have been economically wasteful into such an area as housing development.

An hon. member has spoken about the need for people to go on a savings spree, something that does not mean putting money in the bank and when you have enough drawing it out and going to buy a house. Savings mean putting your money into a productive area where it can work for you, generate a little income for you, and at the same time generate development for the people of Barbados.

We are often told by international funding agencies that for a country with our per capital income, our level of savings is very low. That is undoubtedly true, Sir. We have been relying on other people's savings. We rely on Barbados being an attractive country and indeed, as seen in other quarters, a very well run country; and we rely on bringing investments from abroad to supplement our own savings; and a flow of private capital investment over the years has supplemented both our balance of payments and the amount of productive investment that can be done in Barbados. We are investing at a much greater rate than we are saving locally; and in a closed economy — Chapter I of the books on Economics point out that what you save you invest, and what you invest is what you save.

We have to raise the rate of saving, and the means of doing this is to channel the profits which accumulate in the commercial banks. The Barbados Development Bank is given concessionary funds in order to invest directly in manufacturing industries or in tourist development. Housing is not normally regarded as direct development, Sir. We have to manipulate in the best sense the investments of the commercial banks. We have tried to make consumer loans less attractive to the commercial banks, and make housing loans more attractive. We have tried to encourage the commercial banks to lend people money to repair their houses, to

add to their houses, and to create a better environment for themselves; and we have tried to encourage investment companies to channel funds directly towards housing; and these are directives that have been given to the Barbados National Bank.

Now, this first issue of housing development bonds for which we are offering a guarantee is only a part of a first issue of \$5 million in housing bonds which the bank is placing on the market; and it represents only a part of at least \$10 million which we have to ask the bank to ensure is going to be available for housing loans from its Mortgage Finance portfolio during the year 1979. The Resolution itself speaks only for a first draw of \$1½ million, but it should be understood that this is only the first instalment.

I must say that the Hon. Leader of the House, the Minister of Trade and I always considered that \$1½ million was a little bit; but sometimes you have to restrain your impetuosity and your optimism; and when we came to decide how much we would ask the public for as a first issue. The hon. member wanted \$5 million. I thought at least \$2½ million; but we were advised that we never knew what the capital market would be like at the end of 1978; that you could not assume that although things looked like they were improving, that they would necessarily unprove. The Civil Servants salaries would be coming up, and you would have to pay the back pay. We would have to pay further instalments on some of the money of the previous Government loss on International Seafoods Limited and so on, and that the liquidity which appeared to exist in the system might not persist to the end of the year.
1.15 p.m.

Well, Sir, our first instincts I think, if followed, would have led us to no harm because the amount of \$1½ million was over subscribed in a matter of a couple of days. I am awaiting a Report now from the Bank who are still making the allotments to give an idea of exactly how quickly it was over subscribed.

I believe that \$2½ million would also have been subscribed very rapidly indeed, Sir. Anyway when we come to the balance of the \$5 million we will be able to see how firm the market is. I do sometimes take the opportunity to report to the House when we are speaking of these financial subjects, to give the House some idea of the general progress. On this occasion I hope to be able to give a Report of the Government Revenue between April and November, a full report, but I can only give preliminary figures because we had a lot of dealings last month, including the payment of a lot of tax pay but we have had a very satisfactory increase in Government revenue during the month of November and it does appear, Sir, as though even with the civil servants backpay we are still running a small surplus on

current accounts and it does seem that Government finances are to some extent returning to the position that they enjoyed many years ago, Sir, that they enjoyed in 1961 and again in 1968, 1969, 1970 where Government revenue was able to keep pace and more than keep pace with Government current expenditure and contribute also something to capital development.

Now, Sir, it would appear at a preliminary look at the figures as though the overall Government deficits this year which would comprise both current and capital accounts might be less than three-quarters of the overall deficit of last year which would mean that there has been a general economic upliftment and improvement in the Island, whose results are perhaps even now becoming apparent to the man in the street. But, Sir, I want to warn against optimism in Government finances and therefore I am only reporting that these are the preliminary indications.

The economy is still balanced as are the economies of all the small countries on a relative tight rope. We must not become too boastful of the fact that we have the lowest inflation rate in the Caricom, that unemployment appears to be going down, and that the Government revenues appear to be going up because wilful and malicious persons can overnight destroy the confidence on which Barbados continued development depends. Overnight it is possible for politicians and the paid lackies of politicians to cast this country into the sort of circumstances under which the confidence of persons who come here to invest and the very confidence of the ordinary Barbadians who have invested so heavily in these bonds whose guarantee now goes before the House can be eroded to an extent that we can get back into the conditions we were in in 1974 — 76. The potential for self destruction among Barbadians remains high.

The crowds who go out to hear the purveyors of threats on political platforms, the purveyors of vile and disgusting rumours, the crowds who go out to hear people who after 30 years in politics can talk only about the mothers, step-mothers, children of childhood of decent people doing their best for this country, those persons, Sir, yet remain in our midst and it is really unfortunate that they find themselves at a stage like this joined by representatives of the media and representatives of persons who once hoped to be called decent people themselves.

I have to sound a word of warning to all concerned. Remember, as Neville Boxill used to tell you, people who tear down houses, Cardinal Bowen in Barbados, never tore down a house when they were inside the house yet. Those who have money in the Cayman Islands and who boast that their standard of living cannot fall even if they never work again in their

lives, they can afford to tear down but those who have a commitment to Barbados and a commitment to the kind of development that the Government is giving as exemplified in this Resolution, have to be a bit more careful with what they say. What we say, Mr. Speaker, because I believe that hon. members on this side have showed a sense of responsibility and balance over the last two years under grave trials, grave causes, under destructive and evil and nasty malicious comments we have shown the responsibility of balance and patience which I am proud to think we will continue to show. Anyway, I am diverting a little bit.

By virtue of the provisions of the Barbados National Bank Act it is necessary for the Government to guarantee the Bank's authorised borrowing and I want to say this about guarantees, Sir. We have had an example, authenticated, proven, witnessed, signed, sealed and delivered by the Report of Sir Herbert Duffus of persons who occupied my position, a person who occupied my position as Minister of Finance where guarantees have been signed although the authority of Parliament was not sought. Now, Sir, it is very important for all of us to understand that it is no use to vote money in the Estimates if you then allow the Minister of Finance to sign for money which has not passed through the analysis of Parliament. There is no point thinking that you have control over expenditure if the Minister of Finance can take up his pen and allow the Government's credit to be pledged without the knowledge of Parliament or even indeed of his colleagues in the Cabinet.

The previous Attorney General, the Attorney General previous to the hon. member for Christ Church West even gave an opinion to that effect that guarantees, bank guarantees given at the bank could not be entered into by the Government unless they had been approved by Parliament. This is accepted law, Sir. There is no half measure about it, but we have nevertheless had an instance in recent years of a Minister of Finance picking up his pay at the behest of a Bank Manager, his own Bank Manager where he had his own personal account. Whether it was an overdraft or not, it does not matter, Sir. His own Bank Manager signing documents that amounted to guarantees by the Government of expenditure. I can only apologise on behalf of all Ministers of Finance in Barbados for so gross an act of misbehaviour on the part of a Minister of Finance.

1.25 p.m.

I read the daily newspaper everyday. I read yesterday all these facts set out. I hope that people who write editorials and people who write comments have also read yesterday what Sir Herbert Duffus said about Carib West. I can only pledge that this Government will not do the same thing, and certainly

that this Minister of Finance will not do the same thing. That is all I can do. I can only pledge it. These particular bonds have not been allotted yet, as I discovered when I sent for my own. The Bank Secretary pointed out that the allotments were being prepared, but that passage of time and certain legal formalities still remained. I can say that it is a very serious matter. I do not really know the level of the economic analysis we have in this country or the analysis of what is proper in Government in this country. I see that President Nixon was driven from office and that President Nixon is abused for being corrupt, and I know that all that was found against him in the Watergate enquiry was that he had a knowledge of who broke in and left himself to concealing it. Nixon is called corrupt, but Nixon did not take the American Government's money and lend it to a friend to bale out an airline. No Commission found as a fact that friendship was the ground for any of Nixon's actions in respect of the American Government's money, but the Duffus Commission found as a fact that friendship was the ground for the former Prime Minister buying Carib West, friendship with Mr. Harold Went; found that as a fact, and yet the Advocate newspaper cannot find there was anything wrong with it, and says that the image of the former Prime Minister remains intact. He took \$500,000 of the Government's money and gave to his friend to allow his friend to pay off the mortgage on his house, and the Advocate newspaper finds that nothing is wrong.

Mr. SPEAKER: It was only a sudden change of mind.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Well, Sir, when you read Duffus, it says financial interest did not require it, the interest of Mr. Harold Went and Mr. Trevor Mayers required it. That was written in yesterday's Advocate newspaper. And, Sir, when you think about something else; no Cabinet Paper was produced in the Carib West matter, and the former Prime Minister gave evidence to Mr. Duffus that it was for reasons of secrecy. Now why would you need to be secret? You are normally secret when you are going to buy something because the shares will go up, but the shares in Carib West could not go up. The Government was going to pay more than they were worth. They were worthless, so they could not go up anyway; but Mr. Harold Went owed \$310,000 at City Bank. It was charged by a mortgage on his house, and he went the day before the Cabinet sat and got City Bank to agree that they would take \$200,000 from the debt. Do you think that City Bank would have agreed to take \$200,000 for \$310,000 if they had known the Government was going to give the company \$½million? You now see where the secrecy came from and yet the Advocate newspaper says nothing was found wrong with the hon. member.

I say that the hon. member for St. John did not wish the details of the Carib West purchase to be known because he wished to conceal it from the creditors of Carib West, so that they could be defrauded, and you will read the report of Duffus to the end and you will not see that he absolved the hon. member from improprieties in dealing with Carib West. You will read it through to the end and you will not see anywhere that he said that the Government's dealings with Carib West were above board.

Anyway, Sir, that shows what can happen when guarantees go wrong. When Harold Went, Trevor Mayers and Colin Mayers did not have enough money, Gallagher, the friend of all of them, the banker of the Leader of the Opposition, himself had the guarantee typed and sent it up and it was signed in the office of the then Prime Minister, but the Advocate says that his image was intact and there was nothing wrong. In some cases, Sir, I put it down to ignorance, but in the case of Robert Best I put it down to malice. In the case of Martindale and Foster that is ignorance; but Best is malice. Perhaps I should not mention that.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are dealing with improprieties, but Sir Herbert Duffus dealt with infelicities.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I thought you were going to say I should not call the names. I have given Your Honour no notice and I can have it struck from the record if Your Honour so directs. But nonetheless we live in a country where partisanship enters into news reporting, and we have to accept that fact. We cannot deal with it otherwise. People just hear things. Fortunately for us today there will be nothing said on the other side which can exclude perhaps a report in Parliament from consideration. What will probably happen is that they will not report it at all. I can guarantee that what is said in here will be reported if at all in the skimpiest and most casual manner in the newspapers.

Anyway, Sir, I do not have to mind that. We are doing the correct thing about the guarantee. Nobody will write of me as Sir Herbert wrote of Gallagher and the hon. member for St. John, when they pointed out that Gallagher was a liar. They did not call him a liar, but it was proved he was a liar because it proved a letter was produced on the question of guarantee by Gallagher contradicting exactly what he gave in evidence to the Commission. You will find that in the Advocate yesterday. Nobody will ever write of me as Duffus wrote of Barrow "but was Mr. Barrow deceived?" Those last words "but was Mr. Barrow deceived?", do you know what they mean? That the hon. member for St. John was not telling the truth. That is exactly what was meant by the question "but was Mr. Barrow deceived?"

That is precisely what was meant, that the hon. member knew all along what he was signing; that is exactly what that question meant. The trouble is the language is too sophisticated for Mr. Cecil Foster and Mr. Neville Martindale. The language is too sophisticated. If Duffus has a fault, that is where the fault lies.

Do you know something else that will never be said of me? It will never be said that I am guilty of amnesia when what is really meant is that I told a lie on one of the most decent civil servants that this country has ever had. Nobody will say that of this particular Minister of Finance. He deliberately made up a lie on Steve Emtage. Now note, there are twenty-four members of the House. Of one of them it has been said that on oath he gave evidence he could not forget, he gave positive evidence that a civil servant had attended a meeting and took notes, and it was proved to be false. The evidence was proved to be untrue and it was glossed over by saying he was guilty of amnesia.

Anyhow Carib West dealt with a guarantee. That is how hon. members on the other side dealt with guarantees. This Resolution today is how we deal with guarantees. We come to the House and say what we have to say, and we ask the approval of the House for the issue which is at stake.

1.35 p.m.

I have every belief that this investment will prove a useful one and the Barbados National Bank can be relied on to administer the funds properly, and the present financial situation of the Barbados National Bank gives some confidence that we will have no cause for worry. This is not a guarantee the Government will have to pay.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, for at least two years now the National Housing Corporation has been in a position where we have had to hold down the development of houses at the maximum rate as has been foreshadowed in the Manifesto because of the general financial condition of the country. We all know that this year the Estimates took a 10% docking after what was originally agreed by the Estimates Committee, but there cannot be a building boom in which the National Housing Corporation is expected to play the leading role unless vast sums of money such as have never been put in public housing in this country before are channelled into housing in the future. You cannot hope to build, for example, 500 houses at \$4.5 or \$5 million. Those figures can no longer in today's economic climate suffice to build the number of houses that are needed to scratch the surface of the housing problem in this country, so there must first of all be a massive

injection of capital for housing for the boom to take effect and for it to be meaningful, but at the same time as there is a massive injection of capital the concomitant services also have to be adequate to service this capital and the other ancillary services that are to be accommodated.

To that extent, therefore, the administrative and technical wings of the National Housing Corporation have got to be put on a level to be able to cope with any massive injection of capital. The strategy of the National Housing Corporation over the last two years and three months has been very carefully worked out, and it was very simple. In the first place, I believe that everybody in Barbados knows and concedes that the National Housing Corporation was perhaps the worst of all the Statutory Bodies in this country. It functioned inadequately from Board level right down, and at this stage lest I am misquoted by the gentlemen of the Press who have a habit of doing it to me, let me make it clear that in that I am exempting the present Manager of the National Housing Corporation. As the Hanschell report clearly says, he laboured under the greatest difficulties because of the nature and type of people he had on the Board, and especially former Chairmen of the National Housing Corporation who refused to allow him to develop his initiative and his talents. He was to retire in 1976, he wanted an opportunity to see if we would have brought a new approach into the Housing Corporation, and he was satisfied. He has now reached retiring age and so he must retire, but the financial management was bad at that Corporation.

The financial management of the National Housing Corporation was so bad that not since 1973 when the National Housing Corporation was established by an Act of Parliament have they laid on the Table of this House a report as they are required by section 16 of the Act to do every year, they have never even laid accounts. Do you know what that means, Mr. Speaker? That the same Act gives the Corporation power with ministerial approval to borrow money from the commercial banks, but how could anybody go to a commercial bank and say, lend the Housing Corporation \$3 million, we want to build 200 houses in a particular area? The first thing a bank manager is going to ask is let me see a balance sheet, but they have none, they have nothing to show, or certainly they had nothing to show up to 1976 when I took over on November 8. Why a Corporation set up by Parliament charged with the responsibility to report to Parliament has never been able to report its financial business to Parliament or its general administrative business, only those who were in charge then can answer but I am happy to report that reports are being prepared for all the outstanding years, the accounts have been audited up to 1976. I think it is, we had to get a crash programme going, we had to take up money and give to a firm of chartered accountants in Barbados to

bring all these things up to date. We are still slightly behind hand, but I am hoping, I am not promising, that by June of 1979 all the outstanding reports and accounts will be laid on the Table of this House by the Minister.

That is one, Sir. At the same time as you had a level of inefficiency in administrative management, you also had a dearth of technical personnel. There was one surveyor in 1976, there was one senior technical officer who had engineering qualifications, there was a financial controller on secondment from a Government Department.

1.45 p.m.

What we have done is that we have tried to strengthen the number of these areas to prepare for a launch-off in 1979. The ground-work first had to be done. We have had a few people assess our needs and we now have a trainee manager since September. We have just appointed a new financial controller. Mr. Louis Redman who used to be in the Ministry as something designated Housing Development Officer has come to us with certain specific terms of reference and job descriptions for a highly technical department. I have also moved the Technical Department from Country Road and given them a separate and spacious location refurbished at Clarendon Black Rock. We also have an additional survey; we have people in training in England from our drawing office, and we are hoping to get one or two other technical people fairly shortly, — on Thursday I have an interview for a post. So that we have tried to build up and have available reasonably adequate backup services to manage a massive injection of capital. So I am looking forward next year to Government putting into housing — not all through the National Housing Corporation — a substantial portion should come through the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company — the conditions necessary to ensure that home ownership is made easier for the people of this country.

Something that has been glossed over or never considered is that in an effort to assist in home ownership this Government increased the mortgage limit from \$32,000 to \$50,000, and that further mortgage money is being made available to the National Housing Corporation. And I would anticipate that that upper limit could possibly go another \$10,000 higher, to \$60,000. I am not promising anything, I am only saying that I anticipate that this could happen.

Now the Resolution before us is one of a number of stratagems that can be used to assist in a housing development programme such as would help to assuage the present housing needs in this country. Housing is a basic need; this Government has always recognised that, and it is only the general economic conditions of this

country that precluded the speedier development of housing. Now that things have taken a turn for the better I believe that the Government's desires will be realized in 1979. I am not one to boast of achievements; I do not run to the Press or give Press conferences. I believe that what is being done in the country in terms of housing will speak for itself over the years, but no one in this country should lose sight of the fact that from November, 1976 to the end of July this year, we operated on between \$4.5 million and \$5 million — which was not significantly more than the last Government had in 1976, but we built more houses in 1976 and 1977 than they did in 1975, the year of the sugar boom, when they built 195 houses. In 1976–77, despite the economic crisis in this country, we were able to build over 260 houses and moved 52 people from Emmerton Lane and resite them at Clapham, and also clean up the area for the arboreum at Constitution Road. All this was done with the same type of money that the DLP administration had. And best of all, out of that same money we were able to create 131 new jobs. Somebody will be able to decide one of these days whether we have been able to manage the finances of the National Housing Corporation better than they did.

For two years I have been asking the Government to pay attention to the creation of a land bank in this country. We cannot have staff and personnel and adequate conditions for persons to work in unless you have the land available on which to build houses. I am satisfied that the Ministry of land has embarked on and is continuing to look for suitable sites for housing development in this country. I have recently written the Chairman of the Agricultural Development Corporation asking him to let us know at the National Housing Corporation, with a view to channelling such information to the Government, what marginal or other lands he has which may be suitable for housing development, and I expect a reply before the 31st December this year. In the meantime we have looked at a number of sites for next year's and subsequent years' building. I have in my possession a sketch from the Planners in respect of Jones Land and Fernihurst which is an area in the constituency of St. Michael West. These are only preliminary figures, but I think that before they are finalized by the Estimates Committee of the National Housing Corporation and the Ministry of Housing I should indicate some of the areas to which we are paying attention. At Jones Land and Fernihurst the aim is to build 90 three-bed room terrace units, 30 two-bed room and five one-bed room houses. At Haynes Ville in addition to the work going on now we will build 5 one-bed room 20 two-bed room and 50 three-bed room houses; at Bonnetts 5 one-bed room, 4 two-bed room and 130 three-bed room houses.

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the hon. member completed his list?

Mr. SIMMONS: No, Sir, I would be glad if Your Honour would indicate to the Ministry of Lands or to the National Housing Corporation what land may be available in your constituency so that the Ministry could look at it. I think this is an area in which hon. members can assist. We must know of areas of land in our constituency which could do well for housing development.

At St. Celia, Mr. Speaker, the architects have been authorized to do the drawing for some high rise apartments; perhaps we can get in about 30, but these are not final figures because we are still awaiting the final designs from the technical people. The Ministry of Lands is also looking at a site at Six Roads in St. Philip with a view to building about 75 units there. And in my own constituency we have looked at land there and the Ministry will be negotiating with the sellers of certain lands in my constituency.
1.55 p.m.

That, Mr. Speaker, is envisaged for the non-commercial programme for public housing. These figures for Housing do not include commercial houses or houses which come from the commercial side of our business. At Free Hill, and at Wotton, we would like to get these going too. When you add up, Mr. Speaker, you will see that assuming that the finance is made available, we will get past the 500 with ease in 1979.

At the same time, we have to provide house spots. That is where the Land Bank is also important. What has already started is putting in roads and the realigning of houses and compensating persons who have stopped growing on the land at Parish Land, Christ Church — some 14 house spots — and there are going to be recommendations that land going back towards Providence should be acquired for future development.

What can be said at this stage is that an allocation of at least 24 houses has already been made, and there will be a meeting before Christmas at which other units already allocated will be given out. Mr. Speaker, the general public must understand that one of the ways in which a person renting from the National Housing Corporation is his brother's keeper in the payment of his rents and the payment of his loans. We lend to general workers \$7,000 now that he has gone up. This money revolves as people pay off.

Hon. H. B. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to interrupt the hon. member; but it now being 2 p.m., I beg to move that this sitting stands suspended for 45 minutes.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the Sitting accordingly.
2 p.m.

On the resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: The sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken, the hon. member for St. Philip North was addressing the Chair.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, at the suspension I believe that I had outlined the building programme as was envisaged by the National Housing Corporation for 1979. I would also wish to report at this stage, Mr. Speaker, that because of certain positive action which has been taken by the Corporation in the last six months, our arrears are now revealing a more healthy state than previously. They are still extra-ordinarily high, but the action which we have taken seems to be paying some dividends.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to point out to members of the general public that if they do not pay their rents and arrears on loans, they are denying some fellow person in the community from getting a loan or obtaining the necessary shelter. It is a very selfish and shocking attitude; but of course the attitude was engendered in 1961; but we would have thought that people after 17 years, and after 12 years of Independence, would have shown a more responsible attitude to the community to which they belong. I am once again appealing to those who are in arrears to take steps voluntarily to settle those arrears, or at least make a substantial contribution towards the settlement of those arrears.

There are people in some of the newer estates who owe \$3,000. They will not continue in the new year without the necessary court processes. That must be clear and it has been determined by the Corporation. Much has been written about the Government's decision to establish a National Bank and Insurance Corporation, but there is one golden thread that seems to have been lost on the commentators, the people who write in the Press and the public at large.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the National Bank and the Insurance Corporation of Barbados, institutions owned by the people of Barbados with a view to giving them greater economic independence and with a view to developing a nationalistic programme, what seems to be lost on several people in this community is that these are two foundations from which the Government's revenue in the years to come can be improved. The profits of the National Bank and the Insurance Corporation of Barbados by law have to be paid into the Consolidated Fund; and as I understand it, those profits will go towards the accretion of Government's revenue, thereby making more money available in Government's finances for the general well being of this community. They are to that extent

important pieces of legislation to improve the basis of economic planning and strategy that have been worked out by this Government.

The second point I wish to make — I did not hear the Prime Minister's introduction — but if he has said it, I remain in ignorance of what he said but I am very pleased with the statement that I heard last week that the contributions to the housing bonds came considerably from the smaller people of the society. I am told that 83 per cent of the contributions came from small people rather than from the big insurance companies and so on. Indeed, the significance of this lies in the Prime Minister's Budget Speech this year when he said that the Budgetary Proposals were aimed at creating savings in this community.

Some months ago, the Central Bank reported a very high level of liquidity in the banking system. I think that it would not be unreasonable, Mr. Speaker, to draw the conclusion that the Prime Minister's intention in the Budget presentation this year to encourage savings has had a positive effect. We find that people have been able to turn some of their savings into further savings in housing bonds.

2.55 p.m.

That is significant in so far as it proves again that the Government's economic policies are not only right but are being accepted by the community and it is one thing for which the Prime Minister should be loudly congratulated, Mr. Speaker, and I make no apology for congratulating him on that strategy which has proven successful to date.

It is a bit sad that some of the economic commentators and certain commentators, not the economic commentators but certain commentators who proliferate commentaries in the Newspapers, would not have taken a little time out to do an analysis.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward in the next 2½ to 3 years to a continuing thrust and impetus in housing in this country. The Government is not ruling out private investors in housing. It cannot, and we hope that with the measures which are being taken to stimulate housing development that private entrepreneurs would take it upon themselves also to construct dwellings for sectors in this community which are in need of proper housing.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to lend my wholehearted support to this Resolution.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have intended as my contribution to this Debate to simply pose one or two questions which I would scheme to have the Hon. Prime Minister reply on in the course of his winding-up. Now one has already been

answered, but I really wanted the Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning to take the opportunity in the course of his winding up perhaps to give us some appreciation of how the National Bank is doing to date.

From all outside appearances it appears to be doing well, but I thought that he would want to comment specifically on how many depositors they are and the number of deposits on the Bank. The question as to what percentage of bond purchases came from individuals as opposed to institutions I think has already been answered. Perhaps he may wish to tell us when there will be a further bond issue. I myself was of the view that we should have had a bond issue for \$5 million on this occasion as opposed to \$1.5 million but there is no reason why that cannot be corrected in a matter of months.

Generally, I would like the Hon. Prime Minister to give us some thoughts on the performance of the National Bank to date. We feel sure that it will turn out to be one of the important financial institutions in the country and we would like to know that it has been off to a good start.

May I take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to comment on one or two other matters in relation to housing. I am sorry that I did not speak before my friend, the member for St. Philip North but I really wanted to ask him whether or not he had got his administrative housing in order, as it were, at the National Housing Authority so that he could now go ahead with confidence and certainty and some urgency too in tackling the housing problem ahead. We had heard from him for some while that one of the reasons he was not able to take off in housing was because he had been burdened with an inadequate administrative structure. I would like to think and indeed I would like to know whether or not the problems in administration have been resolved and whether he is now adequately peopled by way of staff to meet the task ahead.

I should like to comment further, Mr. Speaker, to say that in my view there should be a National Housing Plan and I was very much hoping that I would have heard some indication from my friend for St. Philip North that he was near ready with a comprehensive housing plan which would set some targets, identify the acreage of land which would be needed in the years ahead, discuss some strategies from the developments, identify some source of finance and generally give us some indication of what resources there are available for housing and what would be his expectations with respect to the provision of housing in the years ahead.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. member would just give way. You cannot remember everything in a speech which is not written out. Mr. Speaker I can

let the House know that the National Housing Corporation has in fact started and will have ready by January a plan for housing development to reflect 1978-82. Certain information itself from that document has been sent to the Ministry for use in other areas but by January a document such as the one published by the Industrial Development Corporation will be in the hands of the general public. You cannot remember everything.

Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I very much welcome the assurances from my friend, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say that housing remains our most inadequate infra-structural facility, if I may put it that way. This administration has the opportunity to correct it and I very much hope that the urgency of the problem and the enormity of the challenge will be adequately captured by the officers of the National Housing Administration.

Now, in my view, a major error in housing planning has been committed in this country and perpetuated for many years and it has been done too often in the past, Mr. Speaker. We have had housing estates put up without any regard for what I regard as minimal community facilities without which living in any neighbourhood becomes intolerable and burdensome. I refer to such basic things as provision for minimal shopping facilities, provisions for a baby creche provision for a community center and provision for a playing field.

I very much hope that we will not enter into any housing plans in the future without making provisions for these minimal community facilities and now that I am on that, let me strike a note in relation to my own constituency, Christ Church East. There is at present activity going on in relation to the provision of sites and services in an area called Parish Land. I have made representation to the Ministry of Housing with a view to ensuring that some acreage of land, I think it is about 20 acres, to the South of the Methodist School, Sir, in Providence, and adjacent to Parish Land, land that is marginal land, and has for long been taken out of agriculture to be bought by the Government so as to erect there a community center, a playing field and a baby creche.
3.05 p.m.

I very much hope that my pleadings in this matter will not go unheeded because Christ Church East is particularly badly served as far as the provision of baby creches and playing fields are concerned. The time to do it is now while the work is going on. I will not rest content with any assurance that they will get back to it later. The time to do it is now so that the Government can confidently tick off Parish Land as having been an area that it has properly done, all the services have been put in and there is no need to return to that

immediately. I very much hope that the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister before his reply will consult quickly with his Minister of Housing and give me that assurance and the people of Parish Land which we all so badly need.

Mr. SPEAKER: Start off with St. Peter first.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I will have to give you the same assurance that I gave the hon. member for St. Lucy since you want me to come from the north. I am giving you careful consideration.

Sir, let me first allay the fears of my colleague about his problems in his constituency. I am not only examining his constituency, but I am looking at all of them. I can assure you that for all the years in the City I think if there is a serious attack on the whole slum concept, the Ministry of Housing is now approaching that task vigorously. I can also assure the hon. member for St. George South - I am told he won by something like 1,800 votes - that he would probably not need that immediate attention and would probably like me to look after his colleague earlier. I can also assure him that he is having the attention of the Ministry of Housing. I can assure my colleague from St. Andrew that we are going into Apes Hill to look after his constituency some time next month. I think he can be very sure of that, but I would just like to give my colleagues the assurance that there is a whole new concept in housing which we are trying to formulate in the Ministry. No longer am I just going to build 40, 50 or 200 three bedroom houses, but I am thinking of building even one bedroom houses and twos and threes because there is a great demand. I think some 23% of the applicants at the Ministry of Housing are in the form of one bedroom houses, and that is a concept which we are also examining. If I am the person who is in charge of the Ministry of Housing, I think my hardest job would be to fight with the Prime Minister to make sure that the funds come my way, and I think it is a credit to the small man particularly in Barbados to show the great confidence he has in the Government and especially in the Barbados National Bank and the Housing Bond issues where they have taken up some 83% of them.

I would not like to say much more at this stage since my colleague gave the assurance that the administrative structure of the department of the National Housing Corporation has carefully looked at it. I know there is a trainee manager and I just repeat that there is a technical wing which is going to be staffed with a quantity surveyor and a senior land surveyor. There is also a financial controller for the very first time which the National Housing Corporation will be having and he is in the job now. We are going to have an estates manager; so the whole concept of housing we are hoping to change. It was this party, you must not

forget, that brought to Barbados its first low income housing for the people of this country, and we are going to continue to pursue such a course, not overlooking the fact that we have to look at the lower middle and middle income persons who are in need of housing.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure my colleagues that given the tools I shall do the job. The tools are in the hands of the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister knows well enough that if he does not give me the money I will give him his Ministry. I just want to make this position quite clear. I am going to aim to satisfy the needs of this country. In his manifesto he set out that through incentives the Government would provide 800 homes per year. I am going to aim that between now and 1981 I would try to build with direct National Housing Corporation labour at least 800 houses within the Ministry itself. This is my aim. It is a tall order, but I do not believe that I may falter. One of the problems however that I am very concerned about is the problem where I believe there is going to be a labour shortage in this country in the area of technical people such as carpenters. I know the Minister of Education as well as the Ministry of Community Services are working and gearing themselves for this, but it is also a defect in the armour of the last administration in not looking ahead realising that within the not too distant future you have to meet these things, and I would not be surprised that with the big building boom which we are going to have between 1979 and 1982 that we are not going to be short of skilled men such as carpenters in the country. I can only hope that the Community College and the Polytechnic can turn them out fast enough and good enough to meet the demands within the next four years. That is my contribution to this debate, and I would like my colleagues to have confidence and faith in me.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, if no other hon. member wishes to contribute, I will proceed to wind up. Hon. members have contributed to this debate and I will do my best to answer them. The Chairman of the Housing Authority, the hon. member for St. Philip North, and the Minister of Housing, the hon. member for St. James have emphasised problems. The hon. member for St. James may be assured that once the Ministry of Finance has a complete grasp of how the funds are going to be spent that funds within the limit of the Government's resources will be made accessible for building houses for rent. Where the question of houses for middle and lower income persons are concerned we regard this as a revolving fund. Very large sums have been put into it already in the old regime and the returns have been very small. Certainly the fund has not revolved. We have to be satisfied that

the fund will be a true revolving fund, that sales will begin to match input very shortly.

I think the hon. member with his experience in commerce will be aware that you cannot run a business on the basis of eternal subsidy. Under the old regime houses were distributed to persons who did not have the means of buying them unless indeed a passport to the Democratic Labour Party provided the means of paying for the house. There are some 30 or 40 houses, 36 I think the number is, which should have been sold and which were — I am corrected, it is in fact 40 — which should have been sold, but handed out to supporters of the Democratic Labour Party who had little prospect even of paying the rent far less buying the house of the National Housing Corporation, and the Corporation is saddled with that. Naturally, Sir, I am determined that no yardfowl, whether his name is Douglas Leopold Philips or Basil Leonard Pickering, is going to stay in any Government house on the basis of which party he supports, the Phillipses and the Pickerings will have to look for somebody else to give them the chicken feed. I do not have to express myself very much on that.

3.15 p.m.

As far as the Bank is concerned, I am obliged to my hon. friend, the hon. and learned member for Christ Church East, whose interest in economic affairs is always apt and to the point, and his comments are always useful as indeed his questions, and I am obliged to him for the number of remarks which he made. In answer to what he asked, the Barbados National Bank generally is showing signs of a very encouraging depth indeed. Its deposits have increased by a amount of almost 50% since its coming into being on April 1, an unprecedented rate of growth in any commercial bank of this country. Deposits have risen from \$61 million, at the end of September it was over \$70 million, and it is expected on the basis of present trends it will be over \$80 million by the end of the year.

These are very encouraging figures and my thanks and congratulations go out to the Bank's Board of Directors, its President and other Officers. A new branch of the Bank will be opened on 1st January at James Street, and I look forward to my hon. friend, the member for Christ Church East, to open an account at the new bank. I very much hope that by the end of January the hon. member for Christ Church East, the hon. member for St. Philip North and others in the James Street area to do just that.

The Bank will also during the course of next year take over exclusive banking rights at Grantley Adams Airport. Negotiations are now underway to take over the present premises now enjoyed by the City Bank, whose lease will expire very shortly. The Minister responsible for

tourism, the Hon. Leader of the House, has made representations to me that the present closing time of 10 o'clock of the Bureau de Change is too early and I will pass on his observation to the Board of the Bank, but its operations at the airport have been successful so far and I have every confidence will continue to be successful when we take over full responsibility for banking at the airport.

As far as the Agricultural Credit Bank is concerned, the Agricultural Division of the Bank has made arrangements whereby the Central Bank will provide a line of credit to facilitate small farmers as well as the activities of estates and sugar factories. You may observe that I have a brief in my hand, I know that with all the discretion for which bankers are famous they have not indicated the extent to which this will be carried out, but I have very sincere hopes that it may be possible to persuade the sugar industry itself to do some of the crop financing through the National Bank as well as through the overseas owned commercial banks. I am saying this merely as an outsider, because the Bank's Directors who provided this information have not informed me of that, but those of us who have our ears close to the ground believe that this may well come about.

In the agricultural field generally the House will be glad to know that the Bank has been able to arrange for reduced insurance rates for the boats, the difficult problems which successive Ministers of Agriculture have raised in here on numerous occasions, and the Agricultural Division is also negotiating with the Caribbean Development Bank for a second agricultural loan of approximately \$1.8 million for loan to small farmers.

As far as the instant matter goes, Sir, the housing bonds, we have not yet been able to decide when the remainder of the expected \$5 million issue will be taken up, but I would like to think it would be done before the end of April. As I mentioned earlier, it is envisaged that up to \$10 million will be required next year by the National Housing Corporation and by private individuals, and we are aiming at this target. I certainly have a more ambitious target of at least \$20 million in housing to be built annually in this country and I have every confidence that the Mortgage Finance Division of the Bank will be able to attract this sort of money. At the end of September 1978 mortgage loans outstanding at the Barbados National Bank was over \$20 million, an increase of almost \$4 million from the end of 1977. Indeed, Sir, hon. members may care to know that where only \$2.2 million was disbursed by the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company in 1976, between April and September alone of this year no less than \$4½ million in assistance to would be home owners in Barbados has been disbursed by the Mortgage Finance Division of the Bank, 171 new borrowers, and we are processing at the moment 278 applications for home loans which are approved but have

not yet drawn the money in an amount of over \$6½ million. We are going to draw the money next year towards the target of 800 homes being financed by the Barbados National Bank alone.

I think, Sir, that hon. members will agree that the efforts by the Government in respect of housing are beginning to bear fruit. I fully endorse the remarks made by the hon. member for Christ Church East and I appreciate the way he is echoing them. The only remaining area of structural change on a major scale is housing. I fully endorse his remarks and I think I can say that the effort being put forward in the fulfilling of some of the needs identified will be rewarded in the near future.

3.25 p.m.

We only have to go about the country — not listening to rumours about Pele, rumours about telephone tapping, abuse of the Attorney General, his wife, mother, step mother, children — we only have to go about the country and look at the developments going on — in my own constituency of St. Thomas, at Welches, Warrens, Baggettelle, Walkers, in St. George. Go all over Barbados and see the housing development going on and you will realise that despite the froth on the surface this country is getting somewhere. Some people are worrying their heads about telephone tapping and such things; these are people in need of injections. I am quite sure that we will never see in this House the situation as in 1966 where recording equipment was put in the Speaker's lavatory and a microphone concealed in the Speaker's Chambers, and an appeal made to the hon. member for St. Philip South to vote with Crawford was recorded. And the man responsible for that now talks about telephone tapping. You know it is true, Sir. That is what we have to put up with in this country. We are trying to build houses for the people; we are trying to destroy unemployment; and the man who was responsible for putting a microphone in the Speaker's Chambers and recording what was said in the Speaker's Chambers talks about telephone tapping. Not only was the telephone of Sir Theodore Branker, tapped but everything said in his Chambers was tapped. Anyway, they won't be able to tap the telephones of these houses until the houses are built and we have to guarantee the bond before they can get that far.

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

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

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that we have to ask leave of the House for a certain matter — unfortunate because the Opposition is not present — but it is an urgent matter. I am speaking of the matter of the National Housing Corporation and the Shamrock Trading Company, and I have to ask leave of

the House to deal with a supplement for the Ministry of Housing and Lands for land and property acquisition, in all its stages today.

The situation relates to the necessity to vote a sum of money in respect of the Shamrock property, inasmuch as interest is accruing at the rate of 6% per annum. The lawyers for Shamrock have asked for twice as much money as the Duffus Commission cost. George Moe and Asquith Philips talked about how much the Duffus Commission cost but they have asked for the biggest cost in the Island's history — about ten years salary for what George Moe got as Attorney General. However, we must not mind that and we must ask leave to deal with the matter because we must get this money paid lest the interest accumulate. I therefore beg leave to deal with this Resolution today.

The question that leave be granted was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee to consider the grant of a certain sum of money for the service of this Island.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1978-79 PART II — CAPITAL

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution for which I seek Parliamentary approval comes as a result of a judgment in favour of Shamrock Trading Company sometime this year. I think we are all aware of the fact that certain lands had to be acquired for the extension of the Deep Water Harbour. There were some problems between the Government and Shamrock Trading Company and when there was no settlement the matter was referred to the Law Courts. Apparently Shamrock won the court case... (Asides) The lawyers tell me Shamrock didn't win because they didn't get all they asked for. Anyway, we are seeking Parliamentary approval for the amount of \$1,535,683 to cover the amount involved and also to make sure that there will be enough to cover the lands we are going to acquire so that we would not have to come back to the Legislature. This is what is primarily behind this Resolution.

What I find very interesting in this exercise however is that I am told that a Mr. George Moe who apparently appeared for Shamrock is seeking some \$125,000 in legal fees. I do not know how the Government is going to get out of that, they must determine that. What I am sure

about is that if by accident or by design the Government must pay to a Mr. George Moe \$125,000, I am sure there is one thing he will be doing for me, and that is to pay for my deposit in 1981; and the people of St. James will get a proper grog out of it; they will be able to eat, drink and dance. And even the police sergeant will be in it; all the sergeants in St. James, for they are all friends of mine. Some are members of the church and may not be able to drink anything strong but they can still have a coke. So I am quite sure, Mr. Chairman, that this should not pose any problem. We have to pay this money in view of the fact that it is accruing interest at the rate of 6% per annum, and that is why I seek the permission of Parliament today to have this matter go through.

I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, before you put the question I want to make a small contribution, because I have been approached by several people who after hearing that Shamrock Trading Company was awarded the sum of one and a half million dollars as compensation for the acquisition of their property by the Government have felt that this Government — the Barbados Labour Party Government — was the party responsible for the acquisition. If you had to ask someone on the outside for their reaction, they would tell you that the Government lost the case and they feel it is this present Government.

I want to set the record clear. The negotiations to acquire the Shamrock Trading Company's property started under the former Government. In order to extend the Deep Water Harbour the former Government had to take over some of the land in the Fontabelle area and Shamrock happened to be one of the properties. What happened is that the former administration did not settle the negotiations and this present Government was faced with the situation where it inherited what the former Government had left off. We inherited the situation and what we have been doing from the time we took over was to negotiate with Shamrock and this is one of the classic examples of how the former Government operated. So we are faced with this situation of asking for \$1.5 million to settle what was started under the former administration, and yet people on the outside will feel that this present Government started on the wrong foot by losing the case in court.

3.35 p.m

Now, as I said, we must be complimented for having made it abundantly clear that we were not prepared as a Government to sit by and allow people to come up with a figure and we acquiesce in such a figure. We have at all times tried to negotiate amicably in order to settle this matter; but it reached a stage where it was no longer possible to continue with the negotiations, and

therefore the Government decided to allow the court to settle it.

So, what we have today is a Resolution seeking the approval of a vote of a certain amount of money to defray the cost awarded by the court; but it must be pointed out that it was a situation that was inherited by this Government because the negotiations were not started on the initiative of this present Government. I want that to go on record because we have heard a number of people beginning to feel that this Government had committed a heinous error in going to court and losing one of the cases; and if you listen to the news, you will get the feeling that it was the present administration that was responsible for the negotiations that it lost the case because it was not competent in handling such a matter. I do hope that with that explanation, the public at large will understand that they should compliment this Government for acting in the manner in which it did in order to settle the Shamrock issue; and I hope that as we go on, this present Government will not be saddled by many more cases such as the Shamrock one which, in my humble submission, has been a very unfortunate matter for this Government.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, what I want to say on this matter will be very brief. I thought that other speakers would have adverted to it, but the fact is that they have not done so. When this administration came into office, and I was assigned to duties of the Minister responsible for Communications and Works I was confronted with a situation where the Deep Water Harbour was being extended, and a number of properties in the Fontabelle area were to be acquired.

There were a number of grumbles about the purchase of these properties, and the cost involved. I thought that I should have looked at the valuation of these properties; and in looking at the valuation, they struck me as being very high. It was not only the question of the Shamrock Trading Company itself, but also the question of properties which involved M. L. Seale, the Fergusson family, the Tudors family and quite a lot of people there. I thought that at that point in time the Government should have another look rather than accept figures put up to us for valuation. That we should not just accept those figures, but rather that we should look again at the figures with a view to renegotiating the figures downwards.

As a result of the decision taken, the Government entered into new negotiations with the owners of the properties at Fontabelle; and I am happy to say that as a result of these negotiations the properties have been acquired at figures considerably less than the figures initially negotiated for under the regime of the Democratic Labour Party. So far as this property, the Shamrock Trading Company, is concerned, the figures

which we have subsequently arrived at, and even with the cost that we will pay, will certainly be far less than were originally negotiated for.

In every other case with respect to the properties at Fontabelle the Government is by far better off with the position which it now has in hand as a result of these negotiations which were made subsequent to the coming into being of this new administration. I just want to make those points so that the public would be fully aware and seized of the fact that as a result of the coming into being of this Government the prices of the properties at Fontabelle are far below what they would have been originally by way of the new negotiations.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, I think that in this matter the whole sequence of time should be established. The file is before us, and I am slowly going to give the dates. The property owned by Shamrock Trading Company Limited comprising of 34,830 square feet was acquired by the Government in July 1976 by notice served by the Chief Surveyor on the 29th July, 1976, under the provisions of Section 6 of the Land Acquisition Act. The Company was requested to state on or before September, 1976, the particulars of its interest in the land and the amount of its claim as compensation. On the 12th September, 1977, a claim was received by the Attorneys for the company in the sum of \$1,949,490. 3.45 p.m.

Differences of opinions arose between the Government and its advisors as to the value of the property and it was submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act and on the 19th October, 1978 Mr. Justice Williams delivered a judgment in which he awarded \$1,535,683 plus cost and interest at the rate of 6% payable from the date of the judgment until the date of payment so that the original claim was for \$1,941,000 odd and the amount awarded was \$1,535,000. Of course, Sir, the cost has to be taxed.

I think that is a very clear and succinct position that we would hope that those responsible for a fair and accurate Report of these proceedings will let the public know. On the 12th September, the claim for \$1,947,000 was put in. The Attorney General in the last administration did not give any opinion on this matter and then subsequently appeared as Council in the very case.

The question that the Resolution do now pass was put and resolved in the affirmative.

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

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, the Resolution was agreed to.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that Private Members' Business be now taken, Sir.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Private Members' Business.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Item standing in the name of the hon. member for St. Michael North West, Private Bills, Item No. 1 be now read.

THE BARBADOS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1978

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 1 to move the third reading of a Bill to amend the Barbados Horticultural Society Act, 1928-5.

Mr. ALLEYNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Bill be now read a third time. The Report, Mr.

Speaker, of the Select Committee is before this Honourable Chamber and certain amendments which have been circulated have been made to the Bill and I will ask, Sir, that the Bill with amendments be now read a third time.

On separate motions of Mr. ALLEYNE, seconded by Mr. BRADSHAW, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, that concludes business today and I beg to move, Sir, that this House be now adjourned until Tuesday, 19th December, 1978, at 12.00 noon.

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

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