THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1976 – 81

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 21st November, 1978.

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

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P. (Speaker); Mr. R. StC. WEEKES, J.P.; Hon. L. S. CRAIG (Minister of Housing, Lands and the Environment); 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); 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); 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.; Hon. L. R. TULL, M.A., (Minister of Education and Culture); Mr. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT and His Honour E. E. ALLEYNE, LL.M., (Deputy Speaker).

Prayers were read.

Mr. SANDIFORD entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: I should like it to be known that there are no Minutes ready for confirmation today.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report and Financial Statement of the Caves Authority for the year 1977–78.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:–

Statements showing sums advanced to the Postmaster General for the payment of money orders for the months April to July, 1978.

Statements showing money order transactions through the Crown Agents for Overseas Governments and Administrations for period May-July, 1978.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of the following:–

Resolution to approve the Sugar Industry (Rehabilitation, Price Stabilization and Labour Welfare) Order, 1978.

I will be asking for leave to deal with this in all its stages at today's sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are just intimating that you will seek leave later.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' NOTICES

Mr. ALLEYNE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Bill to amend the Barbados Horticultural Society Act.

BILL READ A FIRST TIME

On motion of Mr. ALLEYNE, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, a Bill to amend the Barbados Horticultural Act was read a first time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Before we proceed to Orders of the Day, the hon. member for St. Michael South had filed a question with the Clerk, and he will be granted leave later in the day to give notice of it.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Government Business.

Order No. 1 is the instant Order of the Day and it stands in the name of the Hon. Prime Minister to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the proposals in the White Paper on the Review of the Remuneration and Pension Scheme of Parliamentarians.

Dr. CHELTENHAM and Dr. HAYNES entered the Chamber and took their seats.

RESOLUTION RE REMUNERATION AND PENSION SCHEME OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In the year 1971, Sir, when the Barbados Labour Party was preparing its manifesto for the general election to be held on September 9, the final point we made on that occasion was that in respect of salaries of members of Parliament as a matter of principle no salary increases will be voted by members of Parliament except after an independent review by an outside body. We made no pledge on that occasion to hand over the right to fix the salaries to any outside body, but we did think that the time had come to try to set public fear and public disquiet at rest by having a careful examination made of the general remuneration and terms of service of parliamentarians before parliamentarians entered on any exercise of increasing, decreasing or otherwise dealing with their own salaries, for when you get down to it, the public views exercises such as that in which we are not engaged as being exercises in voting yourselves, ourselves in here, money. It may very well be that the force of public opinion has less weight in controlling for example the earnings of professional people, the earnings of dock workers and so on, than it may have in controlling the earnings of members of Parliament.

Certainly when you think in terms of the responsibility carried by Ministers of Government in a country such as ours, when you think of the sacrifices that have to be made by persons who wish to enter our public life in this country, for there are no after rewards. Not for Barbadians ex-Ministers are the volumes of memoirs that carry a million dollar tag on them as in the United States, not for Barbadian ex-Ministers are the directorships four or five each of which carried a greater salary than a ministerial salary just relinquished as can be expected in Britain or North America.
12.25 p.m.

Not even for Barbadian ex-Ministers are such things as the lucrative and well paid jobs high up in the profession in which they were qualified that was afforded to Mr. Malenkov after a year or 14 months as Prime Minister of Russia. Barbadian ex-Ministers have not been fortunate enough to reap these rewards and therefore in my view cannot justifiably be asked to ignore considerations of earning power outside Parliament in analysing and setting the salaries and emoluments which Ministers and ordinary parliamentary members should get. But nonetheless, Sir, in response to the pressures of public opinion which are felt at their most considerable whenever the matter of parliamentary salaries comes up, in 1971 our Party decided that the matter would be analysed in depth, it would be looked at, if we got into power, by a body unconnected with members of Parliament and based upon that body's findings and recommendations members of Parliament might then be able to come to better informed conclusions as to what amount could reasonably be expected to be paid by way of parliamentary salaries.

The historical narrative will reflect that we were not elected to power in 1971 and that our views were not accepted by the Democratic Labour Party, and I must say that it is an issue on which diametrically opposed views can he beld. We put one view, the DLP put the other in 1971, their party prevailed at the polls and their view subsequently prevailed in Parliament.

Now, Sir, during the debate in 1973 when the question of increases came up, the point was put by Mr. Edwy Talma who was then the Leader of the House that the House of Assembly was the place for setting salaries, and a certain level of salaries was proposed, there was a certain amount of wrangling at the start of the debate. Our methodology met with some minor wrangling in and out of both political parties at that time, and some of the debate was concerned with that, but the points of principle were put forward. Mr. Talma suggested that the salaries which were then brought down by the Government were proper salaries, I replied on behalf of the Opposition, said I was not quarrelling with the level of the salaries I said that I personally was not going to vote for any salary increases at that time until there had been an independent review and a report to the House about the matter.

I have only just managed to get hold of the debate, Sir, I see Hon. F. G. Smith putting a strong case, in due course I may be able to draw members' attention to the specific amounts, but I would emphasise that the issue in 1973 was not with the amounts of the salaries but the issue was that Parliament, although it was the final arbiter, should have had an independent review before anything was done. There is a letter which is a document of the House, I do not think it will do any harm if I read it, this was written on the 2nd April, 1973 to Mr. Talma:

"Dear Minister,

In submitting my recommendations on salary revision for members of Parliament except for Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries I am bound, and am happy to be bound, by the policy of the Barbados Labour Party as expressed in the Party's Manifesto for the 1971 Elections to the effect that such a revision should take place only after an outside body has examined the matter and that Members and Ministers alike should not decide on their own pay increases. Also I think that Members' new salaries cannot logically be fixed without new Ministerial emoluments being officially made known at least to private Members of Parliament.

I therefore recommend that a small Commission preferably headed by a judicial officer or the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, and including a representative of the Establishments department of the Public Service and a person with a knowledge of the higher range of salaries in the commercial sector of Bridgetown, be appointed to investigate the matter and report at an early opportunity."

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Prime Minister might favour us with the page from which he is quoting.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: 2214, Sir, the debates for Tuesday, 17th April, 1973. Well, I am not going to bore members by reading my entire speech, they can have a look at it for themselves, but I did make the point too, Sir, when I was again recommending the Commission and recommending bi-partisan policy, I again recommended "that the Chairman of the Public Service Commission was a person suitable to sit and hear evidence, if necessary, from members of Parliament as to their expenses and as to the amount of time demanded of them in the discharge of their services, and report back to Parliament," — and these are the important words uttered on the 17th April, 1973 — "for Parliament is, after all, the final arbiter and the Act must pass through Parliament itself."

Well, Sir, as I say, there was no objection to any particular amount at that time, I am looking carefully at the debate because I have no doubt that those to whom truth, accuracy and political integrity do not matter will seek to misrepresent what was said on the earlier occasion. I spoke then, Sir, along the lines that Mr. Speaker was by no means being too generously rewarded. The exact words, if I may quote them, "I am not going to say it is excessive. Your Honour has a dignified position to keep up. I think that the former Speaker and the late Leader of the Opposition were mistaken at the last salaries revision when they accepted very ungenerous salaries indeed and abandoned their entertainment allowances."
12.35 p.m.

"I believe that both of them at the time were taking too restrictive a view of the traditions which they had to uphold, and I went on to name the salary and said that I did not believe it was an unreasonable sum of money to pay because although the Speaker is theoretically a part time officer, in fact he is constitutionally just as full time as a Minister; he continues after the House dies, which I would think is one aspect of the characteristics which divide full time from part time." I have no doubt that the hon. member for St. Michael South with the research he has made of my speeches over the years will find that same thread of consistency running through the debates of 1973 in respect of Parliamentary Members' salaries, as he has found in other areas. When the two of us sit down about the year 2005 or 2010, having retired from the service of the public of this country, there is nobody I would rather have edit my collected speeches than the hon. member for St. Michael South, and an examination of the debates will show what point was put on that occasion. Nevertheless Sir, our views did not prevail then; there was neither a Select Committee nor an outside independent body, but Parliamentary members' salaries were raised in 1973 by fiat of the Cabinet carried through Parliament on the basis of their Parliamentary majority. I did not hear then the voice of the Church raised against the actions of the Government; I did not hear the voice of the Barbados Workers Union or of the National Union of Public Workers on that occasion; it passed and that was that.

Now in 1976 the Barbados Labour Party again repeated its pledge not to carry out any increase of salaries of members of Parliament unless there was first an independent review by a properly qualified outside body. Such an outside body was appointed in the form of the Chairman of the Public Service Commission, a former trade unionist, and a former senior civil servant — an administrator of Montserrat who had become an executive in a commercial firm in Bridgetown. This is the Nicholls Commission. The Nicholls Commission Report is before the House and it can be studied and examined.

That Commission did not contain, as originally envisaged when we were in Opposition, any public officer and therefore on November 21, 1977 after the Commission's Report had been handed in, I wrote to the Chief Establishments Officer and asked him to analyse the recommendations in terms of general suitability in the light of his knowledge of conditions in the Public Service.

Now the first of the Chief Establishments Officer's recommendations is not before the House, but

in the light of certain matters which have arisen I am going to refer to some elements of it.

Now on that occasion the Chief Establishments Officer pointed out that the Nicholls Commission had made a fundamental mistake in its calculation, a fundamental mistake in its approach to the arithmetic of the matter, because the Nicholls Commission failed to take into account that the Public Officers Housing Allowance is really a part of his basic salary called by another name, since it is taxable and pensionable, and that the total emoluments of the public officer at Permanent Secretary level or any other level where a housing allowance is drawn include the housing allowance and he pointed out that on that basis the Nicholls Commission had exaggerated the gaps and had not properly made allowance for that aspect of the matter. He therefore pointed out that to restore 1973 relativities in terms of salary it would have been necessary in 1977 to pay a salary of $34,560 to a Minister annually and $48,000 to the Prime Minister. Now this is a very important point, which although it emerges from the second of the reports of the Chief Establishments Officer it was not outlined in full. In fact, what had happened was that the Nicholls Commission got its arithmetic wrong. In recommending $42,336 for the Prime Minister they were departing from their own principles because they said that the relativity of 1973 should be restored, but their calculations did not restore it.

They also made other mistakes. In fact, the Nicholls Commission would have reduced the salary of Parliamentary Secretaries who sat in the Senate; it would have reduced certain members' salaries. So it was clear that there were anomalies in the Nicholls Report that had to be questioned.

Now I am not saying anything against the Commissioners; they made their findings. Some of them the Government did not appreciate – outside the question of arithmetic. For instance we do not agree with the idea of clocking in for a member of Parliament. I am sure the hon. member for St. Lucy does not have to clock in with the Barbados Workers Union to draw his salary, and we regard the idea of clocking in for Parliamentarians as odious. We do not believe that the dignity of the House of Assembly of Barbados can be served by telling members that if they come and attend prayers and sign their names they will get $150 even if they go away the next minute. A member's emoluments should not be based on how often he attends the House or speaks in the House; that is a matter for political comment at election time. A member's value as a representative does not necessarily depend on the immediacy of his attendance in Parliament. Parliament is not a part-time occupation in the sense that it only meets one day a week; you have to work every day as a member of Parliament. People are at your house every day; on the phone they try to get in touch with you every day. Last night at 10.45 one of the policemen on guard at the Prime Minister's residence could tell me there was somebody in a car waiting to see me. Indeed yesterday was a difficult day, because someone came to see me at 7.15 a.m., on a political matter even before I got out to work; so it can be seen that the work of a member of Parliament starts from the time he gets up until he goes to bed, and it is unfortunate that the Nicholls Commission did not seek a little more information from persons with experience in Government. Perhaps they should have discussed these matters with persons like Cameron Tudor, D. D. Garner, Edwy Talma, Owen T. Allder and Dr. Wilson and others who have been in Parliament in days gone by, before members were paid and after. But in any case I am not seeking to defend anything; I am only saying that there are legitimate criticisms of the Nicholls Report and I think that is one of them, the idea of paying members of Parliament $150 a day for attendance.

Now the next stage in the chronology relates to a Parliamentary Question which was asked by the then Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Frederick Gladstone Smith, and which was answered on December 13, 1977. 12.45 p.m.

The question asked was: 1. Has the Commission established under the Chairmanship of Mr. Neville Nicholls to review Parliamentary salaries and terms and conditions of Parliamentary service reported? 2. If the answer is in the affirmative, will the Minister take immediate steps to publish for public information the report and recommendations of the said Commission? 3. Will the Minister state whether or not the Government intends to implement the recommendations of the said Commission? 4. If the Government does not intend to implement the recommendations of the said Commission, will the Government state its reason for the non-implication? 5. If the Government intends to implement the recommendations will the Government state how soon the Legislation to implement the recommendations will be introduced into Parliament?

On 13th December, 1977, I gave the following Reply:–

"1. Yes, Sir.

2. The Nicholls Report will be presented to Parliament in due course along with the comments of the Cabinet and the Chief Establishments Officer. These comments will include the Government's views and any recommendations which the Government intends to make to Parliament on the matter

raised in the last three paragraphs of the Honourable Member's Question."

It seems that we have a pack of journalists who do not do their homework. The answer that I gave in Parliament in December, 1977, was that a report would be given to Parliament in due course along with the comments of the Cabinet and the Chief Establishments Officer. I said that those comments would include the Government's views and any recommendations which they intended to make to Parliament on the matters raised in the last three paragraphs of the hon. member's question.

I would honestly and sincerely recommend that those who write for the newspapers would study the subject before they write. Barbados would be better served on both sides of Parliament than we are by reading the Press. Some of it is due to malice, and some is due to sheer ignorance by not doing their homework properly. Since December last year we told Parlaiment that we would be coming here with the comments of the Cabinet as well as those of the Chief Establishments Officer. Today is not a day for a debate on the quantum of members' salaries. We have read a lot and heard a lot about the Government's proposals. I want hon. members to look at what this Resolution seeks to bring about. This Resolution seeks to appoint a Select Committee – let me see if I can find the necessary terms – to accept the proposals for the remunerations of Parliamentarians which have been laid; and those proposals are set out in paragraph 15 of the White Paper. The last of the proposals set out in paragraph 15(1) is that emoluments should be revised with effect from 1st April, 1978, particularly along the lines recommended by the Chief Establishments Officer in his comments in paragraph 8, and broadly along the lines of what he said concerning such modifications as might be considered appropriate by Parliament, with particular considerations being given to an increase in allowances, and constituency allowances to all members of the House of Assembly.

In other words, what people are casually talking about as Government salary proposals are not any salary proposals by the Government. They are there to be read in conjunction with paragraph 16(1). That is a very important point. I can say that the Government's representatives on the Select Committee will be seeking a better provision for the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Chairman of Committees and the Leader of the Opposition. This is contained in the proposals of the Chief Establishments Officer.

I can go on; but if you want to find out what is happening, read that paragraph and not what was reported in the Press. That represents the true position; and what the Chief Establishments Officer has done is to make a calculation based on the Commission's report; and the Government will take a calculated look into the Commission's report.

I think it is safe to say, since a Mr. Tudor's name has appeared as mentioned in the Report, that the person referred to in the Report who recommends $50,000 a year for the Prime Minister and $2,000 a month for ordinary members, is Mr. James Cameron Tudor, Commander of the Most Excellent Order of St. Michael and St. George, former Deputy Prime Minister, High Commissioner to the U.K. and Envoy Plenipotentiary to the United Nations, who first entered the House in 1954, and left the House in 1971 – the only person who has ever led both Chambers in this Ancient and august legislature. I can also say that his views have got the support of other parliamentarians who have served for an even longer time on both sides – the Opposition and the Government in this Chamber.

We will take these proposals into consideration, Sir. I can say that there are a number of them which hon. members will take note of, and that indeed have already been accepted by the Government. All of these matters are being taken into account by the Select Committee.

Now, Sir, to continue going through the White Paper proposals, we are asking Parliament to endorse certain things; but we have rejected the Nicholls Commission proposal to give members $7,000 tax free. The Government is not supporting that. At the present marginal rate of tax applicable in the range where the Prime Minister's salary is, that would be a tax break of $49,000 a year. At other ministerial rates it would be worth $21,000 a year. The $4,000 a month in your hands is something to have; but we are rejecting that. We are rejecting some of the things that the Nicholls Report said we should have. We are refusing the tax break, as I have said.

12.55 p.m.

It just shows you how wrong people can get things when their minds are closed through prejudice, party politics or inability to see what is in front of their faces. One of the things that we are substituting for that tax break is contained in paragraph 15(2) of the White Paper, that is a proposal to pay an amount of $42,000 a year for part-time secretarial assistance for each member of the House of Assembly who will be eligible for the constituency allowance.

If this proposal is accepted, Sir, it will not be given to the member as cash in his pocket. He will have to nominate a Secretary to do his constituency work for him. It is considered that the amount of work to be done, and we are passing this, Sir, on the recommendations of the Chief Establishments Officer, it

is considered that the amount of work to be done can be amply rewarded by the $350.00 per month as it is not considered to be a full-time job and one of the reasons that prevailed with us to reject the $7,000 tax break and instead to handle it in a way like this is that it will give 24 girls or 24 girls and boys a job. That is one of the reasons that every member of Parliament will now be able to give a job to some qualified potential Secretary in his constituency rather than taking the money to spend on ourselves, perhaps on that or on something else.

A member who is not standing again might be very unlikely to pay the same attention to his constituency as a member who is. He might just take the money. Rather than do that we are giving the amounts of money to the officers themselves, to these part-time secretaries and so on.

In addition to that, Sir, the Opposition will have its own Secretary. The Leader of the Opposition therefore will have two Secretaries. He will have a full-time Secretary at a salary of $8,328 per annum and as a member of Parliament he can appoint a second Secretary part-time to do his pure constituency work.

We are accepting the recommendations of Mr. Tudor that members of Parliament would be given the right of free postage in respect of correspondence of Government Departments. It might not seem like an enormous amount of money, Sir, but we think that the member is important, but more important than that when we come to the representation of the People's Act, we are also proposing to give every candidate at an election the right to post one election circular free. Every candidate. Perhaps the deposits will have to go up a little bit so that those candidates who have had free postage and who have lost their deposits will have paid into the Treasury an amount sufficient to cover the waste of time involved and that is a matter for the legal legislation. That will not be a matter that will be dealt with by the Select Committee.

Now, Sir, we have another proposal that members of Parliament should be granted tax relief of up to 10 percent of total emoluments or $300 a month, which ever is less, in respect of subscription paid by them to a Registered Political Party. Now the first point I want to explain in that proposal is the expression "Registered Political Party."

The legislation known as the Integrity Legislation which will shortly be coming to the House, Sir, is going to contain references to Registered Political Parties because we believe that not only should members of Parliament, Senators and other persons in the political eye be asked to make declarations of assets but we think that officers of political parties should also be asked. We are therefore going to introduce the system which is being used in Britain and other countries which ask for Political Party Registration. It is now being introduced all over Canada. Members who are familiar with the relevance of British Electorate Law will know that the ballot papers in Britain now carry the party affiliation. A man's political party is now printed after his name on the ballot papers.

That matter is also under consideration for Barbados but no decision has yet been taken on it. A decision has been taken that political parties would have to register in future and certain matters will arise from that in the Representation of the People's Act.

Now, Sir, we have for a long time been operating under an organised hypocrisy that you do not have to be a financial member of a political party to enter Parliament. This particular hypocrisy being organised for the purpose of the Commissioner of Inland Revenue denying you the right to have your subscriptions to a political party set off against your Income Tax.

Now anybody in the House who is a Lawyer will know that the subscriptions to the Barbados Bar Association are set off against your taxable income. It is understood that a man cannot practise Law unless he belongs to the Bar Association. Persons who are Doctors in the House will know that subscriptions to Medical Associations are also set off against your Income Tax. Indeed subscriptions for Medical Journals, a whole host of things are allowed to professional people by way of off-sets against Income Tax.

The same is true of Engineers, Architects, all professions, even Journalists. I do not know if the Press Association of Barbados qualifies itself as a Journalist Association but it is understood that in Britain where you have in effect closed shops of the National Union of Journalists that they are regarded as professional expenses.

Each and everyone of us in here is obliged by his Party's rules to pay a subscription to the political funds of the Party. Everyone of us. I pay $200 plus per month. I do not know what the other members pay. I cannot remember the amounts, Sir. I hear hon. members saying it is too much. There are the official subscriptions. That is all they are asking for, the official subscriptions.

Nobody can come in here unless he is willing to meet his financial responsibilities to the political party which sponsored him and it is hypocrisy to say that those financial responsibilities are not an unescapable expense of earning the Parliamentary salaries and I myself feel that where this is concerned that it is time to put an end to this hypocrisy.

The House of Assembly pay sheets recognise the fact that you have to pay. They have up a little note, BLP subscriptions, DLP subscriptions and I believe the computer prints out the amounts every month. It is like the Pension Fund deductions. That is another thing I do not think the members of the public know that members working in here for their pensions pay a percentage of their salaries every month towards this, unlike civil servants who get their pensions without subscription.
1.05 p.m.

Members in here pay. The hon. member for Christ Church South Central left several thousand dollars in here when he left the House in 1971. Several thousands of dollars were left in here which he had paid over the years towards his pension, and I sincerely hope that in due course the public will come to understand that by a self-denying ordinance members of Parliament decided to contribute to their pensions. Nobody could have made us contribute, but we voted a contribution to the taxpayers. You hear how we vote ourselves salaries; nobody says you voted yourself a contribution to your pension. They talk about pensions; they do not talk about the contributions. As things are, indeed the contributions I made for years will be lost unless something is done about it. The Government in due course I do not think intends to allow the hon. member for St. John when he resigns or when he retires from public life to draw the Leader of the Opposition's pension as well as the Prime Minister's penion, and I do not think that he intends me to draw both either, but as the legislation at present exists, both of us can draw both. But I think an end will have to be put to that, but in the meantime there are several thousand dollars locked up in the Treasury that I have already contributed and for which I will never draw a Leader of the Opposition's pension. Anyhow, that is only by the way.

I have spoken with some force about this since I have seen some nonsense in the Press. I am trying to pay respect to these comments, but some of them are really very difficult to pay respect to. I have seen some nonsense in the Press in regard to this matter. We have to recognise that it is, I repeat, an inescapable expense of public life that you have to contribute to your party. We do not want to overdo it. We do not want to carry it too far, therefore we say 10% of salary or $300, whichever is less. In other words, if my salary is whatever it is now, $33,600, I will not be able to contribute more than $300. I will only be able to contribute $336 or whatever 10% will be.

Now, Sir, the next Item is No. 7. This is something on which hon. members feel very strongly. It forms part of Mr. Tudor's recommendation and also of the Nicholls recommendations, but we are having some emendations of that. We are asking the House to approve that on dissolution of Parliament all members should continue to be eligible for their salaries and allowances up to nomination day. Thereafter only those who are nominated except for Ministers, parliamentary Secretaries, the Speaker and the President will be eligible to receive emoluments up to polling day. I cannot put quite such a strong case for this. I have never really felt very strongly about it, but no doubt there are other members who will put this case with some force. Certainly I accept it. The amount of money is very small. I think that the business of taking away a man's salary immediately the House is dissolved so that he has to go through a month or two and then gets re-elected and gets a salary again, is undesirable. I can see that it could be considered as undesirable.

Now comment has mainly so far confined itself to the question of salaries. We are living in a very critical age. The favourite sports of Barbadians are more than ever seen to be cricket and criticism. We are living in an age when good news is no news, when the Press seeks what is bad, what is critical, what is unfortunate rather than what is positive and what can uplift the people, what is useful to make comments about. If an hon. member on the other side of the House gets up and makes a speech explaining the past activities of the Government, sets out principles and motives for doing something and no hon. member on this side gets up and is critical, as I once saw on a debate on civil aviation to which the Leader of the Opposition contributed, no mention would be made of that in the Press. The fact that an hon. member on that side could say something useful and it was not criticised means that it was not worth mentioning. If, on the other hand as has happened in here the Chairman of the Barbados Marketing Corporation gets up and explains that the BMC is doing well, that it is improving its position, that it is trying to bring down prices for the people, and then the Minister responsible for Agriculture gets up and tells you something positive about agricultural marketing policy and the former Minister responsible gets up and also says something positive, none of that is reported in the Press. It is too positive. It shows things in too good a light. It puts too good and rosy a view on society though none of these views are disagreed with. But previous to that an hon. member on the other side got up and, should I also call it a lapse, in a lapse said the BMC should be closed down and implied that everybody should be sent home. On the front page of the Advocate you get a report "Caddle calls for investigation". That is how the Advocate summarised the BMC debate. Well when we are dealing with Reporters who, putting it at its highest, have so little sense of what is suitable, what is appropriate in a developing country or a developed country, you should not really express surprise that not one single organ of the Press, not Rediffusion, C.B.C., the Advocate, the Nation has thought fit to refer to the fact that Government is reducing members' entitlement to

parliamentary pensions. You see that would put the Government in a good light.

The public says the pensions are too generous and we feel the pensions are too generous. *(Asides.)* I hear an hon. member from behind me say "who we?" But, Sir, we have collective responsibility. Maybe I do not altogether agree with some of the proposals myself, but we have collective responsibility in this matter. But you see that would put the Government in a good light, therefore the Advocate will go into the highway, the byways and indeed even in the gutters to find a comment that will show the Government in a bad light that nobody editorially or otherwise will see fit to point out that the Government is proposing that parliamentary pensions be made a little less generous.

Mr. TAITT entered the Chamber and took his seat.

The proposal which the Government is making will take them to paragraph 8. Firstly, we do not believe that any change will be made in the computation of retiring benefits. The Nicholls Commission had recommended that you have to be a Minister for so many and so many years before you could get a ministerial size pension. With great respect to the Nicholls Commission, I cannot agree with them. This is not employment in Broad Street where you can expect to go from salary to salary to salary on merit, or indeed just by long service. You may be a marvellous Minister, able, honest, full of integrity, efficient and yet the rest of your party may be foolish, corrupt, ignorant and your party goes down at election time. Now you may only have been a Minister for two years. Your performance as a Minister may not have been enough to lift your party up and save it at the election, but you will go into Opposition and you may stay in the House for another 15 years and through no fault of yours you do not get that original salary. The Nicholls Commission says that you must not get ministerial pension. It is unfortunate that they did not ask any persons concerned in 1968 to give evidence on this matter. They tried to reduce us to the level of civil servants. A civil servant can get a pension after 10 years and never rise above senior clerk, never have a piece of responsibility or initiative of his own. I do not know why people are so unkind to members of Parliament.

We feel that if a man has been Minister, he has given of ministerial service and he should get a ministerial pension. We felt that in 1968 and we continue to feel it now. If a man has been Speaker, Minister, Leader of the Opposition, whatever position that lifts him above the ordinary level of salary, he should be pensioned at that position. The only exception which we would make is that we would like to make allowance in the legislation for a caretaker Government because the possibility that a Government may fall in Parliament and another party or another set of members asked to form a caretaker government for the purpose of holding an election remains in any parliamentary system structured such as ours, and we therefore are going to propose that you must have drawn a salary for a minimum period of 90 days.

1.15 p.m.

We therefore are going to propose that he must have drawn the salary for a minimum period of 90 days. In fact, Sir, when you get down to it I suppose if a man as a Minister can prove within 90 days that there is something wrong with him and the Prime Minister was able to see it very quickly, that would be a ground for saying he should not get the salary either, but the 90 days period is chosen on the basis that you must hold an election within 90 days once there has been a dissolution of Parliament, and so we are suggesting at least one continuous period of 90 days. Maybe the methodology will turn out that we could have made it a little longer than 90 days, but whatever it is it will be a short period relating to situations of caretaker Governments or other sudden parliamentary catastrophes of one sort or another, but as far as other catastrophes are concerned we would not wish this to apply to a Minister or a legislator who died within the period of 90 days. If somebody is removed from office by death we do not think that we should apply a qualifying period as far as the computation of the retiring benefit is concerned. I see that (b) appears here: "No unnecessary financial incentive should be provided to a Prime Minister to hold on to office by the provision of a special qualifying period."

This is the way it has to be, Sir, but I was speaking as one to whom the Nicholls suggestions would not have applied because it is suggested it should apply in the future — I must tell you that I really consider that that was a most vile proposal that a Prime Minister should serve for a certain number of years before getting a pension. It would not have applied to me, it will apply to a future Prime Minister, so I can speak as one who benefits under the present conditions, but the Prime Minister ultimately can remove any Minister who misbehaves, but you cannot even remove a Prime Minister. In fact, you cannot remove a Prime Minister against his will without holding a general election, because even if you pass a vote of no confidence the Prime Minister can appeal to the electorate, and it is wrong in my view to give a Prime Minister any further incentive to hold on to office so that a Prime Minister who has been in office four years and ten months will decide he is not going to hold an election for another two months, even if the holding of an election will fall at a very convenient time, because he is waiting to qualify for his pension. I think this is one of the serious errors of judgement on the part of the Commission. It may

very well be that a Prime Minister is very ill and should retire on the grounds of illness but he wants to hold on to office in order to get his pension. All of these matters for which some mischief would be occasioned if we had accepted that.

Now I come, Sir, to the proposals for the pensions. We propose to abolish the pension system which would give an hon. member a pension of 1/3 of his emoluments after six years. We think that six years is a short period, it may have been appropriate when there were people still in Parliament who had served in three year, Parliaments, and I do not think this is any longer appropriate. We are proposing that there will be only two levels of pensions in future, one of half of the highest emoluments and the other 2/3 of the highest emoluments; that you will qualify for half your emolument after service of ten years or two parliamentary terms amounting to eight or more years, which ever is less. In other words, you may not be able to make ten years by a week or two because of the date of the election, but we give you a period which would allow even for four year parliaments, parliaments which stop short six months before their expiry date, and which will give you a general period of ten years stretching over two or more parliaments. That would be half your emoluments, and for service of 15 years or three full parliamentary terms amounting to 12 or more years, which ever is less, the same amount of conditions, we are proposing that you will get 2/3 of your emoluments.

It is proposed also that people who will become Prime Minsiters after having been ordinary legislators will not be allowed to draw two pensions, but may be allowed the option of recovering contributions to the pension scheme or choosing which pension they want. In other words, if somebody is Prime Minister now and is Leader of the Opposition in the year 2000, it may very well be that he will prefer in the year 2000 to take the Leader of the Opposition's pension because salaries would have gone up, so you will allow him to take his contributory pension in that year rather than his Prime Minister's. These are considerations which can readily be understood once they are analysed, and Sir, we are going to bring in the long hope for provision that a member's personal representative or nominee may opt for any gratuity which is payable in the case of a member who has died while still in service, and it is intended to back-date all these pension proposals, so even though it may take us a little time to bring in this legislation, it is intended to carry it back to 1st April, 1978. There is one person who may be affected adversely by back-dating, that is Mr. Frederick Gladstone Smith. I have taken the liberty of consulting with him on these provisions and indicating to him that there will be proviso that anybody who qualified in actual time before this Act is passed will not be subject to the back-dating. It will only, I think, affect Mr. Smith, because I think he resigned on 2nd April, so he is caught by one day, not those who now have an entitlement to resign, so I am giving warning to everybody in the House that these new pension provisions apply in spirit to them now, and will apply in fact to them when they are passed. Anybody who is present in the House can bear that in mind, it is only Mr. Smith whom the Government is prepared to exempt, it will be totally unconscionable that after Mr. Smith has resigned with 12 or 13 years' service to tell him that he cannot get the pension he is actually drawing, he would have had to have 15 years' service, that would be against all conscience and we do not intend to do it. It is a difficult question altogether.

Well, Sir, the final proposal of course is to appoint the Select Committee to analyse the revised remunerations and the pension scheme. There is a slight error, Sir, I see that it says a Select Committee of Parliament should be appointed to determine the revised remuneration and pension shceme for parliamentarians. The expression "both Houses of Parliament" appears here, but as far as the House of Assembly is concerned, we are proposing a Committee of eight headed by yourself, Mr. Speaker, and we are proposing to nominate four members from this side of Parliament and the Opposition may be at liberty to nominate three members for such a Select Committee.

1.25 p.m.

I do not know what consultation the Leader of the House may have had with the Leader of the Opposition. I was fortified to hear a radio interview with the Leader of the Opposition carried over Barbados Rediffusion, in which he said that the principle of the Democratic Labour Party had always been to appoint a Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament to go into the question of the salaries of members of Parliament and fix salaries only after that, and that was the procedure that party had always adopted. I was heartened to hear that and I look forward to seeing the Leader of the Opposition himself serving on such a Committee which he has said has always been appointed in accordance with the principles of the party which he heads. I hope that all members of Parliament will be able to make an input into this matter and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to second the Resolution and in doing so I would like to make a small contribution on this issue. I happen to be one of those who have sat through more than one occasion in this Chamber in which the question of salaries for members of Parliament came before this House. I have been in politics for some fifteen to seventeen years. I know what it is to be in, and I know what it is to be out; I know what it is to be in this

Chamber and I know what it is to be in the Other Place, and if there is one thing that evokes a tremendous amount of irrational arguments and provokes selfish attitudes it is the question of remuneration for members of Parliament. It seems to me, Sir, that it is not recognized that it is impossible for any community to run itself without an executive arm and some kind of Parliamentary organization, and I think it should also be recognized that Parliamentarians are human beings. They are no special breed of human beings, and like other human beings they have to face the expenses which a normal being faces in respect of living. But there are also additional expenses which arise as an incident to being a Parliamentary representative. I don't think that in this community the impact of the abolition of local government upon the demand of the time and energy of Parliamentarians has been fully realized, and I am very glad to see that as a matter of principle the Government has adopted the attitude which was set out in its Manifesto as long ago as 1971, in having a Commission appointed for the purpose of an objective analysis of the comparative rates of pay between Parliamentarians and others.

Now, as the Prime Minister has said quite clearly, it was never the view of Government that the sovereignty of Parliament would be taken away by virtue of the appointment of this Commission. As a matter of fact, if one studies the way how Parliamentary and Ministerial salaries are dealt with in other countries in the Commonwealth, and indeed to in the United States at Federal Government level as far as I understand, one would know that there is a distinct pattern of having periodically a similar type of body for the purpose of drawing this comparison and for the purpose of enlightening the public as to the remuneration being paid to people to perform similar service in the community. And it is for that reason that the Nicholls Commission was appointed.

Honourable members can be assured that the recommendations of the Commission, like the views of the Chief Establishments Officer on the report of the Commission, cannot take precedence over the collective wisdom of members of Parliament whose right it is by the Constitution to be the final arbiter in this respect.

Now, Sir, the position is that a number of new proposals have been put forward and suggestions made, particularly to take account of the fact that the realities of the situation in Barbados where with a single tier system of Government, every member of Parliament – Minister or otherwise – is called upon to be a channel of communications between his constituents and the Government and other office holders in the community. Obviously this requires, if the members in a constituency are going to be serviced properly in the myriad areas where Government touches their life, from scavenging to external affairs – this requires that some assistance should be given, not for the purpose of enhancing the pay proposals of the member but for the purpose of ensuring that the member's constituents can be properly served. If we had a system of local government in Barbados in which some of the areas of Government were delegated, there would be no need to the same extent in this regard. But the fact of the matter is that in Barbados a member of Parliament is called upon to deal with a variety of work for his constituents which in other countries would be divided between the M.P., and the Local Government Council. That is a very important point and I think that it is very unfortunate that in the analysis so far that has taken place these matters were not adverted to by those commentators who have commented on this matter.

The second point I wish to make is this: There is no group in this community that I know of who in the course of the last five years has not received an increase, with the exception of members of Parliament. The last time salaries of members of Parliament were fixed was in 1973. Now I think it very unfortunate for an organization which pretends and claims that it represents Government workers to suggest that it is dishonest for members of Parliament to want a revision of their remuneration, when that same organization has secured in the course of the last five years as many as three salary increases for its members.

1.35 p.m.

Now do not let us be hypocritical on this. I challenge any member of that organisation, if you were a member of Parliament, if you were a Minister or otherwise, to get up and say whether he would be prepared to accept a situation in which in 1973 a Minister received $24,000 as salary and his Permanent Secretary received $20,160. In 1977 a Minister received $24,000 a year and his Permanent Secretary received $29,000. In 1978 a Minister still receives $24,000, and his Permanent Secretary receives $34,000.

What kind of hypocrites can they be that they are going to say that they are going to be prepared to accept a situation in which they can argue with the Government for remuneration of their members upon the basis that in 1973 a Permanent Secretary received less than a Minister? They did not quarrel about it then. In 1977 the Permanent Secretary received more than the Minister; and as a result of their own bargaining now a Permanent Secretary should receive $34,000 and a Minister a salary of $24,000. I do not believe in any kind of hypocrisy. I call that down right hypocrisy on the part of the National Union of Public Workers not to point out that fact. They are the most dishonest things we have ever had around here when they do not tell the public the truth and the facts.

Let us deal with allowances now. I remember, sir, in 1969 or 1970 when I went to a meeting of a Select Committee and I made a speech in Parliament on Civil Servants salaries. I said that Parliamentarians should not get up and walk about and pretend that they are any special breed of man. I do not subscribe to that. I am always in favour of Parliamentarians being adequately remunerated, because I am in favour of the principle that those who abuse their office – the full weight of the law should come upon them; but in the context of this community, if you are going to ask people to come forward and serve in the interest of the general community, you cannot expect them to be financial martyrs, nor should they when they come forward be weak enough to be scared by such comments as come from the National Union of Public Workers. If they want to incite the public generally let them be honest, let them at least be honest in their comments and in the presentation of their arguments and point out that in this community Civil Servants have received three increases since 1973 and that a Minister who is responsible to the community now receives $10,000 less in salary than his Permanent Secretary. That cannot continue.

Let us get ahead with the allowances, because we are going to do the whole comparison. The non-taxable allowances – throughout the whole period of time – in 1973 the non-taxable allowances were fixed at $9,600. It was recognised many years ago that once you became a Minister in this country that certain reimbursable expenses had to be paid to you. You had to be paid for the cost of travelling and other incidental expenses of that kind. The previous Government fixed them at $9,600.

The same Civil Servants asked for allowances too. It was conceded that at the level of certain Heads of Departments that there should be certain scale for them; and the allowances were fixed. In 1973 they got $2,640. In 1977, $2,468. In 1978, $5,616. That does not take into account the fact that allowances in relation to travelling are also now being reviewed. Now, sir, a motor car. Ministers are not given motor cars in Barbados. Unlike Civil Servants they are not entitled to any housing allowance. There are no reimbursable expenses for travelling.

I would like to know, sir, if any of them who have sat down and studied what goes on in their departments in which people come and tell them that they want to see them before they see a Minister. Half of the problems is the Minister trying to explain that it is not for me to deal with this particular matter; that you deal with it at the level of the Civil Service. The truth of the matter is that in a community like this people expect to have direct access to Ministers moreso than in larger countries. There it is moreso by letter or petition; but in Barbados there is more personal contact than in many other countries of the world. Perhaps in the Caribbean the same situation exists between representatives and their constituents.

Now, sir, the increases. Despite the increase in costs which have taken place between 1973 and now - anybody who bought a car in 1973 and tried to buy a car in 1978, can tell me if the price has not gone up by 300 percent. try to replace it. What is the suggestion? That you must be a martyr? That you must be a martyr because you were so foolish as to come forward? You must go into the Bankruptcy Court because you were so foolish as to come forward? I do not believe in that. I believe in coming forward and giving honest representation; but I also believe that if the community wants you to come forward, there must be a reasonable level of remuneration for members of Parliament.

I have great pleasure in seconding this Resolution. I hope that hon. members on the Other Side will participate as we did when we were in Opposition, certainly when I was here. Not on the last occasion, because as I understand it, there was no Select Committee appointed; but I know that during the course of the 1966–71 session I was a member of the Committee presided over by the then Mr. Speaker in which both sides took part; and at that Committee all kinds of ramifications and suggestions were made.

I do not believe that this is a matter which should be approached on a partisan basis. All hon. members know that in the last five years inflation and increases in the cost of living have eaten into the remuneration that members of Parliament receive. I am not going to get up here and say that we do not deserve an increase. I am not a hypocrite, and I am not going to do it. It would be totally unreasonable; because there is no other group in the community who will stand up and stomach that situation. I am no martyr. I do not want to be a martyr. When you go to the shop you have to provide the wherewithal to make purchases. When you have to travel you have to buy gasolene. I do not want other people's money. I want what is reasonable. I have no qualms about supporting this Resolution. In due course of time those who think that we are wrong will have the opportunity to give their judgment. I only hope that those who from religious pulpits or otherwise pronounce their judgments will remember that there is such a thing as hypocrisy.

1.45 p.m.

The Hon. member for the City, the hon. member for Christ Church East, the hon. member for St. Michael West and myself along with you Sir, as Chairman as nominees from this side.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael South.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the member for Christ Church South Central, need not think that there is not going to be any contributions from over this side. We are going to participate in this debate and I am certainly on my feet and I will be participating and I expect that you will hear the views of other members in due course as this debate proceeds, so he need not have no fear in this particular matter.

I think what he may be concerned about is the content of their participation because I do not think that what may be said from this side will bring any comfort to the Government in this particular matter that they brought.

Now let me make my position clear as I made it clear last Tuesday. I am in favour of an increase for Parliamentarians. The *Advocate News* reported me quite accurately on that. I do not see why this particular debate should be transformed into a tongue lashing and a battering of the Press. We should be dealing with the issues in this debate not turning it into an informal onslaught on the Press as though the Press brought forward the proposals or brought them forward in the manner that they have been brought forward.

I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that this is going to be a very important debate. I believe it is going to be important because it is going to determine whether Parliament is an institution dominated and will continue to be dominated by the front bench, by the Ministers, or whether we will approach this matter as parliamentarians interested in the development of Parliament.

There was a time when Parliament was considered to have three main functions. It was a kind of 19th century view of politics and what place Parliament had in the political system. One such view was that Parliament was a place which would scrutinize legislation and secondly, which would keep the Government on its toes as far as policy making and administration was concerned and thirdly, it was the place where parliamentarians could bring forward the views of their constituents. It was Parliament which was supposed to exercise the control on the Executive.

We cannot discuss this issue here today unless we look at the functioning of Parliament, and the role of members of Parliament, but I want to make a general point here and now that while I said I am going to support an increase for Parliamentarians I had no idea at all what those increases would be and now that I have seen them, I am telling the Government openly they need pruning, they need shaping, look at them again and that is why I say that today will determine whether it is Parliament which will play an important part in the political affairs of this country or whether it would be dominated by the front bench and that the back bench, both on the Government side and also the ordinary members of the Opposition will have no say in the fashioning of the proposals as far as salaries are concerned.

I am saying nothing about your position, Mr. Speaker, because I said last week I might have to put a case for you. I do not know, Mr. Speaker. I understand, not I understand, I know the work that you did on the Opposition bench from somewhere on this side when your party was in Opposition. I could not say a word.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it you mean when the Barbados Labour Party was in Opposition.

Mr. SANDIFORD: That is exactly what I mean. I could hardly say a word, carry out any particular action and you would be there on my toes. I cannot say behind me. You were on my toes. Anything I do, how I dressed, what I said, but on one occasion, they talk about long Parliamentary Questions, I remember a question being asked and there were 26 parts to that question A-Z and the only reason why they were no more was because they were no more letters in the Alphabet, but I know the sterling work that you put in.

Of course you could not fault the Minister of Education under my administration. You tried. You tried, but you could not fault it. Mr. Speaker we know that you did the work then, but when the time came for the pears to be picked and the plums to be shared, you were not there. You were not there. Well some time has past and you have gone on with a measure of success to control matters in this House and to keep our proceedings at a dignified level. I do not know if it is there. I understand that you were hopeful that ministerial rank would be yours some time and I notice the second time around.
1.55 p.m.

I notice the second time around.....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, is the hon. member debating Your Honour's position? Is he debating the proposals before the House? I submit to Your Honour that he is irrelevant.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am debating, Mr. Speaker, the proposals before the House. I am debating the proposals because there is a proposal here in respect of Mr. Speaker, and I am very glad that.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it you mean Mr. Speaker's salary.

Mr. SANDIFORD: The salary, not Mr. Speaker. That would have to be done by a substantive Resolution. It is Mr. Speaker's salary, and I think I am

making fair comment because the second occasion for appointing Ministers have come around and Mr. Speaker is not up at ministerial level yet. The hon. member for St. Peter.....

Mr. SPEAKER: You mean Mr. Speaker's salary.

Mr. SANDIFORD: That is the main point, Mr. Speaker. It is the salary, and we cannot understand though there have been these promises made that the salary of the Speaker should be at the level of a Minister why these proposals are not in here. Why is this not the case? We have seen the position by-passed. At least, the hon. member for St. Peter, whatever promises, worked hard; no one can deny that. He worked hard. I can tell you that because he had some of my officers spend a lot of time looking into these questions, 26 parts of them, and now we come to debate this particular matter of opportunities for appointment at ministerial level, he has not made it; no dice they say, and when the salaries come around.....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, you will have to rule. No matter how much the hon. member may be trying to damn you with feint praise, there is a certain propriety, in my submission, that one must carry on in debates in this House, and I submit that the hon. member is entitled to talk about your salary; he is not entitled in my submission to come out and talk about ministerial appointments and whether or not a particular member of the House has or has not been appointed as a Minister on a separate occasion on a motion such as this. That is the point which I make.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order, please. The hon. member for St. Michael South is entitled to discuss the Speaker's salary, not the office.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am discussing the salary.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. member would sit.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

In view of the fact that there is no reply to Questions, I will take this opportunity to let the hon. member for St. Michael South give notice of his questions.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS

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

To ask the Appropriate Minister:—

1. Is the Minister aware that as a result of the recent heavy rains in early November a part of Clarke's Avenue and the surrounding area in the Constituency of St. Michael South was again heavily flooded?

2. Is the Minister aware that, whereas in the past the Barbados Fire Service responded promptly and positively to any calls for pumping off the excess water, that service on this occasion indicated it was in no position to assist the good people of the area?

3. Is the Minister aware that the stagnant water has remained for days on end not only in the back-yards but in the front yards of these residents, causing them severe inconvenience, anxiety and expense, as well as exposure to mosquito infestation and other health hazards?

4. Did any government Minister and/or official visit the area for an on-the-spot appraisal of the situation, and if not why not?

5. Would the Minister state why the Fire Service was not in a position to respond to the calls for assistance, and indicate what steps are being taken to prevent a recurrence?

6. What plans does the Minister have to stop or minimize flooding in the area mentioned, and when does the Minister intend to implement those plans?

7. Would the Minister consider as a possible solution the construction of an underground drain and manholes to lead the water away from the area?

Also, To ask the Minister of Education:—

1. How many students of secondary school age, namely eleven years old and over, are currently attending the Government all age primary or composite schools?

2. How many such students were attending those schools at the end of the 1975/76 and 1977/78 school years?

3. How many students of secondary school age are currently enrolled in the private approved schools?

4. Would the Minister state the number of classrooms, the roll, the optimum number of students in relation to the classrooms, and the incidence of overcrowding, if any, at each of the governm ent secondary schools, older and newer?

Mr. SPEAKER: This brings us to the end of Question Time.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSIN ESS

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

Order No. 1 under Private Members' Business stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Philip North, to move the passing of a Resolution noting the Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women, thanking the Commissioners for their outstanding Report, congratulating the Government for their vision in pursuing a policy of true equality of the sexes, *inter alia* and urging Government to implement at the earliest opportunity the Commission's recommendations.

RESOLUTION RE REPORT OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, in contemporary times the rights of women have become the central focus for debate. This is to be expected because of the great drive in the upliftment of rights generally throughout the world.
2.50 p.m.

Women's rights as a separate aspect are only a part of the board issue of human rights or fundamental rights. The United Nations and similar international organisations have from time to time proclaimed that greater attention should be given to the extinction of areas of discrimination in human life in this world. In little Barbados as early, I believe, as 1974 the present Attorney General, then a member of the Opposition, called on the then Government to set up a Commission to investigate the status of women in Barbados. That Resolution was turned down by the then Government which paradoxically had among its members, a woman. Undaunted by that setback the Attorney General when he found himself in a position of power and in a position to fulfil positively the aspirations that he had hoped for in respect of women set about to establish a commission to carry out the investigations into the status of women in this country. That Report has been laid in this House of Assembly, I think it was on the 19th September, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that all hon. members have had an opportunity in the intervening weeks to read and study the Report.

At this stage I would commend the Report as being a historical document of outstanding merit, one that contributes to the social history of this country, one that would provide a fund of source material for researchers of the future, one that has brought to bear in its presentation a great deal of scholarship, and one that has been comprehensive in spanning virtually every sector of life in this country in which the woman may find herself engaged.

The actual Report is true testimony to the seriousness of the Government and the Barbados Labour Party in fulfilling the pledges given in the Manifesto of 1976 on page 17 under the Head "Charter for Women". The Mainfesto states that "women constitute considerably more than half the population of Barbados. Yet of the working population only 39% are women; and still further there are twice as many women unemployed as there are men. In general women hold the lowest paid jobs in the community and, in proportion to their numbers and educational attainments, they do not get their proper share of jobs or indeed of managerial and supervisory opportunities."

Missing a paragraph, this follows: "The B.L.P. also twice introduced a resolution calling on the Government to set up a National Commission on the Status of Women with wide powers to inquire into and report on, with a view to legislative action, all areas of life in which women are discriminated against." And under the sub-head "The New Deal for Women" the Manifesto states that the B.L.P. on its return to office will establish on a permanent basis a National Commission on the Status of Women.

It is clear therefore that these three documents are living testimony, as I have said, to the party's pledge to establish a commission on the status of women. Now I think, Mr. Speaker in the light of other things that are being currently discussed in Barbados it is as well to point out that when one sets up a commission of inquiry with specific terms of reference it does not follow necessarily that each and every recommendation of the commission has to be accepted by the Government. If indeed a recommendation of a commission was anomalous or out of line with Government's overall policies, then surely no one would expect a Government to accept unequivocally the recommendations of the commission. The commissions are there, as I understand it, as a form of machinery to assist in the broadening of the democratic process, to assist in broadening the concept of consultative Government where the people at large are afforded the opportunity to put across their case, their views, their attitudes and their problems to an independent body who will then investigate, sift, weigh and report on their findings, but in no way must the commission be seen to be as it were a dictator of areas of policy to a

Government. It has a primary function in an investigative capacity to collect information, arrange it, disseminate it, but it cannot dictate, and so it is with the report of the commission on the status of women as well as any other commission – Nicholls would fall into place here, and I am not debating that now, Mr. Speaker, I have just used it by way of analogy, it fitted neatly into the argument – but as I understand what has happened, the sequel to this report – and I am sure the Attorney General will give the House guidance – as I understand it, various Government departments which are to be affected or which are likely to be affected by findings in the report will be asked to report to the Women's Bureau as to how the particular department sees the recommendations of the report affecting that particular Ministry or department.
3.00 p.m.

I believe it is conceived that the Bureau of Women's Affairs will operate more in an advisory capacity than otherwise, but as I said I expect that the Attorney General or the Minister of Education or somebody who is more attuned to this matter will enlighten the House as to the areas of demarcation of responsibility between the Department of Women's Affairs in terms of the Report of the Commission and the particular Ministry.

Now in introducing this Resolution I did in fact start by complimenting the Commission. I also wish to compliment the Government for its choice of the personnel who sat on that Commission. There is no need for me to go through them – their names are on page 3 of Volume 2 – but unlike other commissions, this commission – I believe – had only persons of outstanding personal and intellectual qualities who had some knowledge of the subjects they were dealing with, and therefore we ought not to wonder today that we have before us a report of such outstanding quality, and I do not anticipate that we will have any substantial diversions of views, attitudes or procedures on this Commission's Report.

Mr. Speaker, what I would be keen to find out from the Government, since I have asked them to take all necessary steps to implement at the earliest opportunity the recommendations of the Commission, is how the Government proposes to phase in some of the recommendations of the Commission. We have been promised a Family Law Bill next year. Some of that can be fitted neatly into the organization of Family Law but I do not know what time table the Attorney General has for the early implementation of the recommendations but presumably he will give some outline to the House as to how he proposes to deal with the recommendations of the Commission.

As I have said, it has been a pleasure to read this Report. It reminds me very much of Royal Commission Reports which I had to read in England for various aspects of my law training, e.g., the Commission on Capital Punishment.

There is in the report a level of intellectual brilliance, a depth of thought that I have not come across in any other similar report put out in Barbados in recent times. I remember as a very young person reading the Farley Report, but it cannot be gainsaid that the Commission on Women has done a fundamental service to the whole community of Barbados, present and to come.

I believe there is a very brief chapter by Mr. Ronald Hughes, and if there is a criticism I have of this Report it is that I was a little taken back by the presence of Mr. Hughes in this Report, dealing with the historical background at Chapter 1, Volume 1, pages 1 to 5. I really feel that since it was necessary for the Commission before arriving at their conclusion to investigate the historical role of women in the Barbadian society, a report of this status and quality deserved to have had a more comprehensive treatment than that which was given on pages 1 to 5 in chapter one. But I appreciate that in dealing with other particular heads the opportunity was taken then to relate the findings of the historical development of the particular area under investigation; but I still think that the report could have done a more comprehensive review of the historical background than was presented. That is the only real criticism I have to make.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to deal with specifics at this stage because it seems to me that we have to wait until the Government tries to implement some of the recommendations and then deal with them as they come before the House from time to time.

Of course the Commission did recommend retention of the action of breach of promise, but that has recently been abolished in legislation prepared for us less than a month ago, and that bears out what I was saying earlier, that the Government is not obliged to accept the recommendations of a Commission. What in fact the Commission has done is present something that is really informed opinion and the Government would have had the opportunity to be able to make the decisions which would have been arrived at on the basis of the widest possible consultation and expression of views. The Commission recommended the retention of a breach of promise but the policy makers of the Government decided not to, and I agree with that. It is an action whose usefulness has fallen into disrepute for a very long time and no longer forms a serious part of the law.

But I have been trying for more than two and a half years to get the Government of Barbados – not

this Government only but the former Government as well – to introduce legislation to protect Barbadian wives who have been deserted by their foreign husbands. I explained that there is a problem under the Matrimonial Clauses Act as presently operated; the Court can only assume jurisdiction to hear the case if the parties are domicile in Barbados. Under the archaic concept of law which we have – which happily the Commission on the Status of Women has advised should be abolished – a wife's domicile is tied to that of her husband, and I have explained that in the past you had American sailors or American servicemen living at the base at Harrison and marrying Barbadian women for the period of time they are on service here.
3.10 p.m.

When they return to their foreign countries they return and leave the women here and the women cannot get a divorce because the women are still domiciled by our law to someone who is in sovereign state like America; and that woman is denied the right to bring a case in Barbados for divorce, because she is, owing to the legal fiction that husband and wife are one, she should have the same domicile as her husband. It only requires an amendment to two or three at the most sections. The last Attorney General, Mr. Moe told me that he would look into it. The present Government says that it was coming in a comprehensive Bill.

I really do not wish to bring a Private Member's Bill to give some satisfaction to the Barbadian wives who are harrassed because of this anachronism. I am not going to do it if it is going to conflict with the Government, but if I have an assurance from the Government that they are going to do – to bring a Bill that would remove this hardship – then I will not present a Private Member's Bill. It is a problem that needs to be tackled and now, Sir. I leave that in the lap of the Attorney General until March next year. After that I will do it on my own, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, when this Resolution was debated on the 19th September, I then recommended that this House thank the Commission for their outstanding Report and their devotion to public duty in producing in such a short time such a comprehensive Report. It would not only be fair for me at this level to reiterate the compliments to the Commissioner, but I also wish to thank the members of the general public for turning up, going to the various meeting places and giving the Commissioners the benefit of their views, their attitudes and their problems. I am sure that without the cooperation of the general public of Barbados we could not have had before us today this Report which is so reflective of many of the problems of this society, especially among women.

But at the same time that I compliment the general public for their cooperation with the Commission, I want to deplore the behaviour of some who have recently been going to the Gambling Commission and behaving in a disgusting manner, in a disgusting, offensive and insulting manner. I am not condoning that. If people have a public responsibility to function as Commissioners to carry out an investigation for the enhancement and the total benefit of this society, it is no place for any person, organised as a group or orchestrated from without by persons of similar disgusting mentality to go in and interrupt the proceedings and disrupt people who are sitting on the Commission. If I had any family there, and anyone had insulted them, I know what I would have done if I was present. I am not advocating anything, Mr. Speaker. I am not threatening anybody; but I know what I would do.

I have witnessed in this country – I have been abused on platforms in the last six months; but I do not mind; because the time will come when I will catch some of those, and the one in particular who is abusing me for practising my profession.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are you defending?

MR. SIMMONS: The defence of women; but I am dealing with the Commission; and what I am saying Mr. Speaker, is that I hope that at the next meeting of the Gambling Commission the Commissioner of Police will see to it that his Force is represented there to ensure the proper and orderly conduct of the proceedings. If not, if these people who sit and function as Commissioners, as well as the general public, well meaning or interested, who go and sit to give the benefit of their views or to listen and hear what is going on and cannot sit in peace, comfort and dignity and hear the proceedings, then something is wrong in this society and the ill must be rooted out; like today. I am not talking about anybody in the back benches.

Those who have power must maintain that law and order is maintained in this country. They have allowed a breakdown for too long. I am, today, making the point that I am not today at all questioning anybody's right to constitutional freedom of expression; but that right must be circumscribed by certain types of conduct. It is circumscribed in the Constitution by legal constraints. Over and above that, it must be circumscribed by an understanding of people themselves as human beings with self respect and dignity as a man. The people of this country must not tolerate bad behaviour.

Mr. Speaker, I have the greatest pleasure in commending to the House the Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Barbados, and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. TAITT: I am rising to add to the support of this side to the calls for congratulations and acceptance of the Report.
3.20 p.m.

I would start off by saying that less it might have been misunderstood when the hon. member for St. Philip North introduced the Resolution where the Democratic Labour Party stood and stands on the question of the rights of women in this country, I would merely read as he did from a document which I hold in my hand which is a Manifesto designed for women for a free people of the Democratic Labour Party and under "Women" it says:

"The Democractic Labour Party will continue its programme of ensuring that women in this country are able to play a full role in the life of the community. Since 1961 we have improved tremendously the material in Child Health Services, women have shared in the general economic, educational and social advancement of the country. In addition, we have passed the Succession Act enabling common law wives and illegitimate to inherit properties. We have secured the jobs of pregnant women. Our laws relating to the rights of women are the most liberal found anywhere. We have recently established the Commission on the rights of women and we will give proper consideration to any recommendation made by that Commission."

I find that is amusing to the Hon. Attorney General, but, Sir, even the Hon. Attorney General himself would recognise that when he took up the job and announced the appointment of a Commission on the Status of Women he was following in the steps of the Minister before him who was responsible for establishing a Commission as it had been indicated that a Commission would be established and indeed in establishing the Commission and setting up the personnel.....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the hon. member wants the factual position, Sir, it is this. On a point of order, Sir, I am giving him the position he wants to know. In March 1976 this House passed the Resolution which I brought into the House. It was the second Resolution which the former Government had rejected. In June they stated that they would carry out the terms of the Resolution. They did not. The House was dissolved and the Commission was established under this Government. That is the factual position.

Mr. TAITT: I do not know for what reason the Hon. Attorney General got up, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chair knows.

Mr. TAITT: I wish someone would tell me. The hon. member must know that he is not the first Cabinet Minister. The hon. member must know that he is not the first person in Barbados who has ever expressed any original thought on anything if he has ever done so. The hon. member must know that he is not the only person in this country who has the interest of women at heart. He is always trying and gets very upset if anyone else either on that side or this side at anytime suggests that they might have an interest in women. I do not understand why the hon. member feels constrained to get up and point out what it is he has done for women. He has done no more. In fact, he has done a lot less than many persons I know. Mr. Speaker, Sir,.....

Mr. SPEAKER: We are having too much noise on the Government benches, please.

Mr. TAITT: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the members of this Commission on the National Status of Women are all oustanding citizens or resident in Barbados. There is no need for anyone of us to outline in any detail the contributions which the individual persons have made and Sir, again so that there will be no misunderstanding I think the Attorney General would agree that it is the Government under which I had the honour to serve who recognised very early the capabilities of some of the people of this Commission. That is not particularly important and I cannot myself say that I can join in congratulating the Government for doing what it is supposed to do. What I would be able to congratulate them for after this sterling work has been done is if they would come out with legislation that will bring to fruition a number of recommendations in this Report.

The whole question of womens' rights, Mr. Speaker, is something which has come to the world, especially in the last 15 years or so. It has come to the forefront because the United Nations itself set up in 1968, I believe, a Committee on the Status of Women and one of the recommendations which was made by that Committee was that all the member States of the UN ought to establish commissions to look into the status of women in their respective territories and to give annual reports.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, now that the Report has been written, the question of the problems surrounding the women of this country will still have to be solved. There are a number of things in Barbados which are taken for granted to which people pay a lot of lip service but in the final analysis when one gets down to solving problems relating to these problems nothing is done.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was very glad to hear the hon. member, for St. Philip North indicate his concern with the problem of women in Barbados who wish to file divorce for husbands who have deserted them and gone

off into other climbs. I do not know what the Attorney General would say but I have to let this Honourable House know that only late last week I have been involved in preparing a small Private Members' Bill to bring to this Honourable House for precisely the same reason and it came about in this way, Sir. I have in my constituency two persons whose husbands have left and gone where they do not know and unfortunately because of the present state of the law of this land they are unable to file for divorce under certain circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, in due course, we will hear all that there is to hear on these matters but the lawyers in town told them that they have problems and the lawyers in town told them, and some of the lawyers who have been described on that side as expert lawyers, Sir, told them that under certain circumstances they would need an amendment to the law. Now if they say the member for St. Philip North is wrong and if they say that I am wrong, I would be happy to hear from the Attorney General who knows everything there is to know about the law to come and tell us what it is.

Mr. SPEAKER: Sir, you know there is a standing joke in this House that there are lawyers and lawyers.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir. I am sure Your Honour is now saying that he is one of the lawyers. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of social ills which are still with us in Barbados which need tackling and will only be tackled if the Government shows – the resoluteness required for such solutions. Now, Sir, when one examines the record of legislation which we have had over the last two years, there is no water-shed in the area of Family Law or in the area of social relations of people in Barbados. What we have had is a promise that such legislation would soon be coming to this Honourable Chamber and as a matter of fact the only piece of legislation which has come that can be said to be connected with this Report, I have reasons to believe that the Attorney General might have indicated that the Commissioners took the position, which in fact it might not be the case. I only hope that when he gets up he will seek to clarify that particular position.
3.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, in this report one of the things which I searched for and did not find is the whole question of women working in the fields of this country in 1978. The matter has been dealt with. In 1978, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that it is right that in Barbados there should still be women bending over out in the hot sun from morning until night. I do not believe that is right. The time has come for us as a community to take a look at some of the practices which are still going on in this country. We are going to have to root out the kind of practice where old women way past their 60s are still having to go out into the fields in the hot sun every day.

Mr. Speaker, there is another practice regarding women which is going on in this country which needs the assistance of the Government. The Trade Unions have been trying their best, but, Sir, it seems to me that the Government is going to have to get involved in passing legislation to deal with the problems which almost everyone who has spoken in Barbados has spoken about. It is the problem of the unfair treatment of the young women in this country by certain employers. Now, Sir, I had occasion to discuss the matter with a young lady who is working at one of the newer industries that has recently come to Barbados, and I am told, I do not know that it is true, but she told me it passionately and she told me as if she believed it; she said it happened and she works there, and I am told that the private business of the women who work at this particular establishment has been passed by a professional person back to the company and the company has taken steps based on that information. Now it is not my duty to come here and make announcements of names and places, but I am going to investigate them. I am going to pass the information on.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I thought the hon. member would have done a better service if he has investigated first.

Mr. TAITT: I have investigated it partly, Mr. Speaker, but I am not prepared to make a full statement on it until I have consulted with the appropriate authorities to discover if they are aware of it and what they are doing. But the fact remains that in that particular establishment young people are being told that if they get pregnant within a year of coming to work they have to be fired. That is a violation of the rights of people of this country. I am serving warning. I know at least one hon. member of this House who knows of what I speak, and I am serving warning on that company that however much we wish to see industrial development in this country, however much we wish to see advancing of people in this country, there are certain terms which are not acceptable to us. Any company that comes into Barbados that seeks to terrorise the people who work and especially the young women who work at that company by introducing methods that are foreign to us, can be assured that at least the members on this side, and I am fairly certain the members on that side will hound those out of Barbados, no matter what the cost, because they come to this country and they wish to do things which they could never try in their own habitat.

I feel, Mr. Speaker, that there are some issues on which there should be no left and right, no up and down; there should be a solid wall against that kind of

activity. That is not the only aspect of ill-treatment of young people that has started to emerge, and I say started to emerge because they are still in the embryo stage. We will watch and we will have more to say.

Mr. Speaker, let me just join in congratulating the members of this commission. Let me say that I hope that no attempt will be made to gather kudos outside and beyond what is considered normal, and let me say that we on this side hope that arising out of this report there will be some beneficial action taken by the Government to allow, for example, the women dealt with and spoken of in Volume II of this Report to recognise that they are truly free Barbadians like everybody else.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I do not know if there are any other members who wish to speak, because I intend to speak on behalf of the Government's position on this report.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are there any other hon. members who wish to make a contribution to this debate?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to speak as to the Government's attitude on the report which has been handed in by the National Commission on the Status of Women. I have already in the ministerial statement which I made in this House in September in laying this report in Parliament set out the Government's indebtedness to the Commissioners for a job superbly done, and I do endorse willingly the expressions which have been uttered by the hon. member for St. Philip North in characterising this report as one of deep scholarship, great erudition and outstanding brilliance; for that it is. I should wish to say that this report was produced perhaps in record time. People must recognise that it would have taken each of the Commissioners who are all fully employed a lot of their spare time and dedication to have accumulated the wealth of information contained in these two volumes of the Report which are in three books, and not only to have accumulated this, but to have marshaled the facts, to have analysed the facts and to have come up with positive recommendations for the Government and for this country.

Mr. Speaker, I played a small role in this exercise, and if reference had not been made by the hon. member of me in a personal way, I would not have even thought it necessary to make the few remarks I am now making on that role. Contrary to the views which he expressed, I have no belief in the view that I am the only person in Barbados who has anything original to say or any worthwhile contribution to make or indeed that I am the only member in Barbados who knows anything about women. It would be absolutely presumptious of me so to assume. But what I do know is that in moving the Resolution for the appointment of this commission I was guided then and I am guided now and I trust I will be guided in the future by a deep conviction that discrimination in any form either against women on the basis of sex, on the basis of religion, on the basis of political conviction, or on the basis of colour is fundamentally wrong. That is the tenet that I learned from the time I was a child at primary school. It is a tenet which has been enforced as an idea on me and which had been inculcated in my upbringing by two women with whom I had been closely associated, my natural mother and my adopted mother.

3.40 p.m.

It is a tenet which has been enforced as an idea on me and which has been inculcated in my upbringing by two women with whom I have been closely associated, my natural mother and my adopted mother, and I want to say that if I have been insistent in forcing this House to accept the necessity for this Commission, it was about the only little tribute that I could pay to two great women. That is all I want to say, I am not asking for any thanks for myself, Sir, but I believe firmly in this principle and that is why I fought the past Government, now the present Opposition, to persuade them that a National Commission on the Status of Women was necessary.

The Democratic Labour Party may wriggle as much as they like, the stand which they took when the Resolution first came down to this House as expressed by the then Prime Minister, the now Rt. Hon. member for St. John and Leader of the Opposition, that I was pandering to a few middle class women who were in the Gallery and he was about the people's business and he was going to have none of it, for a Commission was not necessary. That is the stand which the Democratic Labour Party took then, do not forget it, we are not going to rewrite history in this country in two years or in 15, or in 21, the records are there. I brought back that Resolution in an election year and then it was accepted, in March 1976. The Minutes showed, when the money had to be put up and voted for the Commission, the almost impudent attitude manifested then, there is a note which says: "I suppose if the House of Assembly voted for a Commission we have to pass the money, but I do not see the necessity for that." The Rt. Hon. member for St. John, the Leader of the Democratic Labour Party made that note.

People sometimes believe that you should not criticise people, but each one of us has made a contribution and he has made a contribution but he had one great failing. It was not that the question of the Commission was not necessary, it was that the Rt. Hon. member then felt it was coming from me, which was

one of the worst things that could happen, and it was coming from the Opposition, and he took a very narrow attitude to it then. Let that be part of the history of his life style too, he did good for the country but he also had a kind of blindness to what was needed in the country. He had a tremendous blindness to the necessity for such a Commission, and I am not sure his blindness has been removed. I heard him a few weeks ago on the Marriage Bill saying then that women had no real disabilities, and I got up and tried to correct the hon. member. I would like to commend very strongly the many hon. members to read the Report, including the hon. member for St. Michael South West, because he has spoken at length and has said nothing. I remember once, Mr. Speaker, appearing before Chief Justice Jackson, a most distinguished member of the Caribbean Bar, and I had spoken for very long and he said he had never heard a person speak for so long and so well and said so much about so little. That was the position in the hon. member's case, he has said so little about so much, if I could put it that way, because he spoke well and he said he looked carefully in the Report to find out if any mention was made of rural women and he had seen no such mention. But in the chapter dealing with women and employment there is a particular section in agriculture in which this Commission has made specific recommendations to deal with the problem of rural women working in the fields. Read the Report, hon. members must take time and read this Report because it contains a lot of factual information, historical information, a lot of positive thoughts and recommendations which are worthy of this country, and to ensure that the Report gets the widest possible dissemination the Department of Women's Affairs has drawn up a plan of action.

Firstly, we have circulated this Report to all the women's organisations in Barbados. Between September and today each women's organisation in Barbados has been given a free copy of the Report. Secondly, we have circulated the Report to all of the Unions in Barbados – and here let me thank the Barbados Workers' Union for the services of, I think it is Miss Gibson, on this body. We have circulated the Report to every Department of Government and we have asked each Department of Government to look at the sections that concern them and the recommendations which have been made, and to let us have their views on whether they would wish the Government to accept the recommendations as they stand or with modification, and secondly, whether there are any financial implications from these recommendations for the Government, and thirdly, what is the time schedule for implementing the recommendations.

I want to make it clear that the Department of Women's Affairs does not have the responsibility for implementing each one of these recommendations on its own. Some of the recommendations pertain to subjects within the administrative sphere of other executive Ministries, and the Department of Women's Affairs cannot therefore assume the role and function of an executive Ministry but it must work alongside an executive Ministry in an advisory and co-ordinating role. This is how we see the matter progressing. It is obvious that at times we may have to pressurise, not depressurise, Sir, we may have to pressurise Ministries to go at a faster rate and pace than they themselves may want to, but wherever possible we will avoid conflict because this is a matter on which there ought not to be conflict within the Government as a whole.

This Government has accepted the necessity for equality of the sexes and for all the implications flowing from that principle. There must be full implementation to give equal rights to all the women in this country, as equal rights as the men in this country have, and wherever there are discriminatory practices either by way of administrative steps or legislation the Government has decided that it will during its period of office try to remove those discriminatory practices. That is a clear statement of policy. One of the functions which I perform in the Cabinet as the Minister with responsibility for Women's Affairs, and its Report and recommendations is to see that any recommendation coming from another Department has an input so that we will not find ourselves in the future discriminating on the basis of the sex of any particular person.

We intend also, Mr. Speaker, to organise shortly a national seminar in connection with the Report and findings of the Commission and we will hope that not only women's organisations but the citizens of Barbados as a whole will participate in that seminar.
3.50 p.m.

And we are asking trade unions, clubs, social organizations, political parties, women's organizations and the churches to discuss the report in its entirety and let the Government have their considered views and opinion on the findings of the Commission, because the Commissioners are anxious themselves that the Report should be treated that way; and we are anxious too, as a Government, to know that the public is participating in making the laws which govern them and in influencing the administrative actions taken on their behalf. In addition, the Minister of Information has agreed that the Government Information Service will shortly start a series of programmes on women's affairs and activities which will highlight the recommendations of the National Commission on the Status of Women, with panelists answering questions which members of the public may put to them.

In addition, I understand that the National Commission itself in fulfulling part of its terms of

reference will be responsible for a film of women's rights, which I trust will be ready for the celebrations of Independence Week or shortly thereafter, and that this will mirror to a large extent the development of women's rights in this country and also show some of the existing difficulties.

The Government will also have in due course to consider staffing of the department and whether indeed the department is ideally located within my Ministry or whether there is not some other Ministry where it should be placed to have more easily at its beck and call the supervisory services necessary to give effect to these recommendations. That is going to be one of the policy decisions called for. Within the Ministry of the Attorney General there are no sociologists, which we need if this report is to be implemented; we have no economists, and there are no people trained vocational guidance or in the techniques of employment. At the same time – and this is my own considered opinion – these things are necessary if we are to move forward to implement this report fully. These things are bing considered by my Ministry, and we have taken the views of the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries, and a positive recommendation will be made to Cabinet for either further supporting staff within my Ministry or that the existing staff be part of an overall arrangement within another Ministry.

But one of the things we can do arising out of this report is to establish on a permanent basis of a National Advisory Commission on the Status of Women. I have had the privilege of being in the province of Ontario and its capital Toronto over the past few months – not on the same voyage as the hon. member for St. Michael South Central but on the voyage of looking at the question of how the Canadian provinces had implemented their proposals for equalizing women's rights and I have had consultations with officials of the Government of Ontario and with their National Commission on the Status of Women, as well as with the principal advisor to the Government of Canada on the Advisory Commission set up by that Government, and we have formed some views as to the administrative structure necessary for our National Commission on the Status of Women and the ways in which we may coordinate the work more rapidly. This will take some time, Mr. Speaker; you cannot implement such a report in a day.

The hon. member for St. Michael South West and the hon. member for St. Philip North raised a few points relating to the Family Law revision recommendations contained in the report and I want to deal with these. First I want to let the hon. member for St. Michael South West know that when I was on the Opposition I had drafted a Bill dealing with reform of the Family Law, which I have discussed quite openly with some of the Judiciary and the members of the then Attorney General's Chambers. It was not introduced into Parliament because we recognized that to bring a competent Bill we needed to have available to us some money and the Bill as structured would have been a charge on the Consolidated Fund and only the Government can introduce legislation that would be a charge on the Consolidated Fund. When I became Minister we took the Bill in the Department and we were on the verge of continuing action on it when the National Commission on the Status of Women advised me that it would be preferable to withhold further action on the Bill until after they had made their recommendations; as a result my Ministry did not proceed with a comprehensive family legislation at that time, in reference to the views of the National Commission on the Status of Women. We have had their report only about six or seven weeks ago; in fact the report has been laid in Parliament only since 19th September, 1978. Since then I have met with the legal people in my Chambers and we have drafted a Bill called the Status of Children Reform Act, which will abolish the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate children. We have a Bill called the "Change of Name Act" dealing with all aspects of change of name; and we have in the drafting stage a comprehensive Family Law Bill which will give effect to over forty of the recommendations in this Report.

Now, Sir, I do not know whether members of the public believe that Ministers work or not. I believe we do, and I believe we work very hard. Certainly this group of Ministers work hard, even if people do not appreciate what we are doing. I think we are planning and doing things that are worthwhile, and certainly as far as I am concerned I work extremely hard for Barbados, and I do not believe that any hon. member could seriously get up in here today and say that they want to hear when we are going to give some substance to these recommendations, well knowing that the report was only made public in September and it would take time to draft the laws and consult with the relevant organizations and departments to bring the law down here.

4.00 p.m.

The two Bills that I have just sent around have explanatory memoranda that has been given on them. That has been week end working in the department, on Saturdays from 10 o'clock until 6 o'clock without lunch and sometimes on Sundays. That is what I mean. *(Asides)* I am not saying that it is anything new. I want to say that I earn my fee. I do not only earn it now when I am a Minister. I used to earn it when I was a lawyer. I take my business seriously; and if I have a job to do I am going to do it. I am going to say that we intend fully to implement within 1979 all of the recommendations which call for changes in the law, and

that comes within my department. I know for a fact too that some of the Landlord Bills that I have brought down to this House already contain legislation implementing some of the recommendations of the Report.

I know for a fact also that we have circulated part of the Labour Laws which will implement some of the recommendations of this Report. They have been circulated for comments by the employers and workers' organisations. If the country wants to know what is being done, outside of listening to the invective, and the vulgarity and the abuse by a few people, this is what is being done.

I do not ask for anything. If you do not want us, do not elect us; but once we are here, we will do a reasonable job. These are facts that can be checked out. I do not lie on matters of this nature when I get up and speak in the House. That is what we are doing about it; and the hon. member for St. Michael South West and the hon. member for St. Philip North, can rest assured that just as within two years we have been able to bring to this House legislation to reform the whole of the Land Law which is now before a Joint Committee of both Houses under your distinguished Chairmanship, Mr. Speaker, I propose that by next year I will be able to bring to this House legislation which comprehensively, conclusively and effectively will reform and bring up-to-date all of the Family Law in Barbados; and that it will go down as a tribute to this House and to this Party to which I have the honour to belong. We will do it.

It takes time to do it; but even although we give very freely of our time, we will do it for the benefit of the country if they give us the opportunity to just get on with the job instead of everynight I hear my ears being bombarded and blasted by talk about how the Attorney General should be assassinated. I do not mind, Sir. I am willing for someone to attempt it. I am willing for them to risk it.

I wanted to make those remarks, but I want to deal with the Commission. This Commission was fortunate in that the public came to the Commission and they put forward their points of view before the Commission properly; and so it should be. A Commission, especially of this sort is a device used by Government to find out what is the feeling of the public, and how it should be guided in dealing with matters of some importance. Sir, in England, in Sweden, in Scandinavia, in Canada, all over the democratic and the non-democratic world, even in totalitarian regimes – but not as much as in the democratic world – they set up commissions to advise the Government or to enquire into burning questions of the day. That is the standard practice.

This Commission is a living testimony to the value that Commissions can render; but if people do not understand that they have to learn how to behave themselves instead of being vulgar and amusing in order to get notoriety, and go before Commissions and curse them and attack them, they do not deserve being treated as ordinary citizens of this country. I am glad that this Commission is an example, and I wish that the Gambling Commission will be able to do its work.

The member for St. Philip North said that law and order is not being maintained. I want to reply to that. I have made my position clear. I have a responsibility ultimately in Parliament for the maintenance of law and order. I do not have the day to day responsibility for the prosecution or the non-prosecution of people in this country. That is not the power that I have and it is not the power that I want; although if the Director of Public Prosecutions comes in for a beating in the House, I must, as Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs, put his point of view because he has no Minister to put his point of view except the Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs.

I do not prosecute people. The Democratic Labour Party when in Government changed the law to give the Attorney General the right to direct prosecutions in thirteen certain circumstances. As far as I am concerned if my views are asked for by the Constitutional Committee, I will give up those. I do not want power; but what I do have is the right to tell Parliament when I feel that people are not working within the Constitution of this country and respecting the rights of others.

I do not make any boast about it, Sir; but I believe that the police of this country have been more than tolerant with the nonsense that one hears from the platforms, that you are going to assassinate somebody if you are sent to gaol and that kind of nonsense. Let them start. The first day that anybody tries to assassinate me let them make sure that I am dead. That is all I tell them. I am not making any bones about it, Sir. I am interested not only in those who say it, but in those who inspire them; and I am sending out the message loud and clear. Let it be heard in St. John, let it be heard in St. Michael West, let it be heard in Christ Church West, in St. Michael South Central and in St. Michael South West that if one stone in thrown, keep their glass houses closed.

I have no fear when I know that I am doing only an honest duty for this country, and trying to help for as long as they want me to help. I did not buy a seat in Parliament. I did not want a ministerial portfolio. Everybody knows that. I took it out of a sense of duty to my party, and I will help as long as I am allowed to

help. I am never ever going to be frightened out of this country. I will prefer to die than to 'back down. I stood up to the hon. member for St. John – let history record it – on the righteousness of this Commission, and the fact that it was necessary; and I will stand up to him, the P.P.M., or whoever they are on the correctness of people of this country to dissent, but within the terms of the law. That is why, Sir, I welcome this Report. I was right on this and I will be right in other things too.

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

RESOLUTION URGING GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT AT A SOON DATE A NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

A Resolution urging Government to implement at a soon date a National Apprenticeship Scheme for the benefit of the young people of Barbados was called.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Resolution stands in my name. I am not yet ready to proceed. If the House has no objections, Sir, I will be prepared to deal with it on another occasion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not yet ready to proceed.

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING PROFOUND REGRET AT THE LOSS OF LIFE AND HARDSHIPS SUFFERED BY BARBADIAN CREW OF INTERNATIONAL SEAFOODS LTD's VESSELS

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Michael South West.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, some time in June, I believe, it was announced that the Government had signed an Agreement with the Government of Brazil, arising out of which the Barbados fleet operated by International Seafoods Ltd and owned by the Government of Barbados would trawl for shrimps off the coast of Brazil.

Now, Sir, the history of the shrimp industry in Barbados is sufficiently well known that it does not require at this stage a recap and I believe that in due course, for other reasons, we will be called again to discuss the Shrimp Industry in Barbados but I believe it is fair to say that the industry started in 1968, I believe, in any essence. It has been of some benefit to the community and that all Barbadians, whatever their political position, feel that if it is possible for us to shrimp from Barbados, we should do so because for the short time that the industry flourished in this country, it allowed us for example, to move our foreign earnings from a mere $½ million to $7 million so all Barbadians would have to rejoice at the fact that it was announced that once again the shrimping fleet is going out to sea.

Now, Sir, the shrimp vessels had gone to shrimp in Brazil before, off the Brazilian coast because an Agreement between the Government of Brazil and the Government of Barbados had been signed. It had been negotiated and the terms imposed by the Brazilian Government were terms which they imposed more or less on all countries who had to fish or shrimp off their coast.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that about 10 years ago a call went out from especially the developing countries in the U.N. for the recognition of an economic zone in relation to waters surrounding the particular territories and most likely since then, I believe the most recent one to do so is the Republic of Grenada, the sister Caribbean country. It is not a Republic. It is the state of Grenada. Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether it is a Republic or State. In Grenada they announced they would have a 200 hundred mile economic zone and before that Brazil had announced that they would have a 200 mile economic zone.

Now while one would question the benefits that will accrue to Grenada from this announcement they can be no doubt that Brazil by announcing the 200 mile economic zone stood to gain economically, so it is peculiar, Mr. Speaker, that the species of underwater shell fish that is described as a shrimp spawns and tends to grow and develop in the greatest numbers so far as we in the Caribbean are concerned off the coast of Brazil.

The reasons stated in the UN indicated that the shrimps are moving very slowly down the coast towards Guyana and so in ten to fifteen years the tendency would show that shrimps, which can be found off Brazil, so they say or would soon be off the coast of Guyana. Another body of opinion does not believe that that study was sufficiently in depth and it is a weak point as to where the shrimp will be but one thing is certain, Mr. Speaker, that the shrimp lies somewhere off the coast of South America approximating to where Brazil, Guyana, and where those countries are.

The Shrimp Industry in Barbados, as I said, is owned by the Government. I believe we have 20 shrimp trawlers. Well, Sir, we had 20 trawlers as I read in the newspaper that one has since been burnt. I do not know. I have had no details, and on those trawlers I believe they each carry a crew of 3 some times 4, depending on whether it is the Mother Ship, a captain who is usually a Barbadian or someone who is resident

in Barbados and other persons who are either Barbadians or in Barbados or residents in Barbados, Caribbean Commonwealth citizens. Whether the crew is made up entirely of Barbadians may be of small importance, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the thrust of this Resolution for I believe that Barbados subscribes to the view that all of those persons to whom it has given succour fall to some extent within its jurisdictional ambit.

Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that the shrimp industry has been used as a political football and it is not my intention at all, Sir, to continue that political football game. What I am concerned about is the total lack of specific information, believable information official information which has been vouchsafed to people of Barbados to this question of the shrimp industry in general and the plight of those persons on board the particular shrimp vessels in the particular circumstances.

Soon after these vessels arrived off the coast of Brazil there were trickles of information which suggested that the Navy, the Brazilian Navy, had intervened and had "escorted" these vessels to the Port of Belem. Now, Mr. Speaker, the normal parlance of an international community when the Navy of one power escorts the vessels of another power into a port is usually connected with the arrest of that vessel because if the ship that is asked by the Navy to allow it to be escorted refuse, as I understand it, the Navy of the particular country is likely to open fire.

4.20 p.m.

Now if I were the captain of a Barbadian shrimp boat and the Barbuda navy invited me to be escorted into port, as long as it was a navy with one rifle on board I would be escorted into port, because on a shrimp vessel the biggest weapon they might have is a piece of wood which they use for ballast or whatever it is they use wood on a ship for. So, Sir, to all of us who are not experts in the field of navigation and the navigational laws, these ships were arrested. Now that was June. They were not arrested we were told; they were detained, so I am going to stick with the position of their being detained. I do not know if they were falsely detained, if they were properly detained, but I believe all Barbadians would like to know the circumstances in which they were detained if the Government is able to tell us. They having been detained, Sir, it soon started to be trickled out, and I say this on the basis of representation that was made to me by the families of at least two crew members of the shrimp vessels, that they were in the port of Belem, that they were being ill-treated, that the situation was such in Belem that they had no idea when they would be able to leave. Soon after that, Sir, the body of a Barbadian was flown back to Barbados together with another Barbadian whom I am told sufferred some injury of one kind or another. It was rumoured, I do not know if it is true, that another Barbadian had come home, and I wish the Government would confirm or enlighten us on this, under circumstances of having lost his mind.

The fact is though, Sir, that June passed, July passed, August passed. At that time the families of these people become anxious because they could not get any information from the Government, and when they went down to the shipping office or to International Seafoods Limited, when they were not given the run around, the people down there told them bluntly "we don't know what is happening to them, we have not heard what is happening to them." Now, Mr. Speaker, under the International Conventions covering consular representation between one country and another and under the tradition relating to States and their obligations, it is and continues to be a primary responsibility of any Government, any country to protect to the best of its ability its citizens when they leave their shores. The reason why we have overseas representation, Mr. Speaker, is foremost to provide a measure of protection for those Barbadians who leave their shores and go outside of Barbados. Where we had not ourselves got personal representation it is the practice, and I believe it is a practice which is continuing, we seek to get such representation by arrangements with friendly Governments who have persons on the spot in that particular area.

In the case of Belem, I am in no doubt at all, Mr. Speaker, that Belem is a hostile vicious place. I am under no doubt at all. It may not be hostile and vicious for ordinary persons who travel at the level of Ministers; it may not be a hostile environment for persons who travel at the level of Ambassador or whatever, but even those who travel with diplomatic passports can confirm that when they have gone into Latin America these diplomatic passports seem to lose all of the magic which they can find when they move through places like New York and London and similar places. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, on more than one occasion persons who have travelled on a Barbados passport through Latin America and various countries in Latin America have found themselves including people at ministerial level at the other end of what can only be described as hostility; so if you can take with me that jump from the high level of ministerial position to the ordinary seaman on a shrimp boat which has been detained, you have some idea of what the psychological position of the people on board these ships or boats or vessels must be.

Furthermore, Sir, if there is any doubt in anyone's mind as to the lack of sophistication of the law enforcement people in these areas, let them shed such doubt. Mr. Speaker, the history of Brazil is a history that has a duality. In certain parts of Brazil there has been tremendous progress in the context of social relations between races. But as in all countries of the size of Brazil there are certain border areas and border towns and seaports where the life of a black man is thought of no more highly than the life of an ordinary

dog. Mr. Speaker, you will recall that not so very long ago this little country of Barbados suffered a tragic loss when a man called Milton King who was a seaman working for the Harrison Line went into South Africa, unfortunately said a few words to a man who was a law enforcement officer, and was kicked and beaten to death.

Mr. Speaker, there are some young people in this country who might not remember it, but I think it is well that we should remember that these things have happened to Barbadians who have sought to leave their country and go out into the world and earn a living. Thus, Sir, when the body of a Barbadian comes home from a port where the shrimp vessels belonging to Barbados are held up through no fault of their own apparently, it is not abnormal for the citizens of Barbados to be concerned as to what is happening to the rest of their brethren in this particular port. And any hon. member who has sailed as a seaman or who has friends or relatives who have served as seamen know that while it is an honourable profession or vocation, it is one fraught with anxiety. In the first place I believe that the Government owes a duty, they still owe a duty to the population of Barbados to give specific and detailed information about the safety and welfare of the citizens of Barbados who have been on these shrimp vessels.

I have read in the newspapers that the shrimp vessels have in the month of November finally left to go to Cayenne, but that is not the first time, Mr. Speaker, that we have read in the newspapers that in a few days they would be leaving to go somewhere. For all of those months that I have spoken, we kept reading in the newspapers from time to time little bits and pieces, little snippets of information that in another few days the vessels would be doing this or doing that. They were supposed to go to Cayenne two months ago. Would you believe one month ago? Well it was in the newspapers that they were supposed to go.

Mr. Speaker, for those of us in this community who do not have information, I think you will agree that it must be a moment of anxiety normally. For those of us who are the families, who are the children, who are the wives, who are the mothers of the people on these ships, it must be a traumatic experience not to know what is happening and not to be able to pinpoint a single person in Government that they can go to and get a moment of comfort.

4.30 p.m.

This might be highly amusing for the Attorney General, but what I would like to see him in his fearless attitude do is to get on one of those shrimp boats and go from here to anywhere. He thinks it is very amusing. Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is amusing because I have seen the families of those people. There is a woman living in St. Michael South West, she has eight children, they stopped her allotment from International Seafoods Limited, she went to the Shipping Office, they told her they are nothing to do with it. The man telephoned once from Belem and he told her "you speak, I cannot speak." Mr. Speaker, in those circumstances, we are bound to believe that the reason the man could not speak was because he was under some kind of duress. Even if it is not true she believes it, and to her it is stark reality, it is no laughing matter, it is stark reality for that woman. For the last five months she does not know how she is going to eat, how the children are going to eat, and she has International Seafoods Limited telling her they had to stop the allotment because the ships were not working. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The husband would not sign the check-off). I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that in due course we are going to be given all the explanations, and my question to the Government would still be, why is it necessary to give us the explanations here in this House five months later, why could you not give us good information – and they know what I mean by good – that people could hold on to. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: You didn't ask). I hear a contemptuous observation that I did not ask

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I am very sorry to interrupt the hon. member, but I would be very glad if the hon. member could indicate when he asked the Government for information either by letter or otherwise.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of order.

Mr. TAITT: Not only is it not a point of order, Mr. Speaker, it continues to be an indication of the contempt with which that Government has treated ordinary people from the time they have been in power.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, the hon. member is reflecting on the Government's motives without any justification and therefore if he saying this it must be based on fact. The hon. member is shouting and waxing warm without knowing what has been done in this case and going on pure hearsay. For the record, Sir, I was not laughing at any woman's plight, I was laughing at the obvious fact that the hon. member does not even know that the Government has taken the bill for every telephone call made by the seamen in Belem. That is what I was laughing at, to see how members come in here without facts to make a case.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, it is not a fact that a man is dead, he is only buried in the Westbury Cemetery but he is not really dead; it not a fact that a man came home with his hand broken, it only looks so;

it is not a fact that a woman is down in Alkins Gap with eight children hungry, she only looks so. The Attorney General says I have no facts, so it is not a fact. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Pople die every day). The Hon. Leader of the House is not his normal self, I have never heard him so callous, I refuse to believe that he just said people die every day. That is a fact, but the circumstances under which they die is the business of Governments every day too, and it is the business of Governments that they have consideration for everyday people. That is why it is not the business of this Government.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The point is that Private Members' Time will elapse giving the impression that the Government did nothing in this case. The hon. member does not know how to get his information properly, otherwise he would have written to my Department who would have got the information. The Government did everything right in this case, as he will find out when we lay the report, if he wants to, on the Table of the House, no matter how much he shouts. He comes in here and brings a Resolution without any basis of fact, without having the decency to write my Department and ask for it.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order. The hon. member says I brought a Resolution in here without decency and I object to that as unparliamentary, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may continue to address the Chair.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I was saying.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Lucy finds himself as a co-pilot to every member of the Opposition who addresses the Chair. *(Laughter)*. Let us have some order, please.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, your timely intervention helps to relive some of the tension and some of the anger which I feel, as the hon. members on that side. You can imagine, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Attorney General says to me that the reason he has not told anybody what has happened is because they have not asked?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order. That is not what I said, I said that if the hon. member knew how to get information in this House he would know how to ask questions, or he has the right to write to any of the Departments concerned and he would have been given the facts. That is what I told him. Does he not know how to get information?

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, this hon. member might not know how to get information from over there, but the people of St. Michael South West do not know either, they rely on the good Government to give them normal governmental information about a matter so important, a matter on which they feel so strongly. They walked around this country and talked about open Government and now the Attorney General has the temerity to get up in this Hon. House and say that the hon. member did not write for information and therefore that is why he did not get it. I did not write to ask them how the man got killed, where he got killed, why he got killed, they therefore did not consider it necessary to find out.

Mr. Speaker, if I thought that this Resolution would have brought out the callousness which I have seen, the kind of obvious disinterest on the part of certain of the Government as to what would happen to ordinary people, perhaps I would have debated it earlier. Mr. Speaker, they went on to talk – and I take a very dim view of this – every time the question looked like it would abate they came in with additional information about shrimping, and remember, the hon. member for Christ Church South Central, the Hon. Leader of this House, who has shown by his antics from his chair what he cares about this Resolution or the people, nothing; that hon. member got up in here and talked about the deal with Guyana.

I want to take five minutes to deal with this business of the shrimping agreement with Guyana. If anyone had heard the hon. member talking about Guyana you would have believed that it was some special arrangement that had been made by the hon. member with the Government of Guyana. You would have believed that it was due to some extra-ordinary diplomatic skill on the part of the Government that we managed to get an agreement with the Government of Guyana. Nothing at all like that, Mr. Speaker.
4.40 p.m.

A few weeks before, the Government of St. Lucia with one single little vessel managed to get an agreement better than the agreement the hon. members is talking about. Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, under the terms of the Caribbean community, the Government of Guyana is sworn to have a special relationship with the other Governments of the Caribbean community; it is written in the agreement establishing the Caribbean Community. And hear this, Mr. Speaker, they are going to have this special agreement where the shrimp caught off Guyana is going to be processed in Guyana – they are going to get half the increase. Mr. Speaker, in Barbados there is a saying about doing something with spiders for half the increase; that is what they are doing. And that is not all. But on the question of the agreement with Guyana I have not heard from the hon. member how many people in Barbados will be working as a result.

But it is not only the loss of life, it is not only the foolishness of the agreement with Guyana – they have not told the people of Barbados that so far International Sea Foods has lost $1 million of taxpayers money – and that is a conservative estimate. When the facts are in we are going to hear the true story.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to give the hon. member the correct information: International Sea Foods has cost Barbados $17.6 million to date, the losses occurring during the regime of the Democratic Labour Party; he should address his mind to that.

Mr.TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the Democratic Labour Party had the Government. They had a Commission and we will hear about that. But in the two years they have been there I will address my mind to that and the way they are running things, and in the last year they have lost $1 million, and I challenge them to deny it. In August it was $750,000, and one of the Ministers in the Other Place has intimated that while Stewart, the man from International Sea Foods is fiddling around, they are going to wipe off the company over his head.

Mr. Speaker, let us ask ourselves some questions. Trinidad and Tobago have a shrimp industry. The Trinidad and Tobago fleet has been in Trinidad waters all through this time that we have been losing $2,000 a week.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Private Members' Business be extended for another forty five minutes. *(Disorder)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order, please; there must be perfect silence. Do we have an agreement with both sides of the House? *(A Pause)* In view of the fact that the Standing Orders were not suspended, this is a matter of great importance. This brings us to the end of Private Members Business.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, am I to understand that we are not permitted to move that Private Members Business be extended?

Mr. SPEAKER: You can move it but I need not accept the motion. Had there been an agreement with both sides of the House it might have been possible. However, in view of the Standing Orders not being suspended I do not now accept the motion.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the particular Standing Order be suspended for the remainder of this Sitting.

Mr. SPEAKER: I very much regret that I cannot in the midst of debate accept such a motion at this time. It is now Government's Business.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, before we proceed with Government's Business I beg to move that Standing Order No. 60 be suspended.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: I have heard the motion moved by the Honourable Leader of the House. I do not intend creating precedent in this matter and I will not accept a motion for suspension of Standing Orders at this time.

It is now Government Business. When the suspension was taken the hon. member for St. Michael South was addressing the Chair on Order No. 1.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker at that time I was dealing with the salary for the Speaker and I was indicating that this was a matter which should definitely be looked at because it has to do with upholding the dignity and office of this Honourable Chamber. The hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance in his introduction to this matter did in fact refer to a speech he made in 1973. I have studied what he said then in detail and I am stating that what he is saying now, and I know the similarities and differences, and if he wishes me to edit his speeches I will be happy to do so. But one thing is certain, I look very carefully at what he says.

The question of Parliamentary salaries – and I will get back to the specific case of the Speaker's salary and other salaries including those of backbenchers – but the history of Parliamentary salaries in this country has been a particularly sad one. It is only a question of salaries being paid in the post-war period. This is part of the post-1945 arrangement as far as the political history and development of this country are concerned. During all the pre-history of this country whether in the time when the Indians roamed over this country in the first century A.D. to be followed by the Arawaks, and thereafter the Portugese and Spanish .....(INTERRUPTIONS). You would not understand this, Bolden.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member addressing the Chair?

Mr. SANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but I keep hearing asides which I should not hear. However, it was in 1946 that an address was passed. In 1947 there was a debate and we had this statement being made, and I quote from the Official records of Parliament.
4.50 p.m.

Let me see if I can find it, Mr. Speaker. On that occasion there was one member who indicated that it was a raid on the Treasury. I believe that it was the predecessor of the member for St. James. He indicated

on 15th July, 1947, that the remuneration of members which was then before the House of Assembly, that the proposal to pay members of Parliament was a raid on the Treasury. He said: "We have been sent here to take charge of the tax payers' money. We are the policemen in charge of it. We are sitting around this Table and putting out hands in our own pockets." That was what the conservative member, Mr. Stephen Walcott said on that occasion; and that is the type of reaction which you would expect to get at that time from the conservative elements who, at that time, dominated this country.

When I consider those debate as far as salaries are concerned, I note that on that occasion Mr. F. L. Walcott, a former member of this House was speaking in favour of the remuneration of members of Parliament. The point I am making is that the question of remuneration for both ordinary members of Parliament and thos who hold ministerial positions have been settled. That is not the question today. The question is not whether members should be paid. The question is at what level of remuneration they should be paid, and that is precisely the point that I am getting at.

That is why I say that when it comes to these proposals that are here before us today, they should be pruned down; and I say this on good grounds which I will advert to shortly. The salaries of members of this Honourable House were last fixed in 1970. Every time between then and 1949, when the salaries of members have been debated in here there have been criticisms of whatever level of increases was brought. This, I think, tells us something. It tells us that as members of Parliament we have got to work out an adequate, proper and fair machinery in order to ensure that when salaries are being considered, all aspects of the matter are taken into account; and that justice is not only done, but also appears to have been done. That is the point at issue; and I cannot say that in this particular case the matter has been approached in the context of the Government's call for open government; and I want to let people know that this question about open government, the very slogan itself, has been taken straight out of the conservative slogan and manifesto of the Heath government in the 1970s in Britain. That is where the slogan came from – Conservative Government Policies in Britain. Whatever may be the source of that particular slogan, I do not know who made the research, whether it was the Prime Minister himself or the learned member for Christ Church East. I believe that they are the only two members in here who are professional political scientists on the subject, the only two members who have had graduate training in these particular areas.

Mr. SPEAKER: Salaried accordingly.

Mr. SANDIFORD: That is why we hope that along with you we will all be salaried accordingly; but, Mr. Speaker, there is this call for open government. We have no quarrel with open government; but not only must there be a call for it, but the Government must always practise it; and I am saying that in this review of the salaries of members of Parliament, the Government has been anything but open; and if they start wrong, they will end wrong. We have been told, and I have every reason to believe that this is so.

There was a call by the Opposition benches of the Barbados Labour Party when they were in Opposition that before salaries were voted there should be some independent commission.

When they got into power we would have thought that in the case where salaries of members were to be considered the place where such an appointment as that of the Nicholls Commission would be with the approval of Parliament itself, because it was dealing with members of Parliament. I am saying that the appointment of that Commission was done quite hastily; and it was only as a result of a question which I asked this Honourable Chamber on 15th April, 1977, as a member of Parliament, who as a matter of right should be given details of the terms of reference of any Commission or committee set up to deal with matters concerning parliamentarians. I had to ask that question so as to get information concerning this.

I am not certain how to follow what appeared in the Press. I am not taking anything out of the Press. I am saying that we should not have to come and beg for information about a commission set up to consider the terms and conditions of service of members of this Honourable Chamber. I want to draw an analogy on that particular matter. In the U.K. Parliament the salaries of members had been increased in 1957, but the increase did not come until 1964. Most members of the U.K. Parliament recognised that the position of U.K. Parliamentarians had deteriorated and had been eroded as a result of the increase in prices and other economic factors; but they did not come until 1964, although it was recognised since 1957 that there was a need for an increase. The Government of the day set up a committee headed by Professor Lawrence and two other persons, including Professor V.M.J. McKenzie whom the member for Christ Church East knows very well.

5.00 p.m.

We both sat at the feet of Professor McKenzie, an outstanding political scientist but they made the recommendation but the main point I was making here is that the proposal for establishing that particular Committee to review the salaries of members was made in the House of Commons because quite properly it was recognised as a matter that intimately concerned members

of Parliament. We must do things in the proper way. We must not do it by self or by surreptitious means and that Committee made recommendations.

It recommended that the salaries of Ministers should be moved from £10,000 to £18,000. Sir, it is for the Prime Minister and it recommended that the salaries for Ministers should moved from £5,000 to £12,000. Now this is the point I am making. When I say that the Government should look at these salaries again and shape them and prune them there is a hallabaloo over there and I make that point well fortified because I know that it is not a unique suggestion.

When those proposals were made in the United Kingdom Government, the Government accepted some of them but the Prime Minister himself moved his Government to refuse the recommendations as far as the salary of the Prime Minister was concerned from £18,000 down to £14,000 and that of Ministers from £12,000 down to £8,500. So that was a precedent which I wish to draw to the attention of this Honourable Chamber because recommendations are made and I am at one with the Prime Minister with this.

I do not believe in any view that because a Commission is set up that the particular recommendations of the commission where it relates to Parliament that Parliament is bound itself in anyway to accept those recommendations. I hope one does not believe that I am bound by those recommendations because I was not party to its establishment. I had to ask a question to find out officially that such a Commission was established and to find out what were the terms of reference of that particular Commission. A disgraceful approach to the handling of public affairs in this particular matter. That is my view on this specifically and I believe that the Government could look at that particular area and do something about it.

If they are setting up a Select Committee it is certainly an area they could look to see in what areas the salaries need pruning. They could see in what areas they need adjusting because adjustments can go upwards and they can go downwards and I believe that some of the recommendations made need a little booster and they may need a little, I am not afraid to use the word. They may need to be depressed a little in certain areas. I am giving the Government good advice on this case.

Mr. SPEAKER: But please do not depressurise.

Mr. SANDIFORD: But, Mr. Speaker, they have been trying all around to depressurise you but they cannot keep a good man down.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the whole question of approach to the question of salaries. There is no doubt at all, there is no doubt in my mind. I would say there is no doubt in the minds of the thinking public that parliamentarians, whether it is the Minister, Parliamentary Secretary, backbenchers on the Government side and members of the front bench Opposition, I do not believe that there is anyone who think on these matters and do not realise that there is need for some increase, but as I said the question is not whether they should be an increase, but it is the question of the level of increase and it is on that particular point that I ask the Government to think again.

I have announced that I will be voting for an increase but it has to come in an appropriate form. We have to think again on these particular matters. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that we have got to start from sound principles and we have got....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The hon. member said, Sir, that he is supporting an increase but it has to come in some form. In the form of a cheque or cash? That is what I would like to know.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is concerned with the level of increase and I believe he would now state what level he is looking forward to.

Mr. SANDIFORD: For you, Mr. Speaker, and for me. We cannot examine this particular matter unless we look at the whole background and the scenario against which this matter has been played out. We have got to look at the functions of Parliament and we have got to look at the functions of the members of Parliament itself. That is Parliament as an Institution and the members themselves and their function. Now, some members cut out particular roles for themselves. Some of them get buried in the administration of a particular department and they do a reasonable job and they may neglect their constituents and other members look assiduously after their constituents pursuing each request from the constituent and trying to get some redress whether it is in terms of a problem with a Government Department or Statutory Corporation or whether it would be in the private sector. Others keep their ideas until the next election and live dangerously from election to election with some small majorities.

Mr. SPEAKER: There must be some order please.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Sill others, Mr. Speaker, cut out for themselves a particular role of some political character and I believe each Government must have such political characters. We have them in the United Kingdom Government and we have them in this particular Government over there.

5.10 p.m.

We have them in this particular Government over there. *(Asides)* Man Bolden I am not talking about you. I withdraw that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this whole question is a most important one. I am making the point and I have specific recommendations to make. *(Asides)* I am not telling you what your salary should be. I realise that you are short of talent over there, but what you have to do is to come to the country in a general election now. That is what I am challenging you to do. If you want advice, dissolve and come to the country and face the polls now. That is the time that it should be done.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Do I understand that the hon. member wishes to get the new pay of a Minister?

Mr. SPEAKER: Probably.

Mr. SANDIFORD: It is not a case of what I want to get. You go to the polls and put that on the line. Even the hon. member for Christ Church West. Put that on the line.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, I hear the Dems; I do not know if you hear them. Sir, we came in here on a ticket for five years. They came on one occasion for three years and they had fifteen. We are now only in here two years. Don't worry to come yet. We will come in time; we do not know if you are going to be around. You may be over on this end with us. You are living very dangerously and closely.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point well taken.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, which point is well taken? I am not certain which point is well taken.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chair.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am really not certain what is happening because I listened carefully to the speech of the hon. member for St. Thomas, the Hon. Prime Minister, and he introduced this question. He is looking so comprehensively at it, I was wondering what was going through his mind because it was he who introduced this question of a caretaker Government, and I was wondering if there were some events casting their shadow before. What is it that he is preparing for? He obviously believes that his Government cannot last until 1981, and he was making provision. He made the reference. I did not introduce it. It is he who said he was making provision and looking at this question of a caretaker Government. I do not remember in the annals of political history in this country this matter ever being raised before. I am really wondering why it was introduced here today. I would have risen at that particular point, Mr. Speaker, but I know you would quite rightly have ruled me out of order at that particular time. He has lost the confidence of his colleagues. There are others more competent to speak on that particular matter than I am and no doubt we will hear about that a little later.

I believe that the development of this country depends upon the efficiency and effectiveness of Parliament. I believe that the remuneration and allowances of members should be such as would attract capable and efficient people to offer themselves for public political service in this country. If the salaries are ridiculously low, we run the risk as a country, we run the risk as far as our political institutions are concerned of attracting persons who cannot contribute at the highest possible level of efficiency, and that is a danger, because we want the best possible talent for the running of the affairs of this country. It must be taken into account, Mr. Speaker, that the tenure of members of Parliament is uncertain. When I say uncertain, I am not referring to you, Mr. Speaker, because you have a particular capacity for survival having faced at least three elections successfully.

Mr. SPEAKER: And three more. Let us have some order please.

Mr. SANDIFORD: And three more. I am sorry I cannot say that for the hon. member for St. Joseph though.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, the hon. member has found himself on two ends of a pole, so he is looking for a way out. If he thinks the way out is the hon. member for St. Joseph, let him try, but try as he may he cannot recover the position he would like to be in. He started out by criticising the Government, now he is talking about decent salaries and decent people who can manage the affairs of this country. He does not know where he is. He has lost, and instead of being a man and like I would have said in short simple terms, say give us decent salaries and put us in a decent position that we can administer the country without having to look over our shoulders, and sit down, he is round and round in a circle, off on a tangent and cannot get back.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point well taken. The hon. member is going to state the level of increases.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: He has not said it yet. I cannot see it this evening.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I do not know what is wrong with the hon. member for St. Joseph. The next time he leaves the country he will find himself in another Ministry. He would not know either. Behind his back.

Mr. Speaker, Government is becoming more complex and in order to deal with the complexities of

modern Government, in order for members of Parliament to keep abreast of the developments even in one Ministry, it calls for research, it calls for discussion, it calls for reading, it calls for understanding. All of these matters are important, and I would not like to hear anymore about part-time members of Parliament, because this is one argument that tends to be advanced from time to time about the contribution that members of Parliament make to public service in this country. That is why I believe that whereas we can think in terms of increases of over $1,000 in terms of the Prime Minister's salary, and we can think of increases of over $700 per month for Ministers, when we can think in terms of increases at that level, when you come down to the ordinary member of Parliament, from the backbenchers you will find an increase of something like $200. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that we have got to get proper relativities established as far as remuneration of members and their allowances are concerned. Members of Parliament must approach this matter realistically, and that is what I have been trying to do. It must be based on principles and I have set out certain principles on which this matter should be based. (A VOICE: What are the principles?) Do you want me to repeat myself? 5.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that as far as my suggestions and recommendations on this particular matter are concerned, I am saying first of all that there should be an immediate acceptance of the principle that members of Parliament as workers in public affairs should automatically get an increase when other members of the public service get an increase. That is the first recommendation I am making. If we do not do this, the same position that we find ourselves in today we will find ourselves in in six or seven years' time.

The salaries of members have always been considered as a kind of political football, and I have never been among those who believe that you should discuss certain types of salaries and then other types of salaries and then you suddenly discover that the country is going through difficult financial times and the Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries and members of Parliament must hold strain. I am advancing the view that the salaries of members of Parliament form but an infinitesimal amount of the total wages and salaries in the public service, and that to say that members of Parliament's refusal to take an increase will contribute significantly to improvement in the economy is farcical, but politics being what it is you will always get politics played on this particular matter.

I want to say something more, Mr. Speaker. It is my firmly held opinion, namely, that attendance at conferences forms a substantial supplement to Ministers' income. I am going to repeat it. My firmly held opinion, namely, that attendance at conferences forms a substantial supplement to Ministers' income, and I would like some figures to be given to show what daily tax free allowances have been drawn by Minsters in respect of their attendance at these conferences. Now, Mr. Speaker, do not get me wrong.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, you will table the appropriate Question at the appropriate time.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Maybe, Mr. Speaker, but I doubt that. I should point out for the information of members that those are not my views, I am quoting from a debate on the 16th March, 1976 in which from the Opposition benches – here comes Caesar! – (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I recognise the words). Immediate recognition of the words, exact quotation, words of the member for St. Thomas as Leader of the Opposition. That was part of the approach adopted in 1976, and I will go back to 1973, because I have said we have to look at the whole scenario against which this whole question of increases, remuneration and allowances for members of Parliament have been played out. We have to look at the whole background, because when today we say that this matter should not be dealt with on any partisan basis, I can quote the present Prime Minister who has said that salaries of members is a question which does not call for any bipartisan or bipolar approach. That is what he has said, and he is quite right, I have studied his speeches in detail and I must say I do not know anybody who can dance so expertly in between the different threads and integuments of thought. He does it beautifully.

Mr. Speaker, on the occasion in 1973 when salaries were increased, the Opposition took the stand that they were not going to support the Government in any salary increases. That was the position taken by the then Barbados Labour Party Opposition; no consensus on these matters, no common approach, no looking at the matter in a bipartisan or bipolar approach, nothing like that then, in fact a letter was read out here today and the Leader of the Opposition on that occasion said he was not going to be caught in any agreement with the Government, so if the Government was trying to set traps to entrap him into an acquiescence....*(Asides)*. I am talking about the member for St. Thomas, I believe he recognises his words. He said that, no common approach to salaries then, so I find it particularly strange that today this same Government which in 1973 was saying no bipartisan approach is today calling for some type of consensus and some type of agreement on this particular matter. That is what they are calling for. Now, how do they expect it when behind the backs of the Democratic Labour Party Opposition they went and set up a Nicholls Commission and it was only after questions were asked in here that we got the terms of reference officially in this Chamber.

That was wrong, and I am saying now that if that is the case, why do they want up to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them? They have all the firing power out there, seventeen, and I believe they can handle this matter themselves.

I would like to quote a little more extensively, *in extenso,* from that 1973 speech, because I think it was an expert jitterbug.
5.30 p.m.

I would like to quote a little more extensively from that 1973 speech because I think it was an expert jitterbug. He did say a magnificent rise in salary. But other views were perhaps more rashly put than the hon. member for St. Thomas. Contarary to what people may think, he is a very careful user of words; others over there are not as careful; they rush in where angles fear to tread, and they said the salaries were too high in 1973. But the very Nicholls Commission was yet another vindication of the fact that the Democratic Labour Party Government was running the country adequately and well in the circumstances at that time with the inflation and the other myraid problems. The Nicholls Report indicated that they examined the matter and found that the salaries were not too high. But from the Barbados Labour Party Opposition they were saying then that the salaries were too high. That was the cry then. But the boot is on the other foot now and now that they are in Government and are seeing the realities of their position being eroded while the positions of persons who work with them are gradually improving, they are prepared to say now that they did not realize that the salaries in 1973 were not too high; they are certainly too low now, and that is a fact. From 1973 a 40% increase at the bottom and I believe 20% at the top. The next increase, probably about 1976 by the Democratic Labour Party Government, 35% at the bottom and about 12½% at the top. These were the levels of increases given at that time. To date we have a 20% at the bottom and a 10% at the top. And at a time, Mr. Speaker, when there is a request before Parliament right now which we are considering for substantial increases – I have not said unjustified increases, because of this historical erosion – at a time they are coming for substantial increases we have the case in which persons who work for Government have had a reduction in some cases of approximately 50% in their salaries. There are persons who used to work in the Coast Guard who are now getting half of what they used to get before, reduction of almost 50% in their wages. That is the position we have come to.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I have listened to the hon. member but did not bother to correct him when he said that the Opposition said that salaries were too high in 1973. I said nothing of the sort. But I do not mind that, that is a matter of argument. But about the Coast Guard, it is untrue that any member of the Coast Guard is working at the same job for 50% of what he was getting before. That is completely untrue. If there is any member of the Coast Guard working for 50% of what he got before – and I know of none – it would be because he has been reduced in rank, which could happen to anybody. A Permanent Secretary, I believe, can be sent back down the ranks. The honourable member must not make these dangerous inflamatory statements, expecially when you are dealing with the armed forces, trying to inflame people who are working in these forces into thinking that they have agreements; all he will effectively do is make it more difficult for former members of the Coast Guard to be reabsorbed. That is not meant to be a threat, but the more this goes on the less easy it will be for members of the Coast Guard to be absorbed into the Regiment. The salaries are not comparable; he knows that. The new conditions carry food and housing – he knows that; and there are many people in this country who if they are given food and housing may take a 50% reduction in salary anyhow. He knows all that, but he is getting up and making these emotive statements on a matter quite unconnected with the business in hand.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, there is no denial that there has been a reduction in some cases of up to 50%, however much it is papered over. So we have this position in which the members, it will be said and has been said in the past – and I know Mr. Speaker has been very strong on this because he has been the one on the Opposition benches who resented any suggestion that members of Parliament were part-time workers in the Government. I believe on one occasion he even disagreed violently – I do not mean came to blows, but there was disagreement on the Opposition benches – when he said "he can lead wunna, but he can't lead me." Let the hon. member for St. Thomas deny that. That was a lot of courage, and the hon. member for St. James also had occasion to disagree as well. But in the end you triumphed, Mr. Prime Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. And the Prime Minister will always triumph. And I suspect that at the end of this debate you will find yourself outflanked again, like the hon. member for St. Michael North.

I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that I have made one specific proposal that there should be an immediate acceptance by the Government of the principle that members of Parliament as workers in the area of public affairs should automatically get a pay increase when other public officers do. If that is done all this kicking

around of the political football would come to an end because whenever circumstances operate for an increase for an Assistant Secretary or Permanent Secretary, the same considerations would apply as far as the political head.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If the hon. member wants some assurance on that point, the Government can give it. We do intend that in future there will be a link – and I have said so already in here that the Government intends to phase future salary increases for Parliamentarians with other Government officers, so we need not wax too warm in pushing a door that is not only wide open but the hinges have been taken off. I even paid tribute to him the first time I said it. I do not know if he was in here at the time but I said that I thought he would be glad to hear that the Government had decided that in future salaries of Parliamentarians would be linked and would move automatically.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to these part-time positions, I hope we will be able to get away from that. Nobody speaks in terms of the Clerk and Deputy Clerks as part time positions; they are linked to positions in the Schedule of Personal Emoluments, and I do not know of any Clerk or Deputy Clerk who works full time in here; so I hope that wouldn't be dragged in as a red herring in the debate. The problem about discussion on political matters in this country is that there are too many red herrings drawn across these matters, and I thank the Prime Minister for the assurance that the Government will accept the principle that the salaries of Parliamentarians should move automatically and that there should be a link.

I am making another proposal and he can tell me whether there is an open door.
5.40 p.m.

I am making another proposal, and he can tell me if this is an open door because in this debate I am discursive and also constructive. I am talking to the issues. I am not giving you any details. I am not telling you what to do and what your salary should be. I am calling, Mr. Speaker, for the establishment of a Members' Remuneration and Allowances Review Tribunal which should sit on a continuing basis to monitor the salaries and allowances of members. I am making that proposal, and that they should take into account the movement in the cost of living, in the retail price index and other considerations; and that thiis particular body should include some government officials – I am not telling the Government how to compose that body, but I think that as far as possible, however, it should include representatives from both major political parties, if you can get them, and members of the Remuneration and Allowances Review Tribunal which should be set up and from time to time recommend a correspondence between posts in the public service and parliamentary posts and to set out the salaries and general allowances as they relate to performance as far as members are concerned. I am making that constructive proposal. It should also consider special allowances for services contributed specifically to constituencies by members of Parliament.

I am also suggesting that any anomalies arising out of what the Government may do for any of the misdeeds of the Government on this particular occasion should be corrected by that particular trade union. Mr. Speaker, I make those specific proposals because I believe that Parliament, as the highest court in the land, should be seen to conduct its business in all dignity and in all decorum; and that there should be no unholy squabbling every time that there is a recommendation for salaries for members of Parliament, with one particular side trying to get a political jump on the other side. I am suggesting that if these proposals are accepted, this will be the last occasion on which we will have this type of unholy squabbling going on.

I would like to say specifically, Mr. Speaker, in addition that the Opposition is not going to sit on the Select Committee. So the Government will have to work our its own approach to that particular matter. As a matter of principle, we will not sit on that Select Committee. I am completely dissatisfied with the way in which this whole question of salaries review has been conducted. I am dissatisfied, that, as a member of Parliament I was not involved in the decision to set up the Committee. If we start off wrong, we will end wrong. You have heard it because that is the basis. It is the root of the approach to this. I make my position clear. I am in favour of an increase; but I believe that we should look at the salary of the Speaker again. I believe that we should look again at the salaries of the backbenchers. Why is it that when Parliament is supposed to be the watchdog of government, to look after the people's business, to scrutinise legislation, to vote supplies and to ensure that the problems of constituents are properly looked after – why this domination of Parliament by the Official side?

When I criticised the appointment of backbenchers as Chairmen of Statutory Corporations, I realised that they were very shortsighted and did not see how far this particular point would go. I am saying now without fear of contradiction that it is because most of the backbenchers of Government head Statutory Corporations that these increases for backbenchers are this low. If I am wrong I stand to be corrected.

I am not privy to the reason or rationale behind the proposals in this particular White Paper. It is the first White Paper that I have ever seen in which almost two-thirds of it is taken up with a quotation from a

public official. It makes history on that score. We saw it a little while before there was the debate last Tuesday; and again I am grateful to the Government for delaying consideration of this matter from last Tuesday; because I suspect that if I did not intervene in that particular debate, and if you, Mr. Speaker, did not give your leadership – and I must pay your tribute for your leadership as Speaker in these matters – you made your ruling, Sir. You ruled fearlessly as you have been doing. They will get annoyed with you as they have done today; but you are Speaker, and so as long as you are there, you will exercise your power and authority; and I am pleased with your rulings today.

I would like to repeat that this is the first White Paper in which almost two-thirds is taken up with a quotation from the Chief Establishments Officer. You have never seen anything like that before. It is skilfully done, by a clever hand, because it leaves a little room for manoeuvre, because you can come back and say "oh, those were the views of the Chief Establishments Officer." Mr. Speaker, you know that very well. Let me say this much. As far as the proposals in respect of the services of members for their constituencies are concerned, I give a general welcome to the indication that members who perform these services in their constituencies should be given some assistance in this particular regard.
5.50 p.m.

And that in carrying out that particular business there should be given some assistance in that particular regard but here again I have got to object. I must object to the manner in which these things are done. I know where the inspiration is for all of these matters. One thing, Mr. Speaker, I do my research and I can tell where these things come from and I know that some time in the 1960's, I am trying to find the exact reference, such a matter came up for discussion in the United Kingdom House of Commons and there was an actual Resolution moved in the House of Commons to this effect that a Committee should be set up to make recommendations on these matters but I cannot understand why this Government does not get it into its thick head that this is the kind of approach, a decent approach to Parliamentary affairs which should be adopted in this country. They are supposed to bring new levels of Government administration and management of public affairs. That is what they are supposed to do according to their manifesto, but at every turn in matters again affecting members of Parliament directly you have this kind of behind the fact operation, back of the hand operation in which members are not supposed to know what type of googly or what other type of play may be coming. It is one that is hidden somewhere or another and that you must just accept it and try to play as best you can.

I am saying that on matters of this sort again, they should be a body to study these particular matters and make recommendations on them. That way you are certain that you are involving members of Parliament and others who may have a contribution to make and you are certain that in the interest of Open Government you are trying to get positions openly arrived at.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken at length on this particular matter. I would like in conclusion to indicate that I hope that if the Government proceeds with these particular matters that they will take the advice given, they would look again at these proposals, they will be certain that they have public opinion behind them if they look at the proposals and shape them and prove them and adjust them otherwise in those areas where they need upward adjustment.

They are a few members in this Parliament who stand to lose as a result of these proposals. I declare my interest straight off. If these proposals go through as they are, I stand to benefit from a somewhat inadequate increase. You, Mr. Speaker, an inadequate increase no doubt so I declare my interest, but I am calling upon the Government to think carefully about what it is doing. From over here we can come and tell them go right ahead, rush head long on because we stand to benefit, because we stand to benefit anyway because with the particular composition of the Government and the talents it is supposed to have it is surprising that so many political mistakes are being made.

Mr. Speaker, with those words and with the specific recommendations that I have made, I do hope that this particular matter can come to a speedy Resolution on all sides of this Chair.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a small contribution to this debate and firstly of course I will support it but there are a few things which surprised me and there are things such as these.

I was a bit surprised to see that the Speaker in your position, Sir, not dealing with you specifically, but a Speaker would not have any travelling allowance. I observed only in the two years that I have been elected a member of Parliament and, Mr. Speaker, I realised that you are called upon to attend quite a number of functions, meeting people in an official capacity at their Hotels, here in Parliament and at the Airport and I would have thought that a travelling allowance for you would have been quite obvious. Now I must say, Mr. Speaker, less anybody misunderstands, I am only dealing with you first because it is the order in which it appears.

The second one is I see that the Leader of the Opposition is not going to have a travelling allowance. I find this surprising because the Government has 17 seats in Parliament so we can represent 17 constituents from Government level but the Leader of the Opposition would certainly have to represent 17 constituents as Leader of

the Opposition and therefore would have to travel considerably throughout this Island. Again I am not dealing with the present holder of the seat. I am dealing with the office of Opposition Leader and I believe it would have been proper for him to have a car allowance.

The third thing I find a little strange is that Senators were given a mere.....

Mr. SPEAKER: A car allowance is an entirely different thing from a travelling allowance.

Mr. WARD: I beg your pardon, Sir. It says here car allowance but let us say travelling allowance, okay.

The third thing regarding Senators I find to give them a $50.00 increase was to me somewhat insulting. If a Senator is worth his salt at all I feel they could increase his pay to double what he was previously getting because I feel that Senators who do their homework deserve more than this. I am certainly in agreement with the hon. member who just spoke that backbenchers should have been treated better and I would not speak any more on that because being one myself people might think I am just putting my own case but, Mr. Speaker, we live in a strange society and you will find that the people of the community expect that a merchant is to work for big money, a doctor is to work for big money, a lawyer is to work for big money, and a banker is to work for big money. Take in all four of these and make him a legislator and you say there must be a reduction in pay. 6.00 p.m.

People in Barbados always view a member of Parliament as a person who should work for below what is really just and due to him, and it is something that should be dealt with on this occasion once and for all. Why should a capable lawyer who has a practice earning considerable amounts of money, an able man, give up his private practice to come into public service to work for the country, to put his all into it with great enthusiasm and all his ability, put dignity to his job, and yet find that he is expected by the public to work for less than he is entitled to? I think the public should look into this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would like to refer to a few cases. I recently had to have an interview with Mr. Talma who used to represent the parish of Christ Church in this Honourable House. When I got to his office in Baxters Road he was leaving in a hurry, stepping across the gutter heading towards the magistrate's court. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that it is a shame to Parliament that a man who was Deputy Prime Minister of a country and then ceases to run – he did not lose his seat, he must have felt that at his age it was time for him to give way – should have to find himself in a magistrate's court being pushed around and poked at by young lawyers fresh out of University. When I say "poked at" I am speaking figuratively; but it is a shame that a man at his age should not have worked for sufficient money with his pension to go home and relax, but instead of that what has he got to do? He has to find himself catching a $75 job in a magistrate's court. This is a shame.

I would also like to refer to Mr. D. D. Garner. I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat embarrassed to call people's names, but people get to know facts and get to understand things. The former Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Smith, told several of us at a dinner.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am sorry to have to stop the hon. member, but it is not pleasant.

Mr. WARD: Mr. Speaker, I will remove the names. A former Minister of Government had to phone the then Minister of Communications and Works, Mr. Speaker, and ask him to instruct the Waterworks not to turn off his water. Now, Mr. Speaker, you know a lot of people feel embarrassed about this, but these are facts of life that should not happen to a Minister. If I were the Minister of Communications and Works at that time I would have instructed them not to charge that former Minister for water at any time for the balance of his life. He has served the country faithfully. We have other Ministers who have been in this Government whom you see at auctions buying furniture to repair to make a living. Mr. Speaker, I think that this is outrageous. I do not think that it is right that a man having served his country in a political sphere such as a member of Parliament and has given up his life, has broken his career, because we have lawyers in here who were practising at the Bar who have left their practice to come in here as legislators, and it would be a shame that they find themselves...*(Asides)*

Mr. SPEAKER: We must have complete silence please. I will not be saying so again. Complete silence please.

Mr. WARD: The essence of what I am trying to say, Mr. Speaker, is that I believe that we should realise the sacrifice that some men and indeed women too make to break their normal private practice in life, whether it is medical, legal or otherwise, to go into public life to serve their country, and at the end of the line when they get to a certain age find that they have to go back and start all over again and be pushed around. In certain countries this is not allowed, and I support the Government completely for making sure that members of Parliament and Ministers in particular are treated properly and rewarded for the work they do and for this reason I support the Resolution completely.

Dr. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, ever since the late, 1840s when we in this country began to pay parliamentarians, every debate relating to this matter has been enveloped in controversy characterised by great

inconsistency, hypocrisy and humbug. From all that we have heard today, this debate is well set in that tradition. In my view the controversy arises from two or three sources. In the first place there is a misperception of what constitutes political advantage. Many generations of politicians of this country have felt that the salary issue is one on which you can get votes for your side depending on what posturing you make, or lose votes depending on what posturing you make. I have no doubt, for instance, that in 1973 when the Barbados Labour Party opposed salary increases then that they thought that in the election of 1976 they would have scored political points. They won that election but I have absolutely no doubt that not a single person who went to the polls voted for the Barbados Labour Party because we opposed the salary increases on that occasion. Equally I believe that no one even remembered that the Democratic Labour Party between 1973 and certainly up to 1976 did not increase salaries. It is a non point in the minds of the people except for one or two commentators or one or two who are jealous of politicians any how and would also express an adverse view. It is my experience that as far as people are concerned, they have no sympathy for any of us who a few years from now, after having given service, find ourselves out of pocket, because as far as they are concerned you have been put there to govern including the determining of what is an appropriate remuneration for yourself. If you misperceive the reality of life or of politics or both and refuse to reward yourself adequately, do not complain after. We have no sympathy for you. That is the view abroad as I perceive it.

The second source from which the controversy has always sprung in my view results from the fact that many politicians in this country are afraid of the very people whom they represent. I like to think that I belong to a new generation of politicians in this country. They put me here because they think I have something to contribute. I have given great consideration to this matter and as far as I am concerned the time has come to give the politicians in this country a proper deal, and the only way the public can say thanks for the service which you render is to reward you properly. As I sit on the Select Committee, I will exert great energy in trying to ensure that the increases are at a level which I consider worthy of the status of a parliamentarian and the demands on his time and on his energy.

Now I want to advert to what I consider a fundamental error in the discussion about salaries not only now but that is abroad in this country and has been abroad for many years. It can best be understood if I refer to page 7 of the Nicholls Report.
6.10 p.m.

It is said – and I quote paragraph 3, page 7, Sir – "Information supplied by some of the major business houses in the country has disclosed that the basic salary now received by the Prime Minister is about the same as that of a junior manager in some undertakings, that is, a manager three or four levels from the top of the management hierarchy. The Commission appreciates that different considerations apply in the fixing of basic salaries in the public and private sector. It is generally accepted that Government does not compete with private enterprise in this matter....." and this is the important point, Sir, "The Commission has therefore sought to evaluate the remuneration of parliamentarians in the context of salaries paid in the public sector."

The point that I make is that there has been an attempt by everyone having to do with this matter to equate parliamentarians' salaries with the salaries of public servants. We are the governors of all Barbados, the private sector and the public sector, so I do not understand the profound wisdom in trying to equate our salaries with public servants', you cannot compare a public servant – meaning a civil servant – with a parliamentarian, you ought to be taking the top salary as far as the Prime Minister is concerned, for instance – this is just an illustration – the top salaries running in the public sector along with the top salaries running in the private sector and decide that he should fall somewhere between the two, but he is the Prime Minister not of the public sector alone but of all Barbados, including the private sector and the public sector, therefore I regard it as wholly wrong. It reflects how people assume things and just accept things without thinking them through.

I regard it as wholly wrong to think of trying to establish some relativity between parliamentarians and civil servants. Mr. Speaker, if I may call it again, you have been in it for many years, this game of politics. You know the large and unremitting labours which you have to give and which you have given, and by 'you' I mean all of us too who have been in politics. The dislocation of your family life, the denial of privacy and of the friendship of your close ones, the long hours, the insecurity of your job. Does any civil servant have anything to do with that? He goes home at 4 o'clock maybe after doing nothing, he gets his pension after ten years anyhow, he is eligible for all this sick leave, long leave and all the rest, nobody calls him about the failure to get an old age pension, nobody sees him about a job, nobody asks him for anything in any problem resulting from the death of a loved one, nothing at all, but we are comparing ourselves with civil servants, and doing it with a certain amount of composure as though there is any validity in the comparison. That is the first point I want to make. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, it is a fundamental mistake on which we are proceeding to assume that we should be relating our salaries to the salaries of civil servants.

The second point I wish to make, Mr. Speaker, relates to the role of politicians in a country such as this.

I can think of no voluntary organisation of which one can be a member at the level at which we are members of the two great political parties in this country and have an opportunity for greater service to the country. Without the two political parties, where are we? Whether John Public out there likes the Democratic Labour Party or the Barbados Labour Party, it matters not, the fundamental point is this, Mr. Speaker, that the political progress which this country has experienced in the last 30 years has been the result of the efforts of the two great political parties in this country. They are not kept alive by someone praying when the nights come that they should not die, they are kept alive because all of us on both sides give long hours in making sure that the political parties will remain alive so as to make the contribution to this country which they are making. I am proud to be a member of a political party and making a contribution at the level at which I do, and it is wholly wrong for any commentator in the Press, massively innocent of what are the demands and obligations of parliamentarians to begin to think that it is any light service which we are rendering, it is heavy duty which we are rendering, and it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that it would be thoroughly wrong not to reward us adequately for the service which we are rendering.

Now, I want to deal with another view which is very much abroad and which in my estimation is thoroughly mistaken. I refer to page 8 of the Nicholls Report. "The Commission also considers that the remuneration of members of Parliament who are not office holders should relate to some extent to their actual attendance at parliamentary sittings." Mr. Speaker, with great respect to Nicholls and the honourable gentlemen who served with him, they brought a colossal and incurable innocence of the responsibilities, the obligations and demands of Parliament to their task. Coming to Parliament on Tuesdays is only one small part of what we do, before I came here this morning I saw eleven people relating to political matters. Every day I see at least eight people, coming to Parliament is only a small part of what we do, we have to operate like ombudsmen. There is no ombudsman in this country and the parliamentarians have to operate like ombudsmen, intervening to protect the citizens from the stresses and the strains. We have to do that every day, and that is only part of what we do, so when a man like Mr. Nicholls and the gentlemen who sat with him could utter a statement like that, it only reflects an incurable innocence of what it is all about. But that view seems to have got through even to the present authors of the White Paper. John Public ought to know quite clearly what it is all about. They are offering backbenchers – and I speak about it with some hesitation because I am one and I do not want to think I am making a case for myself, and it is very difficult in this country for people to separate a man's views from the office which he holds.

6.20 p.m.

But there are offering us now $800 a month, that is, the lower end of the scale of Senior Clerks in Government. In Parliament, the only person that we would be above would be the Messenger, who is referred to as the Deputy Marshal, and the Indexer. So I hope John Public would understand what it is all about; it is insulting to the office itself of Parliamentarian. It is demeaning to the holders of the office, and to the extent that the people put us there, it is an insult to them too. And as far as that aspect of the proposal is concerned, I want to serve notice now on the general public, on the party and on everybody that I will not be supporting that. Somebody seems to have got the notion of distance completely distorted when an ordinary member of Parliament can be paid $800 and somebody at the top is supposed to get well over $50,000. Something is wrong with the notion of distance when that sort of thing happens. The only person – I want to repeat, Mr. Speaker – who would be getting less than an ordinary member of Parliament among the officers of the House will be the Indexer and the employee who carries out the Order Papers. I have told him not to bother to bring mine, because he is entitled to say: "You are not anything; whatever time I bring your papers you cannot make any noise." I am slightly above him and the Indexer. The Typists in here will be above us. That is the great insult which is contained in the body of this so-called White Paper. I want to state quite unflatteringly – and whoever knows me knows that I am not a man involved with flattery – I call a spade a spade – I want to say that to the extent that you, Mr. Speaker, are the spokesman for this Honourable Chamber you are the man who symbolizes this House. When we look at the great traditions of your office, when we look at the role which you are supposed to play in defining the rights and privileges of members, I cannot accept that the remuneration proposed for you is adequate for your office. I am not getting into who is the holder of the office, I am dealing with the office. So that as far as I am concerned I will be expressing the greatest of reservations – in fact, I go further, the greatest of objections – to that aspect of the proposal.

I note that there is an entertainment allowance proposed for everybody except the ordinary member of Parliament. When my constituents and the many persons of this community who ask to have an audience with me, when they come, what must I offer them? Water? But there are all sorts of people in this community who can have an entertainment allowance. But every day I have an endless number of telephone calls from people who want to come and see me; I have to tell some of them that I can't see them this week or next week, I am so busy. But they plead for an interview and I cannot refuse them. When they come, what must I offer them? In this country even Ding Ding can get entertainment allowance but not an ordinary member of Parliament.

Mr. Speaker, we have to understand that this is a small community. People have always insisted on having

access to their representative. In addition, the member of Parliament is seen as a successor to the big white man on the plantation. There is this dimension of paternalism in the job. They look to you for everything; they want to see you from the time you get up to the time you go to bed. What must I offer them, Mr. Speaker?

I turn now to the pension proposals. I am very glad that the White Paper has not affected to adopt the many aspects of the Nicholls Proposals on pensions, because that will be one pension scheme set up never to have a pensioner; I do not know who would qualify. I believe that great thought went into the structuring of the pension scheme in the past whereby you could qualify for a one-third pension, a one-half pension, or a two-thirds pension; I would not like to want to interfere with that. But the way the proposal reads now, you can have a situation where a man gives twenty-five years of his life to this country – two of them in the Senate, but twenty five years of his life in politics – and finds himself at the end not qualifying for a pension.

As I said, I believe a great deal of thought went into the matter of the one-third pension and I will not lightly find myself altering that, because you may very well find that twenty years from now a lot of this generation after giving great service to the country may be passing around the hat because he can't change his shirt; there is no pension for him because he only gave seven years in the lower House.

This brings me to another point. I cannot understand the thinking that if a man serves in the Senate then in the House of Assembly, and then in the Senate again, the Senate time would not count for pension purposes except he holds Ministerial office. I would like to see that nullified so that if a man, for instance, had the experience of our present Leader of the House or Mr. Frank Walcott for example that a period of service in the Senate would at least count for two years of pensionable service. Are we saying that the Senate is a worthless institution? Is it the thinking that the Senate should not count unless one is the holder of Ministerial office? It seems to me that service in the Senate should count, not in the same basis as service in the Lower House, but should count in some degree in computing pensions.

I am also very glad that the White Paper makes no attempt to adopt the suggestion in the Nicholls Report that one should qualify for pension at age 55. You see they are trying to compare us with civil servants but at the same time we are to get the end of the stick that is not so very pleasant. If a civil servant can draw his pension at age 50 why did the Nicholls Report suggest that Parliamentarians should draw their pension at age 55?

6.30 p.m.

Now, the real objection to that, apart from the fact that it would put us out of line with the Civil Service is that we have now reduced the age of majority to 18; and when you bear in mind that over 50 per cent of people in this country are under 25, I think that we will find ourselves in the position in this Parliament where more and more young people will find themselves in this House at 22; so by the time that a man who comes here at 22 gets to 50, assuming that he remains in politics, he would have given 28 years of his life in public service; but according to Mr. Nicholls, he could not then qualify for his pension, although in the Public Service you only have to do ten years. You would still have to go on for another five years. I regard that as unacceptable and certainly out of keeping with the trend of things.

I regard the White Paper as the curate's egg. It is good in parts only. There are many aspects that we need to look at with a view to improving them radically; and I expect to play my part in the Select Committee in remedying these defects.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that you are aware that I am at present the senior member in this ancient and Honourable House of Assembly; and therefore you, Sir, who have also rendered service – I think it is your third term in this House – and you are aware of the problems and the difficulties which we face trying to become members of this House. It is all well, Sir, for those who have never had the experience of even canvassing at a house and imploring people to support them should not be able to tell us what is the reasonable remuneration for the services which we render to the community.

I repeat, Sir, here again today that this has always been my opinion, and that is still my view. A mistake was made when we appointed a Commission to recommend increases for us, and therefore we have found ourselves today in a position over which the public will criticise us regardless of whatever we give ourselves as an increase, whether it is one cent a month; because, Sir, the wrong course was taken; and therefore you have got to be satisfied with all the criticism which we will get.

Now, Sir, I would like to say today that I am not against an increase for parliamentarians. My opinion is that it is long overdue; I must state, however, that I would like to express my disappointment at the low level of increase suggested for certain members of Parliament, especially when one takes into consideration the exorbitant increases which have been recommended for the Prime Minister, Ministers and other members of the Government who hold certain positions. Now, if we take the percentage increase into consideration, you will see that when we were discussing increases for Government employees we were told, we voted in here for workers in the lower bracket to be given twice as much as workers at the top.

6.40 p.m.

In other words workers at the top receive 10%, those at the bottom receive 20%, but what has happened in this case, Sir, I am going to be very brutal. What has happened in this case, you have found those at the top giving themselves over 60% and those at the bottom a meagre 40%. What is good for the civil servants and is workable for the civil servants is not workable for members of Parliament. Why, because the other side has the numerical strength, and therefore when it comes to these increases I think the hon. member for Christ Church East has rendered a service here today in putting over his case. I am wondering how his colleagues in his party are going to accept his views.

Now imagine in this age people I have rendered service to as a Writ Server, as a former Vestryman, a former Chairman of the Council for two consecutive times, a member of this House for four consecutive times and you know what one of my constituents met me and ask me? Wait Mr. Weekes, you all do not get any money. Look what they have here for you all, $800 a month. That is less than what certain clerks receive. I am saying this and I am going to use my own words, that the Establishment Officers who prepared that White Paper, as we were told, have insulted Parliament. It is a disgrace. It is a sad affair for this country when people who are employed by the Government can send down a White Paper here. We were told that it was prepared by Establishment. I cannot vouch for that but I am accepting what I have been told.

Now, Sir, I am saying that when you think of giving a backbencher $200 a month increase which brings him to $800 a month and you are giving a Minister $1,300 a month increase you take the salary from $200 to $300 a month. In addition, you are giving him certain points which the backbencher would not receive. Now I am saying that I hope that the Select Committee would go into all aspect of this Report and submit proper recommendations to this House. I am not in a position to serve as a member of the Select Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order. If the hon. member has received instructions, he must obey them.

Mr. WEEKES: But I am going to make my contribution here and I have no doubt that members of the Select Committee would listen attentively and adhere to some, if not all the suggestions which have been made here today.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order, if the hon. member would give way.

Mr. SPEAKER: When you rise on a point of order, the member must give way.

Hon: C. L. BOLDEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thought that the Select Committee was appointed because persons could submit either a written memorandum or appear before the Select Committee to put his point of view. He might have been instructed by his party line not to become a member.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Select Committee has not received those instructions.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: That is what I am saying, Mr. Speaker, but I will hope that although he is telling us here now what he woule like he should put those views in writing and submit them to the Select Committee or if he does not wish to appear in person that would help us or those members of the Select Committee to have a first hand knowledge of what he would like to see done and then when he comes back to the House, he would not have any question or any complaints as to what is being carried out because I think it would be unfair to the Committee to give your views in a Report before the House and not put it down in writing so that they can refer to it and relate it to what the White Paper says.

Mr. SPEAKER: Some points of order would be a speech.

Mr. WEEKES: I thank the hon. member for the suggestion he has made but that is left to my discretion. Now, Sir, Mr. Speaker, the point that I have been trying to make is the comparison of the various salaries. You too, Sir, have rendered yeoman service to your Party, and the unesteemable service which you have rendered, I have no doubt, Sir, that the Select Committee will take that into consideration salary wise.

When you do not pay legislators, I am not referring to those who are Ministers and those who hold official positions because they are in a position to submit their own recommendations and to do with their own selves, but of those of us who are members of the Opposition, Sir, I am sure Sir that if you, Mr. Speaker, and others were members of the Opposition today you would have suggested that that White Paper be taken and thrown through the window or into the waste paper basket when it comes to especially the backbenchers.

6.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, as I continue and I appear to be insular you will forgive me because, Sir, if I do not blow my trumpet, who will blow it for me? Having rendered service in here for four consecutive terms and being the senior member in here I would have to draw to the attention of this Honourable House any weakness which I see in the Pension Act. I am here to put a case and I again repeat that if it appears that I am parochial in my outlook, I ask the Honourable House to sympathise with me at this particular time.

Now, Sir, with the new salary scales, I have been a Parliamentary Secretary for ten years, and I want to draw

this particular point to this House because I would like the Select Committee to take into consideration the point which I am making here today. At present the law stipulates that my pension or a legislator's pension should be computed on the highest salary he received. I am saying, Sir, and I am going to explain all aspects of the matter to you, that in the Pension Act there should be a clause. In other words, legislation should be enacted that if a member is in active service as a member of this House and has not received his pension and gratuity, when the time comes for his gratuity and pension to be calculated or computed, it should be computed on the salary which the present holder received for such an office, because you would be sending out a member who has rendered indefatigable service to the community, you would be sending home a member who has rendered inestimable service to his constituents, and to the island with a meagre sum, and someone who comes in for a very short period and holds a similar position would receive a bigger pension and gratuity than the man who has rendered several years' service and is still a member of the House of Assembly. I want you to listen to that point and go into all the ramifications of it. You have brains over there, legal brains, and I hope that as a layman I have put over my case so that you can see my grievances.

I am saying this too, Sir. Imagine any member who might have held a Ministry several years before. I am going to state it, I am not going to be ashamed. A Minister who holds a position before and continues to work, when he goes out do you know what is going to be his pension if he puts in two or five years? His gratuity would be $83,000 and $1,650 is going to be his pension. With this new salary scale any person who has rendered a number of years' service will have it added on to the service which he now renders. In other words, I am saying that any member – and I defy you or any member to say that this statement is not authentic – who renders three terms as a Minister and leaves is going to be given $83,000 as a gratuity and $1,650 a month as a pension, and I am saying now that as a Parliamentary Secretary, Sir....

Mr. SPEAKER: Would the hon. member please give way?

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: The time is now 7 o'clock. This sitting now stands suspended until 8 o'clock this evening. 7 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. The hon. member for St. Philip South.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, the point I was trying to make is that if a salary of $2,000 a month brings a gratuity of $50,000 and $1,000 a month as a pension, it is simple arithmetic that $3,300 per month will bring a gratuity of approximately $83,000 and a pension of $1,650 a month. I was trying to clear the air by stating that if any person had rendered, say, approximately ten to fifteen years ago two terms as a Minister, then he was given an appointment for one term at the present salary, that person retires, his gratuity is approximately $83,000 and his pension is $1,650 a month.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have made that point three times.

Mr. WEEKES: Now I shall prove to you about the parliamentary salary, Sir. In the past the salary was $1,300 per month. Therefore, if the pension is calculated at that it brings a gratuity of $30,000 and a pension of $650, a month. The point I would like to make right now, Sir, is that in dealing with the revision of salaries and the amendment to the Pension Act I would suggest that any member of Parliament who is in service, and I repeat, who is in service and has not received a pension and gratuity, I would suggest that the years' service he has rendered, his pension and gratuity should be computed on his present salary and not the salary he received formerly. You see, Sir, that when you take into consideration the high cost of living, and as some members stated, members of Parliament who have rendered several years' service and then go home with a meagre pittance, you too, Sir, can see that they will be called on perhaps to do things which they should not do, and in the long run might involve themselves after rendering service to the community. Therefore, I would suggest that that particular point be taken into consideration by the Select Committee.

I must admit that I am grateful to the Establishments Officer, as I have been told of one particular recommendation which he had made in this White Paper, and when I commend him I think you will forgive me if I say that the credit goes to the Prime Minister. It reads thus: "A member's personal representative or nominee may opt for such gratuity as may be payable in respect of that member's service at his death." Mr. Speaker, it was pathetic to think that in the past a member who was kicked out or a member who retired would receive his gratuity and that if a member died in harness the gratuity could not be paid to his estate, and therefore this is something which is of paramount importance to certain members or all members of Parliament. Therefore, I take this opportunity in congratulating those who have included this clause in the recommendations.

While I would say that as the senior member of this House it really applies to me, I know that it also applies to other hon. members, and in some cases we are not called to another world by age and therefore what is good for Peter may be very good for Paul.

Mr. Speaker, I have expressed matters in general and I do hope that when the Select Committee submits its recommendations before doing so it will study both recommendations, and especially the White Paper, and where they consider that improvement should be made they will do so and where they consider that in their opinion some increases may be a bit exorbitant they will also take into consideration those facts. When you consider the various increases from time to time which the civil servants have been receiving, I have no doubt that the Select Committee will take all those points into consideration, and I hope they will be able to submit a comprehensive report dealing with all aspects of the matter.

That is my contribution to this debate on the increase of salaries for parliamentarians.

8.10 p.m.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, tonight is a funny day. We are living in some funny times and I think it is going to be important that we get a number of principles established in this debate, and I propose to draw to attention of this Honourable Chamber the kind of principle which I consider we should look at in this particular matter relating to the remuneration of Parliamentarians.

I want to put once more, very clearly and without any kind of equivocation, the position of the Democratic Labour Party on this particular matter. I said at the outset that there are a number of principles involved. The first principle I would like to lay on the line is that we of the Democratic Labour Party are not opposed to the principle of an increase for Parliamentarians, and from my personal point of view one cannot expect that in my position I would be opposed to an increase for people who draw wages and salaries. But the principle we are concerned about relates to a number of errors. The first one is that we have been circulated with a White Paper which to all intents and purposes has replaced the Nicholls Commission which was set up to review the salaries of Parliamentarians, and we in the Democratic Labour Party are particularly concerned about the level of increase which is being proposed, particularly in the area of those at the top, and I am going to enunciate very clearly what I am talking about.

When you take into consideration that we are in a situation where the Government has enunciated very clearly the policy of wage restraint, restraining the earnings in the case of wages and salaries of people presumably at all levels of income in this society – and we had a very clear example very recently where one saw this policy established – I am referring to the negotiations for persons in the public sector where the negotiations were settled on the basis of 20% at the bottom and 10% at the top. But we now have this ridiculous situation where this policy has been turned upside down and we now have the situation where in the case of people earning high salaries it is now being proposed that they be granted an increase in excess of 50%, in some cases 60% more. That is why I say we are living in funny times.

I want to refer to a number of Parliamentary debates to establish the point I want to make. On the 6th December, 1977 the Prime Minister in speaking on a Bill to amend the Income Tax Act, at page 133 said: "Mr. Speaker, we have to make a sacrifice. It is a fact that the Government has invited workers in Barbados to accept a policy of wage restraint, and I am going to announce here and now that the salaries of Parliamentarians will not rise during the immediate period of wage restraint, as an example to the country and as an example to the public. As Minister of Finance I am stating that I am not prepared to make more money available at this time despite the incontestable case which Ministers have for a wage increase. I believe it is a sacrifice we must and will make to show to the public that we are politically serious in these matters." The Prime Minister was indicating that he wanted to show that they were politically serious about this matter.

But, Mr. Speaker, I wonder how serious the Government could be about this. I will go on to quote now from the hon. member for Christ Church East who spoke in this same debate on 6th December, 1977. Reading at page 140: "All of these questions will be answered in the years ahead. Now in my view it was extremely important that the Government should set the lead, should set the leardership by example in relation to this whole question of wage restraint; and even though there is an unanswerable case for an increase for Ministers and indeed for Parliamentarians, I was very glad when the Prime Minister announced that this administration would set the example of holding down our increases." What kind of example, Mr. Speaker, do we intend to set in this particular matter when, as I said earlier, we have the situation where people at the bottom of the ladder – and if you take the categories of the persons involved who recently received a mere 20% – people in categories 1 and 2 of the Government scale – these are the kind of people I am talking about, the maids, labourers, cleaners, caretakers, general workers, porters, gardeners, carpenters etc. We are talking about setting an example, but we have a situation where now we are being asked to consider the level of increases for people earning far in excess of what these people have been asked to accept; and, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Christ Church East went on – still at page 140: "I think that the message that must go out from Parliament today is that all classes must be prepared to tighten their belts and bear the strain or restrain and be the ones that should most readily set the example." These are the words, Mr. Speaker, of the hon. member for Christ Church East. Presumably these are the words of the Government, because he was commending the Prime Minister for his policy on wage restraint, and I recall very clearly when he was making his speech he said we would either do it now or we would all sink, the economy would collapse.

We have some very important principles to establish in this debate and in this particular matter and I am particularly concerned that we are now in a position or are now being asked to consider increases at the level and magnitude that are being put before us today and particularly since, as I said, Government enunciated its policy of wage restraint. For if you refer to the Budget Speech made by the Prime Minister on 12th April, 1978, you will find this on page 10 of the public document: "Fourthly, where wage increases in the public sector can only be accommodated by increased reliance by the Government on Central Bank money creation, the result of any general wage and salary adjustment in the public sector is to deplete the foreign reserves and in certain instances put pressure on the price level. It is important to note, therefore, that in order for the stabilization policies enunciated above be effective the rate of wage and salary increases must be related to gains in real output in the economy. It is precisely because there is no certainty that the normal workings of the free collective bargaining process between employers and workers organizations will result in wage increases of the desired level that Governments in mixed economies all over the world have been constrained to attemp to influence the size and frequency of final settlements in the economy."
8.20 p.m.

He goes on: "I have repeated on several occasions that inherent in the concept of an incomes policy is the recognition that not only must the claim of the less well off be accorded first priority, but that the better off must bear their share of the burden of sacrifice. Those are the two basic principles which must underline the implementation of an incomes and prices policy." Those are the words, Mr. Speaker, of the Prime Minister indicating that the policy of wages restraint has been removed; so that to all intents and purposes we are still in an area where as a matter of fact you will find, if you are recruiting, you will find that the Prime Minister is making the point that this restraint will be on until the next budget, and we are in a situation where this could be continued for some years ahead.

So that, Mr. Speaker, we have a very important situation – I think that if one was to read the Budget Speech – I do not have it at this particular point; but it is made very clear that this policy would be on for some time; so that I am really disturbed and very concerned that now in the middle of this policy that has been enunciated by the Barbados Labour Party via the Prime Minister that we are seeing a complete turn around and a complete reversal.

I do not think, Mr. Speaker, that any person who has any concern for principles can really sit down and allow this debate to go on without pointing out the inconsistencies which obviously exist in the position which the Government has taken on this matter. When you further consider that it was in 1978 that the Barbados Labour Party Government introduced a principle and a policy which had the effect of reducing the earnings of thousands of workers in the lower level by at least 20 per cent in the public sector and at the higher level by at least 10 per cent; and talking about the cantonniers and those workers who worked at the Ministry of Communications and Works whose wages were reduced by 20 per cent when they were put on a four-day week; and when you can consider that that happened only a couple of months ago; and these people were made to suffer. They were made, as it were, to carry the burden of the economic straight jacket, and the economic constraint which this country found itself in; and in just a few months after that, what are we finding? On that occasion the then Minister of Communications and Works said, and I quote him: "As part of a programme of wages restraint – this policy is being put forward to us as part of a programme of wages restraint and to provide a saving to create better days in the future.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have a situation where these lowly paid poeple were asked to make a sacrifice. We have a situation where the Government is standing on the backs of these poor people, people who are helpless.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I appreciate the member's point; but is that reflecting on a decision already arrived at by the House? I think that the member would know this.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, when we consider the position of the cost of living and this is an argument which I heard advanced from time to time, and about Ministers not having an increase in their salaries since 1973, you know, I am amused because I think that a very close examination of this would indicate very clearly that in 1973 not one of those was a Minister then, not one. Most of them were not in Parliament. So I do not see how anyone could argue that since 1973 they did not get an increase – that the Ministers did not get an increase. That argument cannot hold good. If on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, an argument had been advanced that in September 1976 they came into office and you look at the movement of the cost of living from September, 1976 to September, 1978, you will find that that increase is 18.5 per cent.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think that the hon. member will agree that the point was that members of Parliament did not get an increase. It is not a question of Ministers. Members of Parliament.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I am dealing with an argument which was advanced by one of the spokesmen for the Barbados Labour Party who has spoken so far. I was responding to that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Proceed.

Mr. GREAVES: Now, if you take a close look at this matter and try to examine it in its entirety you must be concerned. And then, Mr. Speaker, when you cast your

mind back to 1973 when we were discussing the salaries for members of Parliament – now it is very interesting to research and read what members say from time to time on particular issues. On Tuesday, 7th April, 1973, on Page 2215, the then Leader of the Opposition, now Prime Minister said the following: "But it is obvious from what has been going around and Papers which have been laid on the Table of this House, that there is now a magnificent rise in salaries for the Prime Minister, Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries was contemplated by the Government."

And on Page 2216 – remember, I heard the Prime Minister today say in here that he never said that the increases in 1973 were too generous, but this is contained in Hansard, and furthermore that the Barbados Labour Party campaigned on the basis that the salaries of the Ministers on that occasion were too high. I only want to show the inconsistencies. On Page 2216 of the same debate, the Prime Minister said: "I do not think that these increases are all necessary for the good of Barbados. They are for the good of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, members, the Speaker, Chairman and others".
8.30 p.m.

When we look at these matters and when we examine the principles on which the Democratic Labour Party is putting forward its position we must be concerned. We are concerned about the plight of the poor. We are concerned, Mr. Speaker, about what now seems to be the obvious advantage which was taken of the poorer paid workers in this community by a policy which was denunciated by the Government. This policy of wage restraint that I have had to make reference to and I think that we need a situationn now where the Government must make some very clear position or statement. It calls for a statement on this question of wage restraint.

Are we to understand that as from now as it were that the lid will be blown off wage restraint? Am I to understand that no longer must any attention be paid to these guidelines that come off, I want to say that there are lots of negotiations which are going to be geared towards this economic situation. I cannot understand how one would expect that in the light of what is happening here now and what we are being asked to consider and the levels which are being granted one would expect that workers and people who have got to be negotiated for and who are looking forward to increases can be content to accept or be satisfied with a 20% or 10% or a 5% increase or no percent increase as the Prime Minister enunciated at the beginning of 1978.

These are very serious fundamental matters and I think there should be some very clear policy statement from the Government bench or the Prime Minister to make a very clear and unequivocable statement on this question of wage restraint and whether or not the policy of wage restraint is finished with. We are very concerned because it is obvious to me that the credibility of this Government is now on the line. So much so that we have a very interested situation because you know the Prime Minister was one of the chief critics of the former Prime Minister about his going to the Press and on television with matters which should be dealt with in Parliament but I think that the Prime Minister himself broke what must have been a rule that he felt should be followed which might even go, as it were, to debate this matter in order to try, as it were, hoping that he would take some of the heat out of the situation but as I said the credibility of the Government is on the line because I do not understand how suddenly one morning you wake up and hear that the economy has turned around. All the time we have been hearing that the economy has been in a strait, problems in the economy, and I cannot understand, no miracle has been performed and yet we hear that the economy has made this sudden turn around.

It is very clear to me that what is being done, that a situation was being created. A climate was being created where hopefully these kinds of increases and proposals would be acceptable because people were made to believe that everything is good and everything is going alright but I am saying that there are some people in Barbados who are still finding it hard. What about those pensioners and senior citizens who used to be, certainly during the DLP, given something as a special recognition for Independence.

Mr. SPEAKER: I believe we will come to that later on. You ought to have enough before you debate without going into that.

Mr. GREAVES: The case has already been put. I think, Mr. Speaker, that we have to look at this matter very carefully. Now, the Prime Minister today in his presentation, I believe that he is so confused that all sorts of things went wrong. You will notice he was very subdued and he made what I considered to be a big goof because he turned to the member for Christ Church South Central and said that the member for Christ Church South Central left when he was talking about pensions and about the fact that the members of Parliament make contributions towards their own pensions. He said that the member for Christ Church South Central left thousands of dollars in the Treasury. Now I made a quick calculation.

The member for Christ Church South Central was – I think he gained his seat in the House of Assembly in 1966, that was the first time he went into the Party and if you take the amount of money which we contributed on a five year basis, the amount would only be $1,800, so where the thousand dollars are, but as far as I can recall the contributions to pensions did not come into effect, I am not sure, until 1966 and even in that quick calculation you will see very clearly that the Prime Minister, I find it very difficult to understand the whole principles on which these

proposals are based, but as I say, we are particularly concerned in this matter when in the first instance you are talking about this whole question of asking people to restrain and now we have a situation where very clearly there is no restriction and, Sir, I would want to have a very clear, and I think this country deserves a very clear policy statement on the question of wage restraint from the Government because these proposals have as it were thrown this out through the window.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is.....

Dr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I have listened with concerted interest to this debate today and indeed it has been a pretty sad occasion in many ways. The party to which I belong and I myself are connected to the principle that Parliamentarians should be paid a salary. We are connected to that principle because we feel it is fundamental to the development of the democratic purposes that each and every citizen, if he so wishes to offer himself as a representative, should have an opportunity to do so. We also believe that that payment should be adequate.
8.40 p.m.

We also believe that payment should be adequate. Where it would appear, and it does not surprise me, that there is a vast difference between those on that side and those on this side is what constitutes adequacy for parliamentarians. Several arguments have been adduced relating to such factors as the cost of living, the work a parliamentarian has to do, but above all, Mr. Speaker, it is necessary to take the fundamental decision as to how the political processes and the social context of this society we view ourselves as parliamentarians, how, Mr. Speaker, we can arrive at determining that principle of adequacy.

I have heard all sorts of arguments both here today and elsewhere largely from those with elitest concepts of society by those who feel that parliamentarians should enjoy a particular social and economic status within a society and that such status within itself improves the performance of their functions. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw it to your attention that there are societies where different approaches, different attitudes and different concepts apply in relation to those who subject themselves to run for political office, and so it is necessary to determine that adequacy, and it would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that we are going overboard in that regard.

My party, Mr. Speaker, also believes that parliamentarians when they cease to be members of this Honourable House and have contributed to this country should be protected from the ravages of penury, ridicule and scorn by appropriate pension rights, but that those rights, Mr. Speaker, and those pensions should be reasonable. Once we accept the principle of payment of parliamentarians, it is only natural and logical that from time to time there would a revision of salaries, and these revisions in terms of the economic trends that have existed in the past 100 years would usually result in some kind of increase in salary. But, Mr. Speaker, there are increases that are reasonable and there are increases that are unreasonable, because it is necessary as parliamentarians if we are to continue to command or try to recover a situation where we can command some respect from this community that we must see such things as increases in relation to projections, whether political, economic and social which have been made to this community over a period of time.

Another important concept which I believe in is that fundamental to the democratic process, fundamental to the existence of Parliament is the question of representation at constituency level, and indeed I think that in any attempts that are made to make it possible to offer better representation to constituents rather than offering larger and larger salaries to parliamentarians and in particular those who hold office by giving them the opportunity to contribute in that area, the public interest would be better served.

However, I wish to make it clear in the peculiar political situation that we find ourselves in that it is necessary that those holding certain offices, and I refer, Sir, to the office of Prime Minister, the offices of Ministers of Government, the distinguished office which you hold, and other offices of Government, that I feel that officers serving in those capacities should be remunerated at a level where they can provide such services without necessarily any significant erosion of what is determined by an adequate standard of living, and it seems to me here that from the levels of salaries proposed there is a great divide on the two sides as to what we would consider to be an adequate standard of living. In terms of the presiding officer of this Honourable House, from my observations in the very short period I have been in here, the newest though not the youngest member of this House, it would seem to me that whatever relativity is established in respect of remuneration for parliamentarians, it is vital that the Chair should be offered a level of remuneration that adequately reflects its status bearing in mind the constitutional position of Parliament and its over-all importance.

I know, Mr. Speaker, and I have been disturbed, that some time I think soon after the introduction of psychotropic drugs in medicine in certain countries, it became familiar to refer to people who differed from Governments as requiring psychiatric care. Such references eventually became institutional policy and then institutions were built in many countries around the world to which politicians were admitted for

appropriate psychiatric care. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is not surprising that those who would use the name of Hitler with adulation and at the same time seek to attribute to an Opposition parliamentarian the need for psychiatric care purely because he does not agree with a particular viewpoint.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that a new term for salary? Is that a new wage level salary base?

Dr. HAYNES: In that situaiton there would be no wages, no salary. You would just be loaded with psychotropic drugs.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us stick to salaries at this time.

8.50 p.m.

Dr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, in that situation there will be no wages, no salary.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us think of salaries at this time.

Dr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the general principles I have talked about are fair and reasonable, and the question really is a determination of adequacy. However, I want to say this, chickens come home to roost. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, ducklings do come home to roost, as the hon. member for St. Joseph may be able to tell us.

From 1973 – I was not a member of this Hon. House – until 12 o'clock on September 1, 1976 the Barbados Labour Party went the length and breadth of this country telling the people of Barbados that the then Ministers of Government were overpaid, were lining their pockets in four important respects. Firstly, in relation to salaries, secondly in relation to allowances, thirdly in relation to what they considered to be excessive travelling, and fourthly in relation to what they referred to as excessive per diem allowances when they were travelling abroad. This is a fact of political life in Barbados, and if indeed a political party for three and a half years can go up and down the length and breadth of this country, and even before the echoes of their charges had ceased to reverberate on the ear drums of the masses of the people in this country, when you can still hear those echoes coming from the caves, from the guts of this country, Mr. Speaker, within six months in office they found it necessary to set up a Commission to review salaries.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes we tend to look at the politics of corruption purely in terms of financial gains of a given individual or group of individuals. I am more concerned with attitudes of this kind which I would equate with the politics of corruption, because that is why.....

Mr. SPEAKER: You are implying corruption on the part of the Government in their attitudes. Please refrain from this.

Dr. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly try my best not to refer to the Government of this country in that manner, but I would like to say that I referred to the Barbados Labour Party which is not the same thing as the Barbados Government, and this is something that has got to be understood, because unless it is understood we are running into very serious constitutional difficulties.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is running into difficulties with the Chair, that is the only difficulty.

Dr. HAYNES: Anyhow, Mr. Speaker, you will appreciate the cause of my sadness tonight.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are not the patient, you are a doctor, I mean an hon. member.

Dr. HAYNES: Nevertheless, even in the pursuit of our professions we become sad in certain circumstances, and such a circumstance in my emotional judgment and in my intellectual judgment certainly exists tonight. I would like to do this, Mr. Speaker, in order to clear the air before proceeding further with my presentation to this Hon. House, I would like a leading spokesman of the Barbados Labour Party to get up and say that they are sorry they misled this country between 1973 and 1976. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, with your permission, I would pause in order to get such an honest response without prejudice to my right to continue, because as you have rightly pointed out, Mr. Speaker, if we cannot accept that there was any deliberate attempt to mislead this country, then we must conclude, the inescapable conclusion must be that their statements to the effect that salaries from 1973 up to 12 o'clock, midnight, September 1, 1976 were excessive – and this makes it even more outrageous now – to come here to be asking for over 60% increase in their position when up to 12 o'clock on September 1 the salaries were adequate, the salaries plus allowances, plus travelling, plus per diem allowances represented a rip-off of the Barbadian public. How on earth, Mr. Speaker, between September 1, 1976 at 12 o'clock and April 1, 1978, a mere 19 months, can we be talking about a 60% increase? Because indeed when you look around this Hon. House there are I think four members on this side who were in Parliament in 1973, you yourself were a parliamentarian during the period 1973 to 1976, those on the other side, I think

three were parliamentarians and one had the additional responsibility of being Leader of the Opposition, so any erosion, if we accept the principle of erosion, any erosion that took place during 1973 to September 1, 1976 could only have been in respect, as far as the other side is concerned, of their salaries as parliamentarians, that is, an erosion in terms of a salary of $600 a month. So that what we have to concern ourselves with is what kind of erosion would have taken place in respect of their salaries from September 2, 1976 as Ministers, because if even among those three on the other side they were able to pursue their independent professions during that period 1973 to 1976, so I am not impressed with any argument about erosion over a five year period in respect of remuneration for anyone apart from those who were parliamentarians, and indeed if that argument was applied then I think the increases should go to the previous Ministers, backdated from 1973 to September 1, 1976 and then after that to the present ones.
9.00 p.m.

The point I am trying to emphasise is that you have a situation where persons without being forced by anybody went into office knowing perfectly well what the salaries were, and nineteen months later – because these salaries are back dated to April, 1976 – we find a situation where they will be providing...

Mr. SPEAKER: April, 1978.

Dr. HAYNES: Sorry, Sir, 1978. Mr. Speaker, there are other factors that must be considered in this kind of debate. We have heard of an upturn in the economy. I have seen no evidence of this. We have seen massive increases in the public debt of this country. We have seen borrowings as was stated in this Honourable House to even out the cash flow of Government. In fact, we are in the situation where far from there being any genuine improvement in this economy we have a paper improvement at the price of employment in this country and at the price of any improvement in the situation of the working classes. As a matter of fact, to the contrary, there has been a *de facto* reduction in the standard of living of the working people of this country. How then can anyone with any conscience be prepared to accept this kind of measure that calls for a 60% increase at the top?

Over the past two years we have heard again and again this question of wage restraint. It is a kind of economic policy that certain Governments embark on that will lead to the kind of paper improvement which you have seen, a paper improvement in the economy at the price of employment and at the price of the erosion of the standard of living of the total community, particularly at the lower scale. When the question of a 5% increase was brought up we fought that as a party by holding a series of public meetings and joining cause with the Barbados Workers Union, and the best we could get after a 20% reduction of a substantial segment of the work-force of this country and after a massive defeat in a by-election, all that we could get was 20% at the bottom for people earning about $100 a week and 10% at the top. And you are talking now about 60%. As a matter of fact it is a very curious situation of 60% at the top end and 25% at the other end; but I am concerned about the 60% at the top mainly.

For a very good reason, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to get into the detail of this White Paper at this point in time; I want to reserve my position in this matter for the people of Barbados. The basic principles that I have set out which I believe are consistent with the policies of my party we will always adhere to. On the other hand, we cannot in the kind of economic situation in which this country finds itself, in the light of what we would consider to be adequate and what we would consider to be the kind of standard of living which a Parliamentarian should have, we do not think it necessary and cannot possibly support measures giving a 60% increase to people already earning over $30,000 per year.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, it has been a very long day, but as you know, money has a way of doing these things. We have had a very interesting debate. I have heard the Press dealt with in a manner to which we have now become accustomed. As a matter of fact, it was this whole question of the establishment of the Nicholls Commission which gave us the first insight into the mind of the Prime Minister as to how he regarded the Press. I think it was on the 21st April, 1977 when the Advocate in what I thought was a good piece of journalism published that a Commission to review salaries of Parliamentarians had been established. Smarting under the belief that one of the hon. members over here had leaked the information to an experienced, well beloved journalist in Barbados, he subjected that journalist to the most scathing attack I have had the privilege – or rather the shame – to hear in any Chamber on any journalist in Barbados.

Soon thereafter it became obvious that such a Commission had been set up, and I believe that the Prime Minister was upset that it became known to the public that so soon after taking office and before he had well assumed the reins of Government he had to bow to pressures which obviously required that a Commission be set up to look at the salaries of Ministers especially. Soon thereafter, about six months I believe, we learnt that the Commission had reported,

and even though the report had not been laid in this House, I recall the Prime Minister in a moment of debate connected with the economy of this Island, unleash an attack on the Chairman of this Commission that is worthy to be preserved as example of how to attack someone for almost anything.

Mr. Speaker, the case of the Democratic Labour Party on this question has been eminently put especially by my two colleagues who spoke just before me; since what they had to say remains with me so easily, the position has been so clearly put that there is really no problem, no difficulty or need for me to repeat the position.
9.10 p.m.

I rise at this particular point in time, Mr. Speaker, so that there can be no question in the minds of those on the other side as to whether or not we would be sitting on the Select Committee. Mr. Speaker, we will find it impossible at this time to lend the recommendations of members on this side to the formation of a Select Committee for the examination of the White Paper. Mr. Speaker, we do that not because we are unmindful of parliamentary practice and parliamentary positions. We do that primarily because we have no intention of being entrapped by the wiles or any of the machinations or the manoeuvres....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I wish to object to the word "machinations". Mr. Maurice King had to pay my father £100,000 for accusing him of machinations in the columns of the "Democrat".

Mr. TAITT: I realised when I said "machinations" that it was too strong a word. I will withdraw that. I easily withdraw that, Mr. Speaker. I need not make statements of that kind. Mr. Speaker, we will not be entrapped by the wiles, by the apparent sagacity of the Prime Minister on this particular matter. Mr. Speaker, a careful examination of the unfolding of this particular issue will point out very clearly to anyone of even the minimal discernment what the strategy is.

Mr. Speaker, I will not dwell at all on the question of remuneration. No one who is honest could dispute the principle that Parliamentarians and people of that stature and responsibility ought to be remunerated. That is not our position. We are not going to say that they ought not to be. After all, Mr. Speaker, it is now many years since the principle of paying Parliamentarians has been accepted. We have no quarrel with that; and therefore I will not spend time wondering whether somebody should get $200 or $500 or $600; but I have to join with my colleagues in condemning the principle of giving the people of Barbados to believe that there are certain – you will recall with me, Mr. Speaker, how the Governor of the Central Bank together with the hon. Minister of Finance, led this country to believe that the economic situation was so near to castastrophic disaster that it would be nothing short of madness to attempt to offer greater remuneration to anybody in the country at all.

Suddenly, almost without warning, we saw the signs, although we were not sleeping on this side. We saw the signs were not signs to allow Mr. Speaker to get a reasonable remuneration. These signs were not signs to allow members of the back bench to get reasonable remuneration because we have found out that they do not consider what has been proposed as reasonable remuneration. Those signs, Mr. Speaker, were signs to allow those at the top – at the "tippy top" – as I believe children in Barbados would say – to justify and satisfy themselves that their remuneration would be in relation to their status as they see it in relation to the rest of everybody else.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that that particular Act cannot find favour even with them on that side. I believe that. I will tell you why I believe that. When you examine the White Paper, and you listen to the comments that have been made so far on the White Paper, you will see that there is no great similarity by those who have spoken with the concepts and principles which appear in the White Paper. What we have seen, Sir, is a comment from the Chief Establishments Officer; and an administrative fallacy would be permitted if I stood up here and suggested that this White Paper is the White Paper of the Chief Establishments Officer. The Chief Establishments Officer is required to give a comment on anything that he is asked to give a comment on. The Minister responsible for Establishments, the Minister responsible for Finance, the Minister responsible for Defence and Security – this is his White Paper; and as it is his White Paper, and if he makes up his bed he will have to lie down on it.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the hon. member for St. Michael South, spoke today at length on this whole aspect of the position of Parliament. It is not hypocritical to take a position in Parliament such as I took – I agreed 100 per cent – and at the same time refused to sit on a Committee; because the principle involved in a Committee establishment is the collective – if you will pardon the use of the term – the collective responsibility – of the Committee of the entire Parliament. Whether you are in Opposition or in Government, there is a certain level at which there must be communication and there must be a feeling of oneness in certain directions. I did not get that

feeling in the attempt to introduce this White Paper last Tuesday. The hon. member spoke to me and asked me if we were likely to sit on the Select Committee. The hon. member for St. Thomas spoke to me behind your Chair, Sir.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, I asked him if he wanted to deal with the White Paper last Tuesday. There was nothing to do with sitting on a Select Committee. I do not ask people if they want to carry out their duties or not carry out their duties, Sir.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I did not say that he asked me if I wanted to sit on the Select Committee.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is what was conveyed to the Chair.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, let me develop this point about the Select Committee. I had no idea what he was speaking about. I said to him "I do not know anything about that." When he explained that there was a Resolution I discovered that there was a Resolution which was coming down; and I was not acquainted with any Select Committee. No one in here had even seen the White Paper. I left the Chamber and when I came back my colleagues told me that a White Paper was about to be circulated. *(Aside)* Mr. Speaker, I will ask you to protect me from the hon. member for St. James because the hon. member for St. James has his moments, Sir.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that this White Paper sets out the position of the Prime Minister of Barbados first, and everybody else would be in line like ducks walking behind a drake. If he wishes that, he can have that for himself. I will not participate in that, and fortunately none of my colleagues will participate in that. It is unfortunate that some of the hon. members on that side – but maybe it is not so unfortunate – but Mr. Speaker, what about the promises which have been made to the people of this country in regard to certain social services?

If the economy has turned around as the hon. gentleman has been saying, let us restore to the people some of the things that have been taken during the last two years. If the economy has turned around, as he has been saying, let us see some indication of it by a programme to fill the holes in the roads. If the economy has turned around, as the hon. gentleman continues to say, let the four day week not only be abolished, but let the people get the money which they lost. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that there will be no difficulty with the Christmas bonus this year. I hope, Sir, that all will go well; and it was interesting to me to listen to the hon. gentleman who seconded this Resolution.

9.20 p.m.

I recall in the Other Place, and we will recall, and the hon. member for St. George South will recall in 1973 when the question of renumeration especially for the Ministers came up, the hon. gentleman said then that as far as Parliamentarians were concerned the hon. gentleman for St. George South said that he did not feel too happy about Parliamentarians getting anything at that point, but he was not going to spend too much time on it and the hon. gentleman for Christ Church South Central did not feel very strongly about Parliamentarians but he was not going to be voting for it.

You see when I hear my friend the hon. member for Christ Church East discussing the problems of Parliament in Barbados and the statute of Parliamentarians and of his everlasting tenant he did take this stance in the past to find out why it is that the Statute of Parliamentarians continues to suffer the way it does and why is it that each time you get a proposal come before this House or the Other Chamber there will always be this cross reference and conscious distinction of members positions is precisely because not all the positions that were taken in the past were taken on the highest integrity, and, Sir, as you very well know, sometimes the words which you use before come back to entrap you. Senator Tull, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it you mean the hon. member for St. George.

Mr. TAITT: I will be quoting from the Senate Debates for Thursday, April 26th, 1973. The hon. member, Mr. Speaker, I am sure you will bear with me. I just had it here. Mr. Speaker, I can remember the words but I would not like to misquote him. The hon. member for St. George – I have found it. Listen to this, Mr. Speaker, Senator L. R. Tull, on page 281 of the Senate Debate, Thursday, April 26th, 1973. "Mr. President, I believe that the question of remuneration for the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Government is a different kettle of fish from the remuneration of members of Parliament. Members of Parliament by and large, the back benchers and Senators have little or no say in determining these figures, but the Prime Minister and his Cabinet are responsible for determining how much money they will get."

Now he went on, if you will excuse the expression, to drop some warm lashes in the Prime Minister and the Cabinet. Some warm lashes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister of that day.

Mr. TAITT: Oh yes, Sir, he would not dare to drop lashes in front of the Prime Minister of this day

in here. He might drop them quietly to you or me, Sir, but never.

Mr. Speaker, in 1973, the hon. gentleman said "I want the Minister" – you see, Sir, but for the fact those words were said then I could be saying them now. Page 284 "I want the Minister who introduced this Bill to state for the record whether Barbados in 1973 is in the state of financial health to give such comprehensive increases to the Ministers and the Prime Minister."

Sir, for the Records, I would like the Hon. Minister to tell us if the country is in a healthy financial position to deal with the increases for the Ministers and Prime Minister.

He went on to say, Sir, "To me it is a bit wry that you can open a newspaper and see that the public can get involved in the Gary Sobers issue. You see a lot of letters and editorials on many matters and public opinion is crystalised on those matters. What is wrong about involving this whole issue about ministers' salaries?

I am concerned about the honour of Parliament mainly because I am going to be here for a long time. I must consider its honour and integrity. A lot of unfortunate and unflattering cliches are being noised around about politicians. Although some of the members of this Chamber let it be known that they are not politicians, I consider every member of this Chamber and of the Other Place a politician."

Having made his point he went on to say:

"Can it be defended in a country which is being asked to tighten its belt to combat inflation when the Ministers and the Prime Minister are being given a 43 per cent increase?"

Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask, can it be defended in a country which is being asked to tightened its belt to combat inflation when the Ministers and Prime Minister – I would strike out Ministers for the time being and I will say Prime Minister, and I have to put in a little piece here – did not find it possible to offer the lower paid workers in this country more than 20%, but is asking for 60%.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lady who works at Westbury Cemetery. She got an increase under the new arrangement. She went from $69.00 to $84.00, up 20% or whatever that works out to. They rounded it off.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope you are not reflecting on the motives of this House.

Mr. TAITT: No, Sir, she got $84.00. Now, Sir, if she was getting $69.00 and the Prime Minister was getting something, when she got her raise – to $84.00, and you notice where I going, Sir, I am not bothered about the salaries of the Permanent Secretaries, Parliamentarians, and all that because when that lady goes to the Supermarket, Sir, with her $69.00, she is operating in the same environment as the Prime Minster with whatever he was getting. If she moves to $84.00, the relativity should be maintained if the country is asked to hold strain. He should be asked to hold strain also.

I would not even try to blame anybody else on the Government side because I am beginning to wonder if the Ministers knew about it. I have not heard any comments from them yet but I am sure we will hear from them.
9.30 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, if you thought that according to this document Senator L. R. Tull's position was interesting, the position of the honourable gentleman who I believe is one and the same person who seconded this Resolution is even more interesting. Senator H. B. St. John who raised some very fundamental questions about the principle of parliamentary pay, who raised some very fundamental questions about the principle of remuneration for Ministers had this to say, and this is one of the points I wish to raise.

"In this country it is known that the public of Barbados....."

Mr. SPEAKER: You should make it known for the benefit of Hansard where you are quoting from.

Mr. TAITT: I recognise that and I am quoting it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The date of the debate?

Mr. TAITT: The same debate. April 26, 1973.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is another Reporter.

Mr. TAITT: Thursday, April 26, 1973, Official Report, First Session of 1971–76, page 287, at the second paragraph.

"In this country it is known that the public of Barbados provides an official residence for the Prime Minister."

That is what it says here, and he referred to the Schedule, and I do not want to quote him. I refer him and the hon. member on the other side and all the hon. members to read what they had to say on that occasion. You see, Mr. Speaker, if we get into the detail

of what has been proposed... (Hon. L. R. TULL: Read what you said.)

You can read it. Mr. Speaker, I am never ashamed to read what I say. I have never said anything of which I am ashamed.

Mr. SPEAKER: About salaries?

Mr. TAITT: About salaries or anything. I am not like them. I could say it then and say it now. I can read it and you can get up and read it because I have been consistent and I will be consistent. You did not have a chance really. I never walked around this country telling anyone that the Ministers' salaries were too high. I never accused anyone in this country. I never walked around this country trying to give people the impression that Ministers were living high off the hog. What has happened to them on that side, Mr. Speaker, is that having given the people the impression that Ministers were living in such sumptuous conditions, they now find themselves, Mr. Speaker, in the position where they have to go back to the people and admit to the people that conditions were nowhere nearly as rosy as they painted throughout the entire time.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, did the hon. member say then in the Senate that he should not get the 1973 salary because there was a poor woman in Westbury Cemetery that would not be able to buy things at the Supermarket?

Mr. TAITT: What has that got to do with anything? Mr. Speaker, on page 6726 of the House of Assembly Debates, Official Report, the Hon. J. M. G. Adams.

Mr. SPEAKER: What date?

Mr. TAITT: Tuesday, 22nd June, 1976. You don't want to hear yourselves?

"....if elected to power, we have no intention..."

I can imagine him, Mr. Speaker. "...if elected to power, we have no intention of taking any decision in 1977, 1978 or 1979, to increase the salaries of members of the House."

Mr. Speaker, that gentleman, that one, he. Mr. Speaker, you wanted to hear some reading. That is reading.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I challenge the hon. member to read on, because it is one of the most dishonest tactics known in Parliament and a practice that speakers customarily stop when a member seeks to read part of a sentence and leave out the qualifying part.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, if there is anyone who would know about those tactics, the hon. gentleman would know them *par excellence.*

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order, please.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, he is able to read, they are able to read. I do not know what their problem is. They can read too, I think. They read the figures very well.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I wish to know whether it is in order for a member to read what purports to be a speech by another hon. member in which part of the speech is read and from what is read it is clear that he does not conclude the sentence. I would like to know whether that is in order in this House not for today but for the future.

Mr. SPEAKER: The good thing of having our present system is that a member on that side can read and stop and a member on the other side can read and carry on.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, I am objecting to what has just been read because the hon. member is reflecting on my motives. He has read out a passage saying that on an earlier occasion I had no intention of seeking to raise parliamentary salaries, and in a debate when I am moving a Resolution to that effect he is reflecting on my honesty and motives.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is an entirely different matter. If the hon. member is reflecting on the motive of the mover of this Resolution, that is something new which has come before this Honourable House. I will ask the hon. member to desist from so doing.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, to point out that I am not reflecting on anything like near the motives of the hon. member, he said I should read on. I am reading on page 6726.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is entitled to read on, but the point I have tried to make is that the Hon. Prime Minister, when he rose on a point of order, could have read on from where the hon. member left off.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I will save him the trouble. I am on page 6726. The last word I stopped at was "House". The next paragraph goes on:

"Our manifesto will contain statements which will show that we have given thought to the problem of reducing the generosity of members for themselves in the matter of pension schemes; reducing the profligacy with which Ministries and the concomitant high salaries have been shared out; accepting the argument of the hon.

member for St. Michael North East, and reducing, if not abolishing, the post of Parliamentary Secretary."

Does he wish me to read more, Sir? (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: It has all been carried out.) And then you brought them back. You reduced them one week and brought them back. *(Asides)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Look, we cannot have this cross-talk. Evidently the point there was the sharing out of the Ministries that the hon. member was referring to.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir. I should think that in the sharing out of the Ministries such worthy persons as we know, both you and I, could not make the team, and furthermore of all those brilliant players over there, one twelfth man has played in so many practice games it was almost uncomfortable, and when they came to pick the team for the test match would not give him a play at all, at all, at all.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I once told them that when I came into this House they should leave me alone. It is 9.40 p.m. and I know that the Reporters must be tired.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must wind up.

Mr. TAITT: I am going to stop because I have nothing but consideration for the honourable persons who work in this Parliament. I would have hoped that the whole question of parliamentary salaries and ministerial salaries would have formed the basis of an all-day debate and that all of them would have been satisfied in all respects.

9.40 p.m.

But let me end, Sir, with the hope that whatever shall come out...

Mr. SPEAKER: You would not worry to draw if you do not vote for it.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I was making the point that I hope when you go to draw that you can do so with a lot more enthusiasm than you have done in the past.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this business of politics, I am now convinced beyond any shadow of doubt, is a real strange business. There was a lot of reading in here today and I am going to try to read a passage. The case as made out by the Opposition today is a case for more money for members of Parliament.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does that include the Opposition?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is the case made out for members of Parliament, Sir, and better pension rights for members of Parliament. It is really hypocritical to hear members on the other side talking about wage restraint, all sorts of strain, and straining themselves also to make out a case for you, Sir. That was very clear, a case for you in particular, Mr. Speaker; strange business.

Now, the First Session of 1976–81, Wednesday, 6th October, 1976, the same day Cubana went down, I would not like to read everything that was said in here about you, Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman that is taking the Chair. I feel ashamed to read what was said in here about members from the other side of which Mr. Frederick Gladstone Smith was Leader of the Opposition, and he said the Opposition would not support you because of your past. I do not want to go into that, Sir, and they went on to propose the hon. member for St. Lucy. Now today, Mr. Speaker, you are hearing a case made out about what a nice person you are and how much you must get and how many pension rights you should get.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order. Is the hon. member saying that you are not a nice person? It is true that you are a nice person, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The economy has turned around and everything else.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Exactly, this is the turn around now, Sir. The hon. member for St. Lucy, the things he said! The only person who brought a degree of balance on that side was the hon. member for St. John, but listen to the voting, Sir. They did not only make their statements, but they went on and called for a Division. This is Mr. Smith, "I regret, Sir, that they found it convenient, if necessary, desirable to fulfil their campaign promises to visit upon this honourable institution..... *(ASIDES)*. We will happily support our distinguished friend..." Do you hear the word? "....distinguished friend and colleague from St. Lucy, but we cannot support the nominee of the Barbados Labour Party from St. Peter." It was then put to the vote by Mr. Clerk and the members on this side supported you, Sir. Listen now for the Noes: Mr. Smith, No; Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, No; the man who really put the case most of all on that occasion was the member for St. Michael South, Mr. L. E. Sandiford, No, that was his vote; Dr. Caddle, No; Mr. E. E. Greaves, No, and Mr. B. M. Taitt, No. Six hon. members voted no and sixteen voted aye.

Now, Sir, in here this evening for almost five and a half hours the Opposition took it upon themselves to tell us in very simple language that they want more money, and I do not like calling people's names because you told me to get a good vote for you.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order. The hon. member has indicated that somebody on this side, or he said all the members on this side, or he intimated that the members of the Opposition made a case for more money

for us. I wish to categorically deny that I asked for any more money for me.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: All right, you do not want any more money, you do not draw it, because I am going to ask the Prime Minister if it is in order to move an amendment that those who vote against it do not draw. I hope I do not see you at the Treasury.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order. If he wants to put that amendment and he wants my support he can have it, I would support it.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: We heard a lot today, Sir, about the Government being on top the workers' backs, not on the backs of the taxpayers, the workers alone. Now listen to this, Sir, the workers. David Seale, he is not a worker, Leacock is not a worker, they do not work, nor Bernstein, they are big salaried boys. Listen now for the workers who are getting trampled. The Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union salary – I know this is going to be a bomshell – salary, $4,000 a month; entertainment and travelling $2,400; house allowance $1,000, and a car owned by the Union, giving a total of $84,000, all put together, $7,000 a month. The Senior Assistant Secretary, a Mr. E. E. Greaves who I believe is the member for St. Lucy who lives in St. Lucy.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I believe that if the hon. member is purporting to give correct information to this Hon. Chamber he should be accurate. I am submitting that that is inaccurate information. *(ASIDES).*

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Lucy has made his point.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: We have friends, you know, all around, in the Union and all about. Listen, Sir, this is a Senior Assistant Secretary, a Mr. E. E. Greaves. Salary $2,400 per month; entertainment and travelling $1,800; house allowance $800, and a car owned by the Union, giving that individual, this Mr. E. E. Greaves, a salary of $49,240.

Mr. Greaves rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what do you rise?

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. First of all, I would like to make the point that when I was speaking just now the microphone should have been working, I detected that it was not. However, I will go on.

Remarks hereafter made were ordered on 16th January 1979 to be expunged from the record.

9.50 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would like to inform the hon. member for St. Lucy that it is a very dangerous thing to accuse a member of misleading the House; the member making the accusation should carry on and give the correct information.

Mr. GREAVES: I will say further Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, ...

(Remarks made hereafter were ordered on the 16th January, 1979, to be expunged from the record.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. Lucy must withdraw that remark forthwith. *(A Pause)* The hon. member for St. Lucy has disobeyed the authority of the Chair and I ask for a Resolution from the Leader of the House. *(A Pause.* Mr. GREAVES leaves the Chamber).

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: May I proceed, Sir?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member for St. James may proceed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That therefore brings me Mr. Speaker to the figure of $59,008 per annum, giving a salary of $4,924; these are all the figures put together. It grieves me therefore, Mr. Speaker, when I hear members get up in here and talk about the poor workers and the masses. I would challenge any of the members on the other side whether they pay their domestic helpers more than they pay themselves. Every time they open their mouths about the poor workers and the masses – and listen; Mr. Speaker, to the analogy that was drawn, the women working in Westbury Cemetery for a salary of $84 a month and the Prime Minister with X thousand dollars. I really can't understand it. Am I to understand that a corporal must get more than the Commissioner of Police? They did not know that I had these figures from a way back with the Transport Board negotiations but I was waiting for the appropriate time, and I am going to talk publicly too of the high salaries paid from the people who contribute a $1.50 a week. And they come in here today making out a case for themselves, asking for more money, but are critical of the Government and talking about presenting a formula.

Mr. Speaker, I will draw attention to an incident and it serves this Cabinet right. I recall on an occasion in 1971 or 1973 the then Government brought down salaries for members of Parliament but they had arranged their salaries long in advance, and you will recall that in your presence Mr. Edwy Talma came to us and asked us how much we wanted for the Opposition and you said to make the salary good along with the Secretary, if I recall rightly. And Mr. Talma turned to the Union's Secretary, Mr. Frank Walcott then a member of this Parliament and said to him: "You had better let him handle it because he has the ear of the Prime Minister and he may get a better deal for you all." This is how they carried on at the time.

Now we have gone the whole way to fulfil our Manifesto pledge by having an independent Commission set up to review the salaries of Parliament, not for us to accept, but for them to submit recommendations to us for us to make the decision. This is how we have treated Parliament – a Commission set up, the views of the Chief Establishments Officer obtained and then a Select Committee set up to make sure that there is unanimity between both sides of the House. Now it is being put out today that they do not like the formula. All they now say is that they want an increase but they want it pruned – I think that is the word they used – cut off a piece here, add a piece there; knock down a piece here, shoot up a piece here. What do you want? Better allowances and less salary? But you want more money and a good piece too. Well come out and say it like a man and stop beating about the bush about a formula and reading debates of the Prime Minister's speeches some time ago. They should come in here and congratulate the Government on being able to withstand the problems which were inherited and which were so ably turned around that the country's economy could pay the civil servants some $19 million. That is what they should be talking about and about being able to have our balance of payments in a better position.

I think that all Barbadians in this country should be saluted for standing up at a time when it was almost a crisis in this country. Every Barbadian should be saluted for tightening their belt. We have been tightening ours for five years.

Now as far as that is concerned, I want to say that I do not care if they raise the salaries or do not raise them; it is immaterial to me. I have said it in Cabinet and I have said it here. My last son is eighteen years old; I am cool. But I will go along with my colleagues and will stand behind the Government on this; but I don't understand this round about nonsense that you want more money but talking about a wrong formula. When in 1969 we had an increase I stood up over there almost single handed and said that I believe members of Parliament should be well paid. But in 1966 when I first came in here I even objected to the idea of Parliamentarians being paid, because I did not know the difference. And Lloyd G. Smith told me; "You can oppose it, but go and draw it; you do not understand what politics is all about." And he went on to tell me how they ate out a whole baker shop he had in St. Joseph. That is the danger of politics.

Now the Leader of the Opposition, or the acting Leader – or President or whatever he is – told me that he has to have a good bit; don't let them down.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has said that I told him something. I have not spoken to the hon. member on this question at all; I have not said a single word to the hon. member. He is either mistaken or inadvertently misleading the House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: They don't talk to me or sit down with me, Sir; but I know you talked to me. But you talk so many things so fast that you tend to forget what you talked, and the Prime Minister warned you once to at least pause for some thought before you talk; see if you remember that.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, Sir. I just want to bring to light the hypocricy – not that members in here are hypocrites – but the hypocricy in some things that I can't understand. I am going to be a man even if the gun is at my head; I will never sell my soul with cheap politics. That is why the public treats us this way all the time; that is why the public looks down on us as the scavengers of the society rather than the leaders of the society, because here we are beating out our brains, looking after negotiations for people, giving the civil servants – when I look at my Permanent Secretary's salary and look at mine, sometimes I really have to smile. And I am supposed to be a Minister. I am a joke Minister in relation to salaries.

10.00 p.m.

It is only a matter of time; and when we sell ourselves cheap to the public, the public can only see us as cheap. Therefore I am going to support whatever the Select Committee comes up with. In my twelve years in here I believe that I have done remarkably well; so it is immaterial to me what they do; but I do not want any hypocrisy. If you want more money, say that you want more and the public will see you as a man standing up for what you believe.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I will intervene in this debate for a few reasons and very quickly put the position as I see it. I think that if one looks at the principle which we made in debates and salaries, one of the strong points that we made is that parliamentarians should not have to vote any salaries for themselves until after there had been an independent commission put up. That was said in 1972. On this occasion we have fulfilled that requirement.

Let me say in reply to the hon. member for St. Michael South that the Democratic Labour Party in 1973 took the position that to set up a commission such as the Nicholls Commission was a waste of time; and that is very clear in the debate which took place in 1973. They were basically opposed to any independent commission being set up to enquire into the salaries of members of Parliament; and expressed the view that it was a matter for members of Parliament alone, and they were not in favour of an independent commission.

As a matter of fact, the then Leader of the House, Mr. Talma, described it as nonsense; and this view was supported by Mr. "Sleepy" Smith. The view that I took was that there should be proper integrity legislation and disclosure of assets. A Bill on this will shortly be before this House so that this country will have the benefit of integrity legislation. The Democratic Labour Party took the view that it was not necessary to have any form of integrity legislation at all. That is the position on that.

The third point I wish to make is that the Democratic Labour Party came down for an increase in 1973, they brought the papers and gave us just before the House met. In fact we were already meeting when the Bill was given to us on that occasion. I then complained that we should have been given time to at least calculate the position so that we would be able to discuss the matter with our constituents, and give some proper assessment or evaluation.

Mr. TAITT: If the hon. member would give way, as I understand from the debates, on that occasion the contention was that the Leader of the Opposition had had private consultations and had not acquainted his colleagues with what he had agreed to. That is the gravamen of the charge that was made on this side of the House at that time, that the Leader of the Opposition was looking after himself.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, that was not the point. The point that was being made was that they brought down the Bill and gave the House less than half an hour to vote these salaries in 1973. I said that I would vote against the increase because I did not believe that there were proper consultations with the House or with the country on the matter. That is how they dealt with salaries.

The other point made was about the percentages of increase. I want to deal with the member for St. Michael South West; because the percentages of increases voted for Ministers of Government at that time were higher than the percentages of increases which were agreed to be paid to the workers in 1973. I made a statement to that effect, and it is hypocritical of the Democratic Labour Party to pretend today that they are arguing about increases when you take into account the precedent that they set in 1973 which was to give themselves higher increases than they gave to the civil servants themselves. The debates are here. I remember the stand which I took. I pointed out at that time that they should make up their minds whether or not they would establish an independent commission and whether they should have parity. There is no case for the Democratic Labour Party.

Let me tell you what is the trouble with the Democratic Labour Party, as Mr. Tudor has been making claims since Saturday to friends of mine, Sir. Mr. Tudor has been making it quite clear to friends of mine that they have been divisions in the Democratic Labour Party as to the stand they should take today. Some of them were in favour of sitting on the Select Committee. The point of view of the hon. member for St. Michael South Central and that of the hon. member for St. John carried. Mr. Tudor's point of view was a different point of view; and he was backed by other members of the party. He has been talking about it. Do not try to get up and give the impression that you are putting a general point of view.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The hon. member is misleading this House. He indicated that the hon. member for St. Michael South Central did something and said that the view of the hon. member for St. John carried, and that somebody told him something. He is misleading the House. The hon. member for St. Michael South Central has been out of the country.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I can tell the hon. member that before he left the country on Saturday there was consultation between the hon. member for St. John and the hon. member for St. Michael South Central. If he does not know that, let me tell him what happens in his party.

Mr. TAITT: The hon. member might be able to know what goes on in telephone conversations of members over here. He must have information and ways I do not know about.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a point.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I will not follow the bad precedent set by them in listening in to people's telephone conversations. The point is that within the Democratic Labour Party there is no joint view on this matter. Everyone of them is satisfied in his mind, and they know very well that the party should be re-established at the top between civil servants at the top and the Ministers. They know that. That is the view; but the views of the few members in the Party dominated, so that people have come in here to try to publish the attitude that they are disagreeing with the level of increases when they have their own views on the issue. They will draw the salaries and hide behind that type of hypocritical attitude of the Democratic Labour Party and then go out in the country to try to convince people otherwise.

I want to make a few situations clear on this issue. I have always believed that members of Parliament – and I said so in the debate in 1973 – should be properly paid. I believe that there should be certain constraints on members of Parliament, because if you do not pay them properly you will eventually have as we got in the past, corruption rife in this country. Let us face that fact. I do

not believe that you will necessarily remunerate Ministers on the same level as you remunerate people in other areas of the country.

The hon. member for St. Michael South Central, for instance, is able to draw his salary like any other hon. meber on the backbench and work as a doctor in his profession 100%. Let us say that he has an income of $250,000 a year as a doctor and another income in here of $8,000. He can get up in here and pontificate. I have said that I am quite willing to work as a Minister for the country for nothing if they just let me practise my profession; but they will say that it is a conflict of interests. I have not come in here to beg the public for money for me; but if the public says that a Minister cannot follow a profession or his calling and he has an obligation to support his family, then the country must decide whether it will remunerate the Minister at a favourable level or not.

10.10 p.m.

I did not beg to be in politics. I told them already when they are ready they can vote me out. A lot of us on this front bench are making a sacrifice. Every month since I have been a member of Parliament I have been subsidising the public of Barbados to maintain my same standard of living and using my own assets to do so. I am making my position clear. I find it almost beneath my dignity to have to come in here and argue about salaries. I find it beneath my dignity to have to get up on a public platform to have to answer people like Eric Sealy cursing us, people who have no contribution to make to this country, when I know that all of us on the front bench here work twice as hard, if not four times as hard as any Insurance Salesman who is bringing in $88,000 in commission every year. You need to face facts.

I am sure that there is nobody in business in Bridgetown that works harder than Ministers on the front bench in order to get the country going. Why do you not all face facts? It is not that I cannot earn a living. It is not that the hon. member for St. Joseph cannot earn a living, Sir. We are not paupers and beggars in here to rip off the public. Anyone of us could leave Parliament tomorrow and be better off financially than we are in here with or without an increase in salary. And in making people believe that we are a bunch of hypocrites who only come in here to full our pockets or line our pockets.

If that was the standard followed by the Democratic Labour Party, it is not one being followed by us, Sir. I am not begging the public for anything, Sir. I am saying tonight that if the public is dissatisfied with anything we do, vote us out. They have that privilege but when they vote me out they vote me back to my profession. They will not vote me out to poverty or anything of the sort. They can quote that too. Get it straight, Sir, that those of us who are called upon to make some sacrifice they cannot believe that they are going to continue to insult you in public life, downgrade you in public, down pay you in public life, expect you to be honest in public life and at the end of that kick you out.

If the country wants that, they will always be thieves and robbers. We will always have political enquiries, we will always have people getting rich. You will see people accumulating proverty in the Cayman Islands, buying aeroplanes and flying all over the place, having houses all over the place, having bank accounts in the Cayman Islands ending up with a political party with $1.5 million in his pockets when he goes out of power and you would never know what happened in your country. Somebody once said we will wake up and find that we do not have a country. That is the position.

I feel very strongly on this because I thought that the debate would have risen to a very high standard and I think it is below the dignity of this House and below the dignity of this country for Ministers to have insults thrown at them by the National Union of Public Workers, people on political platforms, when you are not dealing with people who are hand-to-mouth who come in here begging for a living. Maybe that used to happen once before.

I make bold, Sir, to say that every month I have been subsidising the taxpayers of this country not only in time and sacrifice but also in my own money. When I was a member of Parliament without being a Minister I used to take the whole of my salary — no hon. member on that side has ever done it yet, and give it to my constituents by way of a scholarship. That is a fact because I was earning from my profession. That is not a petition it is a fact. I gave scholarships before I came into the House and I gave while I was in the House so what are hon. members making a fuss about? You give a Minister $24,000. He is taxed on it. By the time he gets his take home pay, even with the allowances in his hand, at the highest he gets $1,700. That is what he has on the present going down.

Now somebody said to me in the yard as I was coming in today you are working for as much as a snow cone man makes and he does not even pay income tax on it and we did not even know that that was what you were making. Yet you can find Hon. Ministers in this House working day and night, Sir. I want to deal with the position, Sir, because I would prefer to be on the Opposition and go and practice my profession like Dr. Haynes, Sir. Sorry, the hon. member for St. Michael South Central. You hear of the piety from the hon. member when he came into the House,

Sir, the hon. member for St. Michael South Central. Let him disclose to the people what he makes in his profession, add to it what he is making from his investments, add to it what he is making in here as a member of the House and you can expect to hear piety. If he wants to make a sacrifice, let him give up his parliamentary salary to help people. Let him give up some of his investments and live on his profession and serve in here free. That is what I challenge him to do.

I gave up my parliamentary salary to the people. I do not like all of this nonsense. Let us get the principles straight. I believe the only hon. member on that side who is suffering, two hon. members on that side who are suffering by these provisions, the hon. member for St. Michael South loses the opportunity to get a pension after 12 years service. That is a fact. This legislation will affect him and I believe we ought to look at that.

The hon. member for St. Philip South made a point which disturbs me very much. That a member can come in and serve for 15 years and be a Minister at the end of that period for 1 year and get a higher pension than another hon. member who has served for the same 15 years, or a Minister for 12 years and the last 3 years he was not a Minister. Now that cannot be right either. I think he made a very valid point and it is a point that he must advert to the Select Committee, but it is a pity when we talk about raising politics up when the Democratic Labour Party has allowed this issue to put them in the position that because they are anxious to regain power in 1981 they have missed the opportunity for the fist time to establish proper principles in this country. Let us face it.

You are not only fighting for a 1981 Election. This Government has not even been given a chance in the two years of its life to settle down to Government without a heap of criticism by paid agents and unpaid agents every night on the platforms. The abuse of the hon. member for St. Michael South East and the libelous remarks about him. A wicked and vicious campaign was conducted against him the remarks you are getting against every hon. member by Fly Sealy and his gang, well supported by supporters of the Democratic Labour Party and orchestrated by them. That is what you have had to put up with here and yet try to run the country in the process.

I say to the people if you want the Government, take it in 1981. You will only get back the samething that you had before which two years ago you knew was of no value. That is why you will go to get them back. A lot of people who have a state in this country are maintaining corruption and are anxious to get this Government out of power. That is what is happening. They have a state in corruption. They have the Cayman Islands Company, investments here and there. The Duffus Commission might not get at it because a lot of people cover thier tracks. But make no mistake about it that 15 years of Democratic Labour Party rule, corruption became the norm of the day in this country. Nobody would have done the International Seafoods Limited deal where $1.75 million of the taxpayers money went down on ISL during the reign of the DLP Government. Why, because you had the position where people had to look over their shoulders at certain things.

I can tell you I came into this Government clean and I will leave it clean. You can pay me a penny, you can pay me a million dollars and you will never find you can accuse me of corruption in Government. The country must decide whether it wants integrity or whether it wants corruption and if the country wants corruption it can have the Government in 1981. They can have it now as far as I am concerned and I make no apologies to the public of Barbados for the stand I take on this issue. None whatsoever, Sir,

I want to make my position quite clear because it is wrong to go on fooling the public of this country that you must have people who are to serve and their integrity must be outstanding and that people who are earning more than them and putting money into their pockets should be better renumerated. I am finished with that, Sir. As far as I am concerned they can vote salaries, do not vote salaries, I will give the service that I can give as long as I can and they are some of us who do not come in here begging for money and I find it beneath the dignity of Parliament, beneath the dignity of politics in this country that we should be accused in this way when all we are doing is to serve the country to the great sacrifice of our families.

10.20 p.m.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, since no other hon. member wishes to speak ...

Mr. SPEAKER: Is there any other hon. member who wants to speak on this?

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I will very briefly reply to this debate. Sir, very nearly everything that can be said about members' salaries has been said, and I must confess that I have listened to an interesting debate. The Opposition has not been as forthright as I can remember other Oppositions were in 1973 and earlier. They will have one or two more opportunities, maybe three or four at least, before they ever have the chance to introduce salary increases of their own. I would not like to say how many, but I can see that they are guarding against the day.

I was sorry for the hon. member for St. Michael South. He obviously has his heart totally, wholly and

solely with the White Paper with the only reservations that backbenchers should get a little more and the Speaker, reservations which we all have, but he is bound by a collective nonsense decision taken by two men to bind seven, eight or nine, and he therefore had to deliver himself of the remarkable statement that he could not support the going to a Select Committee because he was not involved in the decision to set up such a committee. Now the decision to set up such a Committee is being taken here today. Today is decision time, so it cannot be said that the hon. member is not involved in it.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of elucidation. I did indicate that I was not going to serve on the Select Committee because I was not involved in the whole matter of the establishment of the Nicholls Commission. That was the point I was making.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I have forgotten the word which the hon. member used to explain his inability to cope with some of the mental processes displayed on this side of the House. I think he said teguments of thought. Well I cannot cope with the hon. member's teguments on this occasion. I have never heard the hon. member refuse to go into Committee on a Bill that comes to the House on the grounds that he was not at Cabinet when the decision to bring down the Bill was taken. The Government brings them to the House and invites the House to concur in them. We do not have a coalition Government in here.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, on a further point of elucidation, that is precisely the point I am making. The Government did not come down with any Resolution to set up the Nicholls Commission.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Obviously one can really admire the ingenuity of the hon. member in his, I fear, feint efforts to reconcile his conscience with his position in the Democratic Labour Party. I congratulate the hon. member on the ingenuity which allows him to say that after two general elections in which our policy is made clear that he is not voting for a select committee because we did not come here with a Resolution. I will tell you something else. I did not consult the hon. member before I asked the Chief Establishments Officer to comment, so he should have said that too. Why did he leave out that? He should have said he is not supporting the select committee because I did not ring and ask him or any member of the Opposition if I could show the Commission Report to the Nicholls Committee. I did not consult any of the Opposition before I instructed the the Cabinet Secretary to prepare a Cabinet Paper about this matter, so they should not vote for it. The argument has in about as much water as the head of the hon. member for St. Michael South Central has in political sense. I have never heard as weak an argument from the hon. member, but I have to admire him. When a man goes out and he is facing Wes Hall at one end and Charlie Griffith at the other, he blocks one from Wes Hall and Charlie Griffith clean bowls him, you still say that man was a good man; at least he tried; he faced Hall and Griffith. Well the hon. member has faced not only the Government Party, but he has faced his own party on this occasion, and it is his own party who have cleaned bowled him.

The hon. member did well to speak for an hour and a half without saying anything whatsoever of any value except to the arguments of hon. members on this side. It is of great assistance to the House to hear the hon. member explaining the necessity of paying proper salaries to Parliamentarians and the desirability of having a concensus. He said it would be a good thing but we had not approached it. I do not know how else you approach a consensus except to have a Select Committee. I do not know how else. In all the circumstances, if his party felt so strongly about the Nicholls Commission, why did they let Cameron Tudor go before it and make certain recommendations?

I have heard hon. members take part in criticisms, all sorts of things about commissions, but I have never heard the House move a Resolution to set up a commission, and if the hon. member wants to hear an argument about that, he should turn back to the debates when we moved in here that a Commission of Enquiry be set up to investigate allegations of corruption against Joy Edwards and the Leader of his party said that that was the privilege of the Governor-General only and it should not be brought into the House of Assembly. I am glad the hon. member is not following that bad precedent even though indeed he supports it with a bad argument. And it leads me to almost my final point, Sir. The Leader of the Opposition really should have been in here today. He has been extremely clever. Four days ago he got on Rediffusion, I heard it with my own ears, and said that the correct procedure was to set up a select committee, but having perhaps heard me on television say that I looked forward to his support in this debate today, – I said so last night on television – he has hidden from the House of Assembly and left his misguided minions to bear the brunt of the blows from this side of the House, left them with an indefensible decision which he in particular could not defend because he had put a contrary case to the public a couple of days ago. He reminds me of the Duke of Plaza Toro, for those of you who are familiar with the Gilbert and Sullivan opera, the Gondoliers. The Duke of Plasatoro as one of the songs goes was seldom at the head of his troops going into battle, but when they were leaving battle he always was at the fore. He always led them out of

battle, but when the heat was on he would leave them to bear the brunt, and the Leader of the Opposition has done a great disservice to Parliamentary institutions by putting one case to the public and then leaving the members of his party with another case in the House. He is accustomed to riding two horses at the same time. He has done it very successfully in his political life, but this is one occasion where the one horse on which his boot was pressing most heavily was the horse formed by the unfortunate backs of the six of his colleagues in the House of Assembly at the present time.

As far as the Chief Establishments Officer's writing on the White Paper was concerned, I have nothing to say about that. The hon. member for St. Michael South West has fully, completely and perhaps in more elegant language answered his colleague for St. Michael South. The White Paper is not any individual civil servant's White Paper. We are proud to say that it is the Cabinet's Paper or the Ministers' Paper or whatever the case may be. The hon. member for St. Philip South in three or four different ways found a point that I must confess no hon. member on this side could possibly foresee. We wondered what point of view he could possibly take. The point of view which he has taken is that his pension and gratuity will not be sufficient when he retires. He should be pensioned and given a gratuity at the level represented by the hon. member for St. Michael South East and so on.
10.30 p.m.

We would have been able to give some consideration to this at the proper level if he had sat on the Select Committee, but there will be nobody on the Select Committee to put that case for him, there will be nobody on the Select Committee to put the case for the hon. member for St. Philip South to improve his bit, Sir, and therefore I unfortunately regret that his case will have to go by the board in all the circumstances. I am very sorry for the hon. member, he is yet another victim of the duo of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for St. Michael South Central.

The conduct of the hon. member for St. Lucy who, having called another hon. member a liar and then walked out when called on to withdraw by the Chair, will no doubt be the subject of subsequent proceedings. This is not the first time he has done it and I think it should be the last, and really there was very little in his speech about which I can comment except to say he spoke about wage restraint. We made it abundantly clear when the Nicholls proposals were already in the hands of the Government that we were not going to have salary increases at the height of wage restraint. Hon. members seem to have forgotten that the wage restraint was put forward in April 1977, and hon. members will in vain search the records of the House, or indeed the records of public statements from the Ministry of Finance relating to wage restraint since that time. The period of wage restraint came to an end – not total wage restraint – but the period of the strictest constaints came to an end when we came to an agreement with the Barbados Workers' Union and the National Union of Public Workers. There was notice then that there would be an increase in parliamentary salaries, because I specifically went out of my way to say that such an increase would come after wages negotiations. Nobody can say it was a surprise.

We said we were foregoing – indeed the poor old Chief Establishments Officer comes in for such a hard time that I am almost afraid to quote some of the matters which he has dealt with, but he made a calculation of figures of what Ministers have in fact sacrificed by not raising our salaries to the Nicholls level at the time he recommended, and the amount of money that each Minister has sacrificed according to his calculations is $12,264. If we had increased our salaries at the time of the Nicholls Commission every Minister would have earned $12,000 more. That is the sacrifice which we have made in the interest of wage restraint. It would have been more for the Prime Minister, it would have been $18,000 for the Prime Minister. That is the sacrifice which this bench has made, if we had raised our salaries then, that is what we would have got, and that is the meaning of wage restraint, and it is an insult to hon. members on this side to suggest that we are in any sense in breach of the principles of wage restraint when they were in existence when without a doubt this front bench are the principal victims, if such a word is appropriate, the principal persons making a sacrifice in the interest of wage restraint.

Again, the hon. member for St. Michael South Central, I cannot deal with his speech, corruption and everything else. You know, really, one of these days people will take him seriously enough to go down to the Rates and Taxes and check the number of houses that he has registered down there where he is renting out, the least rent is $450 a month. Any member of the public can go and look and see how many houses there are registered in the name of Dr. Haynes, and check again and ask him if he has business outside of Barbados, ask him if he has any interest in a Cayman Island company, ask him what his declarations are to the Inland Revenue, and then they may be able to estimate how qualified he is to tell people that they must not ask for a living wage.

There are certain things that do not come correctly from certain people. In the United States they say that the Democrats can lead the country into war and the Republicans can make peace. In this country you must leave the hon. member for St. Philip South to say when people are working for too much money – and I mean no offence to him, I mean no offence

whatsoever – but the hon. member for St. Michael South Central must not be the one to say that anybody else is asking for too much money. He is one of the best paid people in our society, he brags and boasts that even if he does not work for another day in his life that his standard of living cannot fall, he has so much already. This is a boast of which he is fond, the making of money is important to him, the disbursement of money is important to him, he told the Hon. Minister of Health that the best thing this Government has done was to set up an off-shore financial regime, that this is something he would be glad to see if he could get into. The Hon. Minister of Health can tell you all that, it cannot come properly from him to look at anybody in here and speak about parliamentary salaries.

If he wishes to see a situation in which the Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of External Affairs has a basic salary and a housing allowance of $36,000 a year and the Hon. Attorney General and Minister of External Affairs has a basic salary of $24,000 a year, or $1,000 a month less, if he can put those views to whoever is open to that kind of influence. Even when you take Hon. Minister's tax free emoluments into consideration and put an imputed value on those tax free emoluments, they do not come up to what Permanent Secretaries are working for. In 1973 Ministers were receiving 19% more than Permanent Secretaries, in 1976 Secretaries were receiving 14% more than Ministers, and in 1978 we are trying not even to get back to the 19%, we are trying to get to 16%, not even to the Nicholls parity, these are salaries set out by the Chief Establishments Officer.

On the question of costs, people speak very grandly about the lowest paid workers, or how can people get this amount of money when the Government has no money. The Government's revenue this year will reach between 296 and 300 million dollars. The Government's expenditure, depending on how things go, and they are very conservative figures, they might in fact reach 305, but I am giving you the inside official pessimistic figures.
10.40 p.m.

The figures for expenditure are estimated at between 306 and 310 million dollars. The additional cost of these proposals is something less than $200,000. You are on the one hand talking about $300 million and on the other $200,000. And the civil servants are getting $20 million. I have said before that if you paid nobody in here and gave all our salaries to the lowest paid workers it would not raise their emoluments by thirty cents a week. You have to understand that there are only twenty four of us in here and twenty one in the Senate. But everybody seems to be jealous of paying a man something to do a job for the country.

Perhaps the only country in the world where the actual salaries of Parliamentarians and persons in Government are higher than those of other people is in the Soviet Union, where the Leaders of Government are not brilliantly paid but are reasonably well paid and are given an abundance of perks; and that is accepted by the Russian people. . (Artistic people who have independent incomes may in some cases get more.)

I don't think there is anything to say about the speech of the hon. member for St. Michael South West. We heard again about the lady from the Westbury Cemetery going to the supermarket. He is in the position of Opposition members all the time; in Opposition you know about the poorly paid people who cannot afford to go to the supermarket but when in Government you know that you must be properly paid. Now I feel for the lady working in Westbury cemetery too; but no more than the hon. member was able to do anything for her when he was a Minister drawing ministerial salary, because life is just not that way. It is a fact of life that countries are organised on a differential wage rate. There are two sorts of reasons for this, and I have heard the Leader of the Opposition when in power repeatedly congratulate Barbadians on accepting differentials which are considerably less between the highest and lowest salaries than most countries in the world. Differentials are 100 to one in Russia between Mr. Breznev – I do not know what he gets as President, but his salary as Secretary of the Communist Party was 4,000 roubles, and there were people in Russia working for 20 roubles, a week which was the minimum wage. There is no such differential between the Prime Minister's salary and the salary of workers in Barbados. A maid at Government Headquarters is at the moment about the lowest paid worker in Government, but the new salary proposed for the Prime Minister is something like eleven times as much as a maid gets. There is hardly a country in the world where you will find so narrow a gap between the political head and the average low paid worker.

Mr. Speaker, hon. members have made their contributions. I am sorry if the Opposition think that they feel constrained to make a protest by not joining the Select Committee. They have made some good points, the chief one being that backbenchers should get more, and I am sure that point will be attended to by the Select Committee. I have said already that it is the view of the Government that those in the intermediate ranges need more; I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to get more; I have said so already, and whether they sit on the Select Committee or not, the Government will be prepared to recommend more under the circumstances.

It has been a debate that has brought out a lot of matters and in many ways there were some responsible

things said in here today from both sides of the House. I only regret that the constraint which led to the Opposition rejecting the idea of a Select Committee may add to the divisions in our society to be exploited by ruthless, ignorant and unscrupulous people. And there are people who will take comfort in the campaigns of hate and destruction of all that is decent in Barbadian life from the fact that the Opposition did not serve on the Select Committee. The divisions and the bitterness which Sir Herbert Duffus spoke of before he left Barbados will not unfortunately be abaited by the result of the Opposition decision, because people are not going to look at the actual content of the speeches and are not going to examine the realities of the discussion in here; they are going to look at it as yet another signal on the road towards a little more destruction of the society.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Before putting the question I would like to make a brief statement regarding the behaviour of the hon. member for St. Lucy. It will be recalled that the hon. member for St. James was addressing the Chair and when he quoted figures purporting to represent the salary of the hon. member for St. Lucy which he receives from the trade union, the hon. member for St. Lucy rose on a point of order and accused the hon. member for St. James of misleading the House. I took the opportunity to warn the hon. member for St. Lucy of the danger in accusing an hon. member of misleading the House and not taking the opportunity to set the record straight by supplying the correct information. It was then that the hon. member for St. Lucy thought it best to accuse the hon. member for St. James of telling lies. I called on the hon. member for St. Lucy to withdraw the remarks, and when he persisted with speaking I rose. He disregarded the authority of the Chair while I was standing, and when I again asked him to withdraw the remarks he took up his papers and left.

I state now that the hon. member for St. Lucy will not be allowed to take his place in this Honourable House again until he apologises to the Chair for having disregarded its authority, and to this Honourable House for having offended against its dignity.

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

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, there was one matter that notice was given of today. I beg to move that the Committee comprised Your Honour, the hon. members for the City, Christ Church East, St. Michael West and myself; and I invite the hon. members on the other side to nominate three members to the Committee.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, just so that there will be no problem with the record, I mention now that I stated during the course of the day that we on this side find it impossible to sit on the Committee for a number of reasons.

The question that the hon. members named be members of the Select Committee to consider the Resolution was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

SUGAR INDUSTRY AND PRICE STABILISATION ORDER

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, earlier today I circulated a Resolution which dealt with the Sugar Industry and Price Stabilisation and Labour Welfare Order. This is the usual Resolution and I am asking that leave be granted to deal with it. *(A Pause)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Both sides of the House have agreed; the hon. member may proceed.
10.50 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this is a short Resolution, and the object is to fix the usual levies. This is a procedure that has been going on since 1948 and a change was made in the basis of the levies in 1956. The proportions have been agreed to as a result of a meeting of the Sugar Tripartite Committee, and the Government does not propose to change the allocation. The basis of the levy is $40 a ton of sugar or $290 per wine gallon which is regarded as a ton. The allocation of the levy is slightly changed. We have decided to give more money to the Provident Fund. The payments are set out in the Schedule to the Resolution. Payment to the Sugar Industry Capital Rehabilitation Reserve Fund will be at the rate of $11.20 per ton in respect of sugar and $11.20 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses. To the Sugar Industry Price Stabilization Reserve Fund, payment will be at the rate of $2.43 per ton in respect of sugar, $2.43 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses; and to the Crown at the rate of $26.37 per ton in respect of sugar, and $26.37 per 290 wine gallons in respect of fancy molasses.

That is the basis of it, Sir, and I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I just want to draw to the attention of the House the theory put forward about the rising price of sugar in relation to this levy. It has nothing to do with the rising price of sugar.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Government has any plans for the specific purpose of general workers funds to repair their homes.

Mr. SPEAKER: People in St. Peter are badly in need.

Mr. SIMMONS: There are some 500 applicants; but we need a revolving fund.

Mr. SPEAKER: People need house spots in St. Peter.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the Government has indicated its intention to have special housing bonds issued. The first of a series of bonds should be advertised soon and the resources which will flow into the Barbados National Bank and the Mortgage Finance Corporation will be considerably increased. There will be advertisements by the National Bank by which people can borrow up to $50,000. I have no doubt that the National Bank, the mortgage scheme and the Housing Authority will supplement the demand that we see increasing.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 28th November, at 12 o'clock noon. I would like to express my appreciation to the staff of the House who volunteered to continue so that we get our business finished.

Hon. C. L. BOLDEN: I beg to second that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, on the motion for the adjournment I would like to join in thanking the staff.

The question that the House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 28th November, 1978 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. Speaker adjourned the House accordingly at 11.05 p.m.