
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 3rd November, 1981.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock on Tuesday, 3rd November, 1981.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House); His Honour C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Deputy Speaker); Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Education); Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Health); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, M.A., (Minister of Labour and Social Security); Mr. B. M. TAITT, B.A., (Hon.), M.A., LL.B., (Hon.); Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, (Minister of Housing and Lands); Mr. L. L. SISNETT; Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.A., M.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); Mr. P. M. GREAVES; Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE; Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, (Minister of Transport and Works); Mr. M. A. KING; Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.A.S., J.P.; Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN and Mr. A. TRUSS.

Prayers were read.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: This Meeting is called to order.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 13th October, 1981.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, Sir, that the Minutes for Tuesday, 13th October, 1981 be taken as read.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations by Honourable Members, let those Minutes stand confirmed. (PAUSE) Those Minutes are confirmed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, I beg to lay the:

Report of the National.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sorry. I beg to lay the:

Report of the National Insurance Board on the National Insurance and Social Security Scheme for the period 1st January to 31st December, 1980.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am commanded to lay the:

Report of the Ministry of Education for the period 1st September, 1977 to 31st August, 1978.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a:

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Waterford, St. Michael.

and also a:

Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Thickets, St. Philip.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South. His question respecting seamen.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, to ask the Appropriate Minister:

Is the Minister aware that Barbadian seamen are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain recruitment to Merchant Navy ships?

In view of the important contribution that such seafarers have traditionally made to the economy of Barbados, will the Minister make a statement on the situation?

Will the Minister indicate what plans he has for improving the lot of such seafarers?

(ASIDE: Buy some boats.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order.

ORAL REPLIES TO QUESTIONS

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the replies to Parliamentary questions Nos. 1, 3, and 7 are ready.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I indicate that replies to Parliamentary Questions Nos. 5 and 6 are ready.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the Instant Order of the Day.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, Sir, that Item Number 2 be the Instant Order of the Day.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item Number 2.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT SINCKLER ROAD ST. MICHAEL

Item Number 2 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Sinckler Road, St. Michael.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, in keeping with a promise of the Barbados Labour Party, a promise and commitment enunciated in the Manifesto of 1976, the Government is committed to providing recreational facilities for the use by the young people, of this country. The Government feels that wherever possible, especially in densely populated areas, adequate facilities should be found for the youths. We feel, Mr. Speaker, that with the increase in the number of young people coming out of school every year and those who have not been able to find immediate employment, that it would be best to accommodate them with certain facilities, recreational facilities, so that they would be able to occupy their minds and their skills during the time that they await employment.

It is with this view that this particular Resolution finds itself before this Honourable Chamber. The land in particular is situated on Roberts Road, Haggatt Hall and it belongs to a Mrs. Sinckler who now resides in the United States of America. For some years, way back in the early seventies, 1972, the young boys and girls from Haggatt Hall, were using this area of land – part of which has sited some 10 to 12 houses – for the purpose of cricket and practising netball.

The owner was here on a number of occasions and approaches were made to her with a view to selling this portion of land. Mr. Speaker, Sir, she has agreed to allow Government to purchase this land for the use by the residents or youths living in the Haggatt Hall area. She has indicated a figure which Government has found acceptable, the figure of \$45 000.
12.30 p.m.

The Government has found this figure quite reasonable because it is a figure which will be paid for land in that particular area at today's prices. So, Mr. Speaker, it is also hoped that the ten houses that are presently on the land will be realigned, will be shifted, so as to make more playing area available for the purpose of siting the facilities there.

It is with this explanation, Mr. Speaker, that I move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: Mr. Speaker, I would like to second the Resolution and I would want to speak also on the matter. I want to give full support to the acquisition

of this parcel of land, because as the Minister has rightly said, he is acquiring it for the sole purpose of providing a facility for the youth of that particular area in Haggatt Hall.

I would like to know that the youth in Barbados are being thought of and that it is the Government's plan to continue to work with the youth and for the youth, but I would like to ask the Minister to clarify or perhaps give a little light to a portion of land which I have been seeking to get the Government to acquire for related purposes for the youth of the Bush Hall area. For some time the Bush Hall House has been up for sale and I am told that the Government had an interest in acquiring the property for social development. It has gone so far that the Town and Country Planning was asked to convene a meeting with the owners to see what negotiations could be arrived at and what price could be arrived at so that Government may be able ultimately to acquire this portion of land.

It has gone many months and I have heard nothing, and I would like the Minister to shed a little more light in the interest of the youth of Bush Hall in particular. Those of us who know the Bush Hall area would know it is a very densely populated area with thousand of youth, many of whom are unemployed, and they are looking for outlets for their social activity. They have been able to form a cultural club, but yet they have no meeting place, and the Bush Hall House is centrally located, it can easily be converted into a multi-purpose social centre. These youth have been using the Washington High School at the discretion of the Headmaster and I have been able to support them out of my pocket in paying for electricity and things of that nature, but that school is a wooden structure and it has brought a measure of concern to the Headmaster in as much as he wants to be part of the society and he wants to make his contribution to the youth of Bush Hall. It is a very ticklish situation and I would like the Minister just to give a little more information as to Government's decision, whether or not they are still thinking of acquiring this property for the people of that area.

You will remember, Sir, in the former Government, it was the former representative for St. Michael North East, Mrs. Eastmond, who had designs also of acquiring that property for the people and she fancied what she called a day care centre for that area, but I would still like to think that the building which is about 2.6 acres or just over 9.145 square metres.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please. I do not want to interrupt the hon. member. He has risen to second the motion moved by the Minister. He has not up to the present uttered one word about the parcel of land situate at Sinckler Road in the parish of St. Michael; not one word. The next thing we are going to find is that each and

every hon. member, if I were to allow this, we are going to go throughout the island of Barbados and not one word will be uttered about the land at Sinckler Road. I am not going to sit here and entertain this. Kindly table your own motion and have Bush Hall discussed, or any other area. Please confine yourself as closely as possible to the Sinckler Road Resolution.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: Mr. Speaker, you will remember correctly that I began by saying I supported the Resolution which the Minister was bringing in the interest of the people at Haggatt Hall....Sinckler Road, Roberts Road, Haggatt Hall. I said that, Mr. Speaker.

I am simply stating, Mr. Speaker, I want to support the Resolution because I feel the youth in this country have an important part to play in the development of this country, and the youth of Bush Hall are concerned. They have no place for social activity, for social development, and I just want to know whether the Government is interested in acquiring the property because there are other parties who have already indicated an interest in acquiring that same property, and I would like the Minister kindly to shed a little more light on the matter.

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

THE VACCINATION (REPEAL) ACT, 1981

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Order No. 3.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 3 stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Health, to move the second reading of a Bill to repeal the Vaccination Act.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, in moving the second reading of this Bill, I just want to briefly mention the reason why the repeal of this Act has come before Parliament at this point in time.

At its thirty-third meeting held in Geneva in May, 1980, the World Health Assembly adopted a Resolution declaring small pox to have been eradicated from the world because there had been no naturally occurring cases of small pox recorded anywhere in the world for more than two years, and the Assembly also recommended that small pox vaccination be discontinued except in the cases of persons at risk, for example, workers in laboratories where cultures of Variola, small pox virus, are retained for research purposes.

Mr. Speaker, with the exception of the Democratic Republic of Kampuchea and Chad there is no country in the world that continues to maintain the vaccination

against small pox, and therefore we in Barbados consider that it is necessary to support the Resolution of the World Health Assembly which took place in May, 1980. What has been done in order to ensure that no problem takes place after the coming about of this action is that a quantity of dried vaccines to vaccinate about 200 million people has been put into cold storage. (*Asides*) Mr. Speaker, as far as the future is concerned, the world will not be at risk as far as small pox is concerned, and the Government of Barbados has decided that it is necessary at this point in time to take steps to repeal the Act, and this measure will bring this about.

To me it is a simple Bill, and as we move forward in this world today with the standard of health becoming so good in the world, it is not necessary to insist on having people vaccinated when they are travelling. As a matter of fact, if you travel now you do not find the great requirements to have vaccinations for the number of diseases for which you had to have them in the past, and as we continue to advance in the field of medicine and the care of the sick and the elimination of diseases in our community, we will find that the standard of health will become so good that there will be no need for any vaccinations at all. The human being, because of his physical development, will become virtually immune to certain diseases.

With those few remarks, I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time, and pledge my willingness to give any reply to any sensible question which is put to me. I would not expect to hear anybody asking me about the temperature at which vaccine will be stored. That is a technical matter and I am not a technical person. I am the Minister of Health, but the people who are responsible for keeping the vaccine to service 200 million people, are far more qualified to know the type of temperature that is required for such vaccine than the number of Popes and Pontiffs who are very quick to pronounce on all matters. But I am willing however to answer any question which is reasonably put to me.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I have a question or two to raise on the decision to repeal this Act, but I am not sure if my questions will fall within the ambit set out by the Minister for sensible questions. It would seem to me, Sir, that we heard falling from the lips of the Minister today a new approach to the Parliamentary system where if a question is a technical question, we cannot direct it towards the Minister if he is not a technical man, but Sir, it is precisely perhaps because he is not a technical man that we the people of Barbados acting through the system which we know, have called upon his Prime Minister to appoint a sensible person to

administer the affairs as they relate to health and other similar matters, and I would have thought that where the Minister recognises his obvious inadequacy in any technical field he would be prepared to have his technicians do what they in all the countries where this system is practised do and come down here so that he can consult with them and answer any technical questions which may have been asked.

Mr. Speaker, to ask at what temperature the large quantity of vaccine which the Hon. Minister alluded to is being kept is not at all a senseless question in the minds of sensible people. It would seem to me, Sir, that if in fact it is being kept at the wrong temperature that we could be discussing a substantial loss, and so to describe it in advance as a nonsensical question because he heard a *sotto voce* asking what temperature, seems to suggest to me that the Minister is not fully in command of his understanding of his responsibility as a Minister responsible for Health.

That notwithstanding, I should seek to ask of the Minister if he could explain to us other than what he has said so far the fundamental rationale for repealing the entire Act. As I understand it, Cap. 57 of the Laws of Barbados in which vaccination can be found does not pertain only to small pox vaccination. It does not say so. It is true that vaccination has come to be associated with small pox vaccination, but I would have thought that immunisation is the key to the particular policy which was set out back in 1947 when the Government of the day considered it desirable to pass legislation on aid in a system of voluntary vaccination.

I am aware, Sir, that there are two kinds of vaccination. The implementation of vaccination (1) is by needle, the one which is envisaged here in this Act, and the oral vaccination.
12.50 p.m.

Now, Sir, when we have repealed this Act, it would seem to me that we are leaving the question of immunisation, for example, of children against certain public diseases entirely at the whim and fancy of the parents of those children. That may very well be as it ought, since there are a large number of people in the world who believe that such diseases ought to be left solely to the discretion of parents.

I feel, however, Sir, that it is the responsibility of any Government to assist parents in coming to the best decisions concerning such matters as Public Health. I feel too, that perhaps a vigorous programme of Health Education ought to precede any decision of the Government to repeal an Act such as this.

I am not arguing against the very well-founded decision taken by the World Health Organisation. They have

indicated that smallpox has been eradicated and I am unable to question the soundness of their argument or their findings.

I would merely say in passing, Sir, that during my years serving in the United Nations Secretariat, there was a statement made categorically, that a certain disease had been eliminated — I have forgotten which one, Sir, in the World, — and about four years later there was an outbreak of that disease and the World Health Organisation sought to have a re-indoctrination of preventative measures to be taken for the eradication of that disease.

I have heard in other circles that it has been reported that the disease called Leprosy had, for all practical purposes, been eliminated but, Sir, from time to time, in certain parts of Africa, we have evidence of the rise of this disease in proportions that bring it to the attention of the World Health authorities.

Mr. Speaker, the question of animal disease, for example, is one which ought to provide guidance in any decision making matters of this kind. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that sometime in the early 1970s it was reported that foot and mouth disease had been eradicated from South America but almost within six months of the date of that report, we had an outbreak.

The former Minister of Agriculture is indicating that I might not be strictly accurate. Let me rephrase that to say that there was a report from certain countries that foot and mouth disease had been eliminated from their territories and had been, in fact, eliminated. Within six months of that Report which had been forwarded to the World Health Organisation, foot and mouth disease was reported as coming from that particular country, not to say from the regions surrounding that country.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, one is not quarrelling or contesting the decision. One is merely drawing to the attention of the Minister that the decision that has been made may not have been absolutely necessary. After all, Mr. Speaker, this particular Act takes up a very modest amount of paper on the Statute Book.

It would seem to me that if we have eliminated smallpox that we have to do nothing more. For us to have expended the time, energy, effort and paper to bring this Resolution to repeal this Act, seems to me, Mr. Speaker, to have been a decision that was totally unnecessary but then, Mr. Speaker, sensible Ministers tend to recommend to sensible Governments a number of sensible things which remain sensible only to those Ministers and those Governments and we, who are perhaps not so sensible, do not always understand the ramifications or the processes of these particular Ministers and/or, of these particular Governments.

It may very well be, Mr. Speaker, that this decision falls within the ambit of that particular form and hence, we other lesser mortals might not quite understand. For what it is worth, however, I would appreciate if the Minister could give us perhaps more information or better information to explain the fundamental decision which has been made to remove the need for vaccination in terms as set out in Chapter 57 entirely from the Statute Book. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a few observations on the debate of this Bill entitled, "An Act to repeal the Vaccination Act."

The first observation I would like to make is that the very presence of this Bill before this Honourable House is, in a measure, a tribute to the outstanding work done by the Public Health Officers in Barbados over the years. They have shown a degree of competence in administration, a degree of professionalism which I think will be the envy of any other sub-group within the medical profession or any other professional group in Barbados.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I, too, share the concern of my distinguished colleague on this side over the necessity to repeal the Act *in toto*. I myself was waiting to hear an explanation as to whether that Act applied only to vaccinations against smallpox or it applied in relation to the wider range of immunisations which are still of considerable importance in Barbados.

It is true, Sir, that over the years that more people have been getting smallpox in a mild and attenuated form as a consequence of vaccination itself than from the natural disease process and, indeed, if you took the world situation at large, I believe that it is a reasonable step for the World Health Organisation to recommend to countries the discontinuance of smallpox vaccinations. Whether it is reasonable to recommend to them the repeal of legislation which covers not only smallpox but other areas of vaccinations, is another matter.

Then too, Sir, there is the associated question that although a disease may be eradicated in any given point in time, when you look at the global landscape in respect of any disease, there is always the possibility, however remote, that there could be a resurgence of that disease in the future and sometimes one has to question the reporting systems in relation to diseases from far out places like Bangladesh, for example, where you may have cases taking place but not reported.

When that, Sir, is taken against the background of modern day jet travel, it ought to be obvious that no matter how far away an episode takes place, it could be in a given country within a very short period of time. 1.00 p.m.

I would like to know whether the Ministry of Health will be continuing its very effective surveillance, effective until now, its very effective surveillance at the airport and at the Harbour, in relation to smallpox, in the event that, if there is a reported case, let us say, in Northern India in a year from now, whether one would be able to move swiftly enough to make sure that persons who have visited that area or come in contact with that area, will be dealt with appropriately on arrival at our shores. That is not an easy matter. It would be even more important, Mr. Speaker to do this when you have discontinued smallpox vaccinations because you will be building within the society, a reservoir of persons who would have had no protection whatsoever against that particular organism.

There is also the question, Mr. Speaker, of mutant strains where organisms are known to fight the process of total elimination by genetic mutation and might appear in a more violent, or less violent form. So, I think that there is a case to be made out for an effective, vigilant system to be established, in the event of any reported cases. The Honourable Minister has mentioned that there will be large stocks of the vaccine kept at a temperature which he did not know. We are not pressing him to tell us the temperature. What we would like to know is that it is a temperature where it will remain viable so that, in the event of an outbreak, that you can have access to it. Also, we would like to know, what arrangements the Government would have made with the World Health Organisation or any of its agencies to get swift access to that vaccine? At what cost? And, how long it would take to get access to that particular vaccine?

In related areas, Mr. Speaker, typhoid is endemic in Barbados, it still is. I believe the last occasion was probably about 10 years ago, approximately 10 years ago, when there was an outbreak, I believe in the Christ Church area and we certainly do not see as much now, as we saw say 12 to 9 years ago. However, how does this affect the typhoid and para-typhoid programme in Barbados? How does the repeal of this Act affect it? That is one question I would like to know because it is the kind of disease, bearing in mind the way in which it is spread, which could have very disastrous effects not only on the community, but on our guests to this island from time to time and I hope that the repeal of this Act would not in any way diminish the surveillance for that particular disease which is endemic here in Barbados.

I would also like to know whether there is any effective programme going on in Barbados to deal with the world pandemic of venereal disease with mutant strains which I adverted to earlier on in my speech. Many of you would know that a time was when it was thought that the advent of penicillin had dealt effectively with gonorrhoea and syphilis. However, the organism has shown remarkable skill in changing its own genetic

structure in order that the penicillin would be no longer effective and hence, we are faced once again with the same kind of situation which presented itself to most countries including Barbados, 20, 30 years ago. I hope the same does not apply to smallpox in the future.

The Public Health Department in this country, Mr. Speaker, has been extremely effective in dealing with poliomyelitis and indeed, since the outbreak in the early 1960s, I do not think there has been any confirmed case in Barbados or probably one. Now listen, I want to make it clear, I am not an expert in Epidemiology or in Public Health, so I speak here as a layman, strictly as a layman. When it comes to my field, I would deal with it with expertise in that area. (ASIDE: Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Not Finance. You are on a good wicket now. Stick to what you are good at.)

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to know whether the Drug Plan in Barbados, or should I say the abortive Drug Plan because I believe that many of the poor druggists who wanted to contribute to this nation and bought their drugs and distributed their drugs in the hope that they would be paid, that many of them, after giving out drugs for three or four months and now have to pay overdrafts at 15% cannot get their money from the Government and one or two, at least one for sure has withdrawn from the Plan on that ground. (ASIDE: Hon. L. S. CRAIG: They must have had bad drugs.) (LAUGHTER) In addition, Mr. Speaker.....

Mr. SPEAKER: In addition to speaking on the Bill.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The Vaccination, yes — I would like to know whether the Drug Plan would cover vaccinations, those vaccinations not given by the health centres, those which are distributed by private practitioners who may be part of the Drug Service which in the future maybe 1990, 2000, we do not know, but nevertheless whether it would cover those expenses.

I would also like to know what would be the status of the programme against tetanus with the repeal of this Bill. I myself have been involved with the establishment of an Intensive Care Unit here, where we have treated hundreds of cases, each one costing thousands upon thousands of dollars for acute medical care when in fact, an effective vaccination programme or immunisation programme to deal with tetanus could have prevented the extremely high costs involved in treating such patients and the cost of suffering and the cost of lives. Many lives have been lost, certainly until that Intensive Care Unit was established which reduced the mortality to almost 100% to somewhere in the region of 5% or less than 5% over a matter of years. It was almost 100%, the mortality was, for tetanus in Barbados in 1967 and by 1973 that had dropped to negligible proportions. But, even that could have been avoided, if some \$10 000 to \$20 000

had been spent on an effective immunisation programme for this entire country against tetanus, particularly directed against those persons who would not have had the benefit of that immunisation programme on going into school and of course, I refer to the middle age and the elderly in our community.

A very important question, Sir, must be raised in relation to dengue. And here, I would like to say again, that I would like to pay a tribute once again to the Chief Medical Officer, and the Chief Epidemiologist in Barbados, who were quite right in rejecting as utter rubbish, the claims by persons about the country being overrun with dengue earlier this year when an objective epidemiological assessment would have shown that the position taken by the Chief Medical Officer and his staff was the correct one. At least, on that occasion, the Government appeared to have listened to the more sensible advisory field. (ASIDE: I am glad you know that they have some nonsensical ones.)

Diphtheria Mr. Speaker, is a matter of some concern and I would like to know what would be the status of the Ministry's programme in respect of diphtheria because despite the programmes carried out, you are getting the occasional case in Barbados, from time to time.
1.10 p.m.

These questions must be answered, must be spoken to when you repeal that major Act, unless there is other legislation on the Statute Book elsewhere that will cover these particular areas. That I do not know.

The question of cholera. One would have thought that the cholera graveyards would have been a thing of the past, but few of us would forget when only a few years ago, about 1973 or 1974, the world was suddenly faced with a potential pandemic of cholera. I believe that the whole thing started in Bangladesh, if my memory is correct. I believe that I at the time, was one of the accredited consultants of PAHO in relation to making provisions for dealing with cholera in the Caribbean area. But will there be a downgrading of the availability of vaccines in Barbados when for example the Minister of Health is travelling to an African state where he is likely if not appropriately protected to contract cholera, would he be able in the future to continue to go in and get his cholera shots in Barbados? Or would he have to wait until he gets probably to the airport in Nigeria and have it shoved in him with some very dull and long needles, and probably without even taking his pants off, as has happened in the past. Perhaps he will be able to respond to this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to embarrass the Minister in any way by asking these questions. They are non-technical but they are questions which are of legitimate concern and which arise as a consequence of

this repeal here. So that if I may make a suggestion, that if the Minister is not in a position to respond to these things now, that at least he should take note of them rather than rushing into an unprepared reply, and perhaps pose the questions to his technical officer and on some future occasion I am sure he will have an opportunity to come back and give this House and the country a reassurance that either the repeal of this Act would not affect these programmes or that there would be more specific legislation being brought down. I do not know, perhaps legislation is being prepared now to deal with these various areas, but perhaps he can give the House an assurance that new legislation will be brought down to cover the non-small pox area of vaccination.

One final point, Mr. Speaker. Although we have done exceedingly well down the years in the area of infectious diseases, the Hon. Minister must be aware that the epidemiological position in medicine now is focussing away from the infectious diseases and moving into other areas such as the prevention of such things as cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, and certainly minimising the brutal effects on physical health caused by those major killers as reflected in the statistical reports put out and very ably compiled most of the time by the Chief Medical Officer of Health.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have expressed our concern in these areas. I believe that the public would be entitled to an adequate answer by the Minister, and whereas we do not propose to vote against this matter, we nevertheless would want it recorded here in this Hon. House that we have made our position clear on the matter. In particular, and I want to repeat this point if you will forgive me, Sir, I crave your indulgence, that if you are going to follow the World Health Organisation's recommendations and you are going to discontinue vaccination against smallpox in Barbados, then you must make sure that you have ready access to the stocked vaccines wherever they are stocked, and you must also make sure that you are capable of responding in the event of an emergency, because in the meantime you will have built up a large pool of susceptible and unprotected persons within the community, and also that you will make sure that the surveillance in relation to this disease is in no way diminished, because once a thing is said to be no longer prevalent in the world you know exactly what is likely to happen. Then you may find that unreported case may occur in a small village somewhere over the far flung quarters of the globe and then all of a sudden you are landed with the problem here in Barbados.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. member who just sat down. I notice that he said he was not an expert

in public health and it is to that remark that I wish to advert a few remarks.

In this country, Sir, as a politician one is under a duty to articulate the grievances of their constituents, in particular when constituents write the Government departments whose statutory responsibility it is to carry out certain functions, and in the opinion of those particular constituents they have been shabbily treated and they complain to me, I will bring it on the floor of the House of Assembly.

I know that the hon. member thinks that it is necessary for the enhancement of his own political position to curry favour with wrongdoing. I myself do not subscribe to such a political philosophy.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The hon. member is certainly imputing improper motives to me and I will ask that those remarks be withdrawn.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I will withdraw them, Sir, but I will say this. There is a class of politician who feels that it is his function all the time to court popularity, and if in an attempt to get this popularity he finds it necessary to give left handed praise when in truth and in fact he knows it is not deserved, nevertheless he would do it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I made a statement on the floor of this House last week which I will repeat again.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it you are going to repeat it if you are speaking to this Bill.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Of course, Mr. Speaker, I am an old member of this House and I know all about relevance. We are dealing with health, and I say, Sir, that in respect of the enforcement of the health regulations which deal with nuisances arising from the failure of householders to clean up and debush lots, that in my constituency I have received repeated complaints of the failure of Public Health Inspectors to do their job in that respect. I repeat that statement. I say, Sir, also that it is a matter of grave concern that we have so much leptospirosis in Barbados arising from the rat population in Barbados, and it is known that these unbushed lots provide a harbouring place and a breeding ground for rats. If any hon. member thinks that in those circumstances the failure to see that householders carry out their duty is not incumbent on the health authorities in Barbados, I leave it to the public to judge whether they are right or I am right.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, it was with great interest that I listened to the two hon. members opposite.
1.20 p.m.

When I listened to the hon. member for St. Michael West, I knew that he could not have missed the opportunity to speak on this or any Resolution bearing in mind he saw a student audience coming from his constituency. This is what we know and this is his practice, but Mr. Speaker, on hearing the hon. member for St. Michael South Central.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I believe the Hon. Minister cast an aspersion on my speech by questioning the motives of my speech. I ask the hon. member to withdraw it, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not agree with the hon. member.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, we know in this House and you particularly know that whenever there is a school audience in this House that invariably the hon. member has to leave. When I listened to the hon. member for St. Michael South Central, I thought that I did not have to reply at all because he had done it so well. Now the vaccines that I spoke about are not in Barbados, and the Minister of Health in Barbados and the Health Authorities have no jurisdiction. We expect the World Health Assembly to be a responsible body of people and we subscribe to the principles of the World Health Assembly, the World Health body and Pan American Health Organisation, and we expect them to be a sufficiently qualified set of people as to be able to understand the type of standards which should be maintained as far as the keeping of any form of medicine is concerned. Therefore I do not think that anybody has to be scared about whether or not the vaccines would be properly kept. It is to be felt and believed that the vaccines are in such competent hands that they will be well taken care of.

The question of the availability of the vaccine to the people of Barbados should not be a question of any great concern. We have always found the World Health Body amenable and quick in its response to any request by any country that is associated with that body, and even if not associated, they are willing to move to any part of the world if an epidemic has raised its ugly head.

Mr. Speaker, I would not have thought that a Bill which on the surface seems to be innocent would have evoked so much discussion ranging from the Health Service and the Drug Plan to the non-payment of druggists. Mr. Speaker, I would hope to see the time come when certain people in this Parliament and in responsible positions would adopt a responsible attitude on matters. I challenge the hon. member for St. Michael South Central to stand up on his feet and call the name of the druggist who has not been paid if he tendered a law-

ful claim for his money to the Barbados Government. I am prepared if he wants to rise to give the name, to give way, Mr. Speaker, to him. Too often we have been seeing situations in this Parliament when people are trying to make impressions without substance and they go unchallenged.

The Drug Plan is so organised that the druggists or the people who are selling the drugs can get their money within two weeks' time. If they do not get their money, something is wrong. There is no system so geared that there is no problem. In the past the President of the Druggists Association, Mr. Rudy Walcott, in the Nation of the 26th adverted to the fact that there were problems because there was a lot of paper work in the past. This paper work is eliminated, he said, but the druggists are not doing very well because the profits are not what they should be. The reason why it is so is because there is a great drop in the price of drugs and though the volume of drugs remain the same in terms of quantity, the question of price is so low today as a result of the drug service scheme that the people who are selling the drugs find it difficult, I imagine, to get the same type of reward which they have been getting. But we will continue as we have promised to bring the cost of drugs down and within manageable proportions of the populace's ability to pay. That is what we have been doing and that is what we will continue to do.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the National Health Service is concerned, it is well on stream and is expected to come into operation early in the new year. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of people who do not want to see the health service succeed. It will God's willing succeed. We live in a very small society and the voices of disruption are many, and too often you hear people trying to undermine the work of the Government unnecessarily. I am told that there is a particular doctor in this country who was very visible in the last election campaign, not as a candidate, but I think supporting his brother, who was trying to discredit the health service and the quality of the drugs which are being offered under the drug service. I want to say from this Honourable House, Mr. Speaker, that the quality of the drugs that are being produced and sold locally are as good or better than any we have known before, but the quarrel with the drugs is not the quality of the drugs, but the price of the drugs, and the more you eat into the pockets of the people who have been making money over the years, the more desperate they become and the more wickedly they react, and that is what I see of the attitude of the people in this country with respect to certain matters.

There was a time when people in health and in this community were regarded as the second and sometimes the most powerful people in the land. Today we have no such person especially operating in the medical

field. The person who is the most powerful man in the medical field, not as a medical man, but presiding over health, is your humble servant as Minister responsible, and I will go further and say I have to be; I am in charge, not in charge in inverted commas, but properly in charge. The Minister who wanted an enquiry and could not get it was nominally in charge; he dared not have put his recommendation, at least it was only a recommendation, his feeling into practice because it was blocked every inch of the way. It is not so as far as this Minister is concerned.

1.30 p.m.

There are certain revolutionary decisions which will be shortly made with respect to the Ministry of Health and I would hope that nobody would be particularly worried about when these decisions would come about.

Mr. Speaker, the repeal of this Act, I am advised, will not effect the question of vaccination *per se* totally. It will affect the question of small-pox but if at all an epidemic raises its ugly head of small-pox, not only in Barbados, but in any part of the world, it would be very easy to have the quantum of vaccine that is required moved in, in order to give protection to the populace.

My advice is, that there are many Acts on the Statute Book of this country which deal with a number of other vaccinations and vaccinations as such will not, other than the one which we are dealing with here, be totally affected by the repeal of this Act and, Mr. Speaker, based on that advice, I am asking this Honourable House to agree with the second reading and the passing of this Act and I have reasons to believe, as we go on, that if there are any problems which will be created as a result of the repealing of this Act, I give the House the solemn assurance that I will come back to rectify any situation which would affect it.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know what else I could say to satisfy the two hon. members with respect to these matters but I suppose that in Committee any questions which they need to raise, I am willing to give the necessary explanations.

The question that the Bill be read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, Mr. SPEAKER, left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called.

Hon. Miss. B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to second the motion and in seconding, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I just want to make a few comments. It is really rather unfortunate that in a place like this Honourable Chamber, people should get up and ask leading questions, that people should attempt to give an impression of the quality of public health in this country which might not be all together accurate and I just want to make.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Hon. Minister.....

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I am on vaccination, Mr. Chairman, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not addressing herself to Clause 1.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir. "This Act may be cited as the Vaccination (Repeal) Act, 1981."

Mr. CHAIRMAN: So you are discussing the title of the Bill?

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Yes, Sir, there are only two questions to this Act, Sir, and I will be speaking on either one or two, if you will allow me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I cannot.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Well, then, I will be speaking on Clause 2, Sir.

The question that Clause 1 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 2 was called.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I am trying again. In respect of the vaccinations, I just want to say, Sir, that under the Health Service Act Regulations to do with communicable and notifiable diseases, there is a list of diseases against which our children, in particular, must be vaccinated before they can enter our primary school system and smallpox is one of them.

By our action today, we are in fact, completing the whole business of deleting smallpox from that list and it is necessary, I think, to reassure parents in particular in this country that the other vaccinations which are compulsory for their children are still very much so.

In other words, children still must be vaccinated against measles, diphtheria, and whooping cough and all of the other things against which they must have been in the past and they will continue to do so but it is just as the Hon. Minister has said, that smallpox has

been eradicated from the world and there is no need for us to continue to do so. In fact, Mr. Chairman, Sir, my information is that smallpox is only kept now in two Laboratories for the culture for reasons of research.

Barbados is a member of the World Health Organisation. The rationale enunciated by the Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Chairman, Sir, is not peculiar to Barbados. It is going to be true for the entire World and I believe that we are safe and that we are correct. In fact, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I know that Barbados is one of the last countries in the World to make it no longer compulsory for vaccinations against small-pox to be the order of things.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I heard wild statements too, in respect of communicable diseases on the floor of this House today. We have, and these are documents of this Honourable House, the Chief Medical Officer's Report. Year after year there are documents which are opened to the public and the Press and are not read.

I have in my hand only two. The others are to be found in the Public Library and other such places. I have the Chief Medical Officer's Report for 1977 and for 1979. It shows no deaths from diseases such as cholera, plague, smallpox and yellow fever in Barbados and that has been true for many, many years.

We heard a lot about leptospirosis. It shows in 1977 two deaths in the whole of Barbados from leptospirosis and people must not try to give the impression that there is any large outbreak of this disease in this country, Mr. Chairman, Sir.
1.40 p.m.

In fact, public health standards and statistics in this country are perhaps among the best in the world. Barbados is one of the countries that spends more money on health than on any other sector and it is reflected in our statistics, in our mortality and in our morbidity.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is a pity, the Honourable Member has lost her opportunity to develop that argument and your case. You have lost that opportunity and I must ask you to sit.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I know that, Mr. Chairman, Sir, and I am very much obliged that you have permitted me. I should have spoken on the other reading, Sir and I am very much obliged that Your Honour has permitted me to say as much.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on Clause 2, Sir. Now, Sir, as I understand it, Clause 2 repeals Cap. 57. It will therefore be necessary for me to ask these questions seriatim, Sir, as they apply to the Sections of Cap. 571.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: As you take it.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, in the early part of Cap. 57, provision is made for the appointment of a Public Vaccinator. Would the Honourable Minister indicate whether, in the Regulations alluded to by the former Honourable Minister of Health; would the Honourable Minister indicate whether in the Regulations attached to the Health Services Act, provision has been made for the appointment of a Public Vaccinator and whether the provision is being made, in terms similar to those which will now be repealed by Clause 2? Under the old Cap. 57, the Minister responsible for Health could appoint a Public Vaccinator for a short term, for a medium term or for forever. The methodology is outlined, to some extent, in the Chapter that is now being repealed. I wonder if the Honourable Minister is able to tell us how he proposes — if this is being taken care of — in the Health Services Act or under the Regulations.

I would say, in passing, Mr. Chairman, that it is all very well for the former Minister to attempt to admonish the population for not reading these publications, but these (ASIDE: No, legislators.) She says it is the legislators who do not read them, Sir. I do not know. Apparently, as a legislator, she does not read them. But, this legislator reads them, Sir, and this legislator wishes to say that these so-called Health Services Regulations which she is talking about, I put it to you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, ask in this Honourable House, Sir, if we could find a copy of the Health Services Regulations up-to-date. And, I would make bold to suggest that we legislators would hardly find one, furthermore the press and the public who are (ASIDE: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Health Inspectors do not have them.) The Honourable Member says the Health Inspectors do not have them. Tell the Honourable Minister who is in your Cabinet because she gets up here and tries to give the impression that people are pettyfogging and wasting time when they are labouring under a colossal avalanche of ignorance, imposed by that Government's failure to do its responsibility and publish the thing, so that we can see them. Do not get up and try to give people the impression that responsible legislators would ask questions in this Honourable House about health for political purposes.

Mr. Chairman, it is totally irrelevant which party is in power, if you get smallpox or tetanus. Mr. Chairman, when you have hepatitis, Mr. Chairman, it does not matter if the Barbados Labour Party is in power or the Democratic Labour Party. You would be glad to see a doctor.

The Honourable Leader of this Honourable House can tell you that when it comes to medical matters he does not — when it comes to choosing his physician, he does not choose on the basis of political considerations. (ASIDE: Nor lawyer.) Nor does he choose his lawyer on the basis of political considerations. And, for those reasons, it is not fair to assume that if an Honourable Member raises a question from either Side of this Honourable House on Health that his motives are political.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member is not canvassing.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. (ASIDES)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I must say, while I am searching for this next Clause, Sir, that there seems to be an inherent jealousy on the part of certain Honourable Members in my relationship with the very young, bright school children in my constituency. I do not know why they have to be so jealous. That relationship is based on mutual love and understanding. I do not know what their problem is.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And, nothing to do with the Vaccination.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Nothing to do with the vaccination.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please let us get ahead.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Section 18 of the old Bill, Sir, said that:

"The parent of every child born in this Island shall, within six months after the birth of such child, take it or cause it to be taken to the public vaccinator" *et cetera, et cetera.*

Again, I am seeking information from the Honourable Minister whether, in the Education Act or the Health Services Regulations, or which Regulations, we will now have the compulsory element of the requirement for immunisation against certain public diseases. I believe, in the Education Act, it is necessary for all children to be inoculated against certain diseases before they enter school. I would be curious to know whether provisions are now made, or have been made for all of the relevant diseases, as so brilliantly articulated by my Honourable colleague, the distinguished Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, Sir. (ASIDE) I believe, Sir, it would be unreasonable to pillory the Honourable Minister any more on this particular Bill, since he has given us an assurance that if, after taking the

points raised on this Side, he is satisfied that there are certain anomalies arising out of this decision that he would come back to us. And so, on that basis and taking that assurance, I would be prepared — Mr. Chairman, Sir, could you ask this Honourable Member who does not belong here. Sir, to go back where he belongs to? (LAUGHTER)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: We have such behaviour over here, such exemplary behaviour until he found himself over here, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, one other thing, could he also indicate whether the provisions for forms, under the Schedules in Cap. 57 have now been taken care of, in the said Health Regulations, as adumbrated by the diminutive lady Minister formerly of the Ministry of Health (ASIDES.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, one or two very brief comments. Firstly, I do not think that it was really necessary for the Honourable Member for the City to be so critical of the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and to launch such a vagrant attack on him because I myself...

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I never uttered any such words. I have not adverted at all to the Honourable Member for Christ Church East Central. The person to whom I was referring was the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, who had a great deal to talk about typhoid and about tetanus, when he knows there has been no outbreak or case of typhoid in this country for several years and only five deaths from tetanus in 1977 and six in 1979.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The reason, Mr. Chairman, why there has been no significant incidents of those diseases is because of the excellent work of the Public Health Officers that I have been speaking about. That is what I have been saying and we want this to continue and I would like to assure the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister that there is no real conflict in our positions when it comes to the epidemiological aspect of the work of Public Officers in Barbados, their record is second to none, but, they are also called upon to deal with other areas relating to the environment and elsewhere and there are problems there. But, those problems sometimes arise because it is the wrong authority that is charged with the given function.

For example, the Honourable Minister of Health knows more about the eradication of love vine than he knows about vaccinations because he is an agriculturalist. And, we have the same kind of problem now, where you have an Honourable Minister of Agriculture who could not distinguish between a yam and a potato, except on a

plate, and hardly then. Now, that is the kind of jurisdictional problems and that is where the argument lies. So, we are not really criticising you, we are talking of different aspects of the work.

Mr. Chairman, back to Clause 2.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You admit you have strayed quite widely.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Back to 2, Sir.
1.50 p.m.

The question of supply and demand in an emergency situation, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to tell the Hon. Minister that the moment there is any threat of a pandemic of any disease and these international bodies are hoarding stocks of vaccines, when it comes to the allocation of those stocks they go purely on a population basis, and a society of 250,000 people competing against one of 200 million, you know what you will get. We have had this experience already in Barbados when we tried to get stocks some years ago to deal with the threat of a cholera pandemic, we had to start setting up our stocks here in Barbados because they were just not available, and I can see no reason why in the next two or three years we could not keep a limited supply of smallpox vaccine in Barbados. It is cheap, you probably have it already, do not let them throw it away, get hold of a few more phials and keep it just in case. The time will come if there is an outbreak when you have to rely on the supplies held overseas.

This is just my humble advice, you can take it or leave it. As far as I recall it has a very long life, I am not too sure, I do not deal with smallpox vaccines, but I think it may have a year or two but I would not like to be committed on that point. But try and keep what you have, see what you can get now and try to protect yourself in the meantime, and in four to five years' time you will be in a better position to evaluate your situation in relation to susceptibility to any flare up or so.

There were one or two other matters I would have liked to deal with. The question of leptospirosis which was raised.....(ASIDE)...

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This is the Committee stage, I would not raise that here.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Vaccination in relation to leptospirosis. Immunisation, vaccination in relation to leptospirosis. (ASIDE). Anyhow, we will not pursue that matter any more, but it is a technical area, so let us leave it, okay? (ASIDE). The hon. member for the City must not get up and wrongfully attack the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister in that manner. It is rude. (Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I have not got up, I am sitting down).

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, before you put the question, I just want to briefly let the hon. member for St. Michael South Central know that the point he made is well taken and the decision has already been taken by me that stocks in hand will be kept and if need be, a sufficiently adequate supply. We on this side always taken the necessary precautions. My understanding is that there will be no need for public health vaccinators because all nurses and doctors really can perform that function.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has given way. I am not sure where he has got the advice. It is true that all nurses and doctors are trained to administer a needle, but on the question of vaccinations *per se* the public health nurse is supposed to have training above and beyond the requirement of an R.N. or S.R.N. and the public health doctor is supposed to be above and beyond the ordinary doctor or even the other specialists. They may be pressed into service in an emergency, but they are persons who have specialised ability. Mr. Chairman, anyone who has ever got a vaccination that was given badly or wrongly would know immediately the distinction.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, the public health nurse is invariably involved with the question of vaccinations, but there are other nurses who are qualified and who can administer the vaccinations as well, and there is no problem about that. We have many public health nurses in Barbados and there is no question of any difficulties in having the vaccination administered. Provision has always been and can easily be made for that.

The repealing of the Act will also repeal the form as it now stands, but provision will be made for similar forms when it is necessary to have them.

The question that clause 2 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

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

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I rise to seek the leave of the House to give notice of a Bill and a Resolution, and in so doing I seek the leave of the House to revert to the order of business.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is there any objection? No objection, the Minister may proceed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$665,140 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1981-82, Part I - Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1981-82, No. 7 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Also, Sir, a Resolution to grant the sum of \$80,616 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1981-82, Part II - Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1981-82, No. 8 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Sir, also to give notice of a Bill to amend the Agricultural Aids Act.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that a Bill to amend the Agricultural Aids Act be read a first time.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting now stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.
2.00 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. Question No. 3 stands in the name of the Rt. Hon. member for St. John who is not in his place. Let the reply be laid.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 3 on behalf of the Minister of Transport and Works.

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 5 stands in the name of the hon. member for St. Michael North West.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, Question No. 5.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister is not in his place.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW entered the Chamber and took his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 6 stands in the name of the same hon. member.

The Minister is not in his place, so the replies will be given at another time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Parliamentary Question No. 7 stands in the name of the same hon. member.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, the Question reads as follows:

To ask of the appropriate Minister: Is the Minister aware that there are no lights in the Fish Market at Pile Bay, Black Rock, St. Michael? Will the Minister indicate what plans he has for installing such lights?

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the reply to Parliamentary Question No. 7 is as follows:

"The Spring Garden Road passes east of Pile Bay and will not affect the access road to the fish market. Consideration will however be given to upgrading the road in the 1982-83 project."

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister in a position to indicate the target date for completion of the road?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a proper supplementary.

Mr. TAITT: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister able to tell us whether the works are proceeding on schedule?

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, this road, I presume, refers to the Pile Bay road. (Mr. TAITT: That is the only one.) You said "this road". The answer can be found in a repetition of the answer I gave to the hon. member who asked the question.

"The Spring Garden Road passes east of Pile Bay and will not affect the access road to the fish market. Consideration will however be given to upgrading the road"—which I believe is equivalent to your "this road"—in the 1982-83 project.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect, Sir, nothing which the Hon. Minister has just said relates to whether the works referred to in the question are on schedule.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now I support the Minister's point. The hon. member for St. Michael North West referred specifically to the access road.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect, the question begins: "In view of the construction of the Spring Garden, Black Rock Highway project....." Now I could assume that the Spring Garden, Black Rock highway project is the generic cause of whatever flows from the question. What I was seeking to find out in the light of this indication that the road passes to the east, which presumably is the Spring Garden, Black Rock highway project, is whether that road that is passing to the east is on schedule so that I would have some indication.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I now give you an opportunity to ask the Minister that question.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Will the Minister indicate whether the construction of the Spring Garden, Black Rock highway project is proceeding on schedule?

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, yes it is.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, my first supplementary is, would the Minister state what are the dimensions of this access road to the Pile Bay fish market?

Mr. SPEAKER: Not a proper supplementary.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Not even the access road to the Pile Bay fish market?

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not a proper supplementary.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, supplementary. In view of the construction of the Spring Garden, Black Rock road, and the Minister bearing in mind the circumstances of the construction of the road, and notwithstanding the information published on the proposed road, will the Minister indicate what are the dimensions of the Spring Garden road which is being constructed?

Mr. SPEAKER: That question should form the subject of a substantive question.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As Your Honour wishes. Supplementary.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has had more than his quota of supplementaries.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Is it three utterances, with respect, or three questions? With respect, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, I have only managed to ask one supplementary question so far.

Mr. SPEAKER: I beg your pardon.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As far as I am aware, I only managed to ask one supplementary. Is that my quota, Sir? 2.55 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: As far as you know you have asked one?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am advised by the Clerk at the Table that the hon. member has asked four supplementaries. Two were valid and two were disallowed. In other words, the hon. member has had more than his quota and I stand by the Clerk's indication.

Question No. 1.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Question No. 1, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the answer to Question 1 is as follows:—

My Ministry is aware of the drainage problems in Clarke's Avenue, Luke's Avenue and Jessamine Avenue area. The existing wells have been cleaned and deepened but this provides only limited relief. As stated in the reply given to a previous Parliamentary Question, the drainage problem is due to the fact that the land lies below the level of Chelsea Road and Beckles Road. The most satisfactory solution would be to regrade the whole area but this would necessitate resiting the houses.

The Ministry is continuing efforts to find a solution to the problem.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister a Supplementary Question, whether the Minister can state whether there was any flooding in the area before Government Headquarters was constructed to the Westside, I believe, of the area.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there was any flooding?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, Sir, in that particular locality before Government Headquarters was constructed?

Mr. SPEAKER: Before the construction of Government Headquarters?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, Sir. There is a reason for that. I do not wish to anticipate the Hon. Minister. I will give him the opportunity.

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not know. This is a matter which I will have to get information about from the Ministry.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Somebody outside is giving advice. Will the Minister undertake to investigate whether the construction of Government Headquarters has not impeded the natural outfall of water from the area and whether remedial action can be taken in draining rather than filling? I am asking whether the Minister will be prepared to investigate that, Sir?

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I give this Honourable House such an undertaking.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I thank the Hon. Minister and persons who are not addressed, Sir, I think should be seen and not heard.

A Supplementary asked by the Hon. member for St. Michael South was expunged from the records by Mr. Speaker).

Mr. TAITT: A Supplementary, Sir. Can the Minister indicate whether included in the remedial measures which the Ministry is considering will be, or can be, the provision of special equipment for the urgent pumping off of heavy rainfalls?

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Works has already instituted a programme of pumping. In view of the fact that the flooding apparently has become an island-wide problem, there is a great urgency for the acquisition of more and better equipment and this is included in our programme for the future.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: A Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister say if this area used to be flooded before 1976?

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether this area was flooded before 1976, if this area relates to the site on which the Government Headquarters was constructed.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I would like to ask the Minister consequent on what he said, Sir, whether any steps are being taken by the persons responsible for Highways and so on, to ensure that gullies and water courses are not filled in our being built upon.

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, in recent time the Ministry of Works has been particularly concerned at the mounting evidence that what passes for development has been conducted over the years in a very

random manner in which water courses have been obstructed.

I have given the technical staff within my Ministry clear instructions that exhaustive investigations must be undertaken before the Ministry gives the Town Planning Department the green light to issue its approval for development in any particular area.

I am very concerned about the capricious and cavalier manner in which this approval has been given in the past but given the increasing gravity of the drainage problem in Barbados, the technical staff has been put on notice to exhibit greater vigil to ensure that natural water courses are not obstructed.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary for the Minister's comment. Is the Minister in a position to advise us whether it is contemplated to dig more and further wells as part of the relief to flooding in this area and other similar areas?

Hon. Dr. D. BLACKMAN: In the past the inert reaction to the solution of drainage problems has been to construct more and more wells.
3.05 p.m.

Of course, well-digging is extremely important to the solution of drainage problems. But, there are many areas in Barbados, where, if you multiply wells indefinitely, it would not by one scintilla, ameliorate the problem, of drainage. We know that in an area such as the Ivy, for example, there are serious drainage problems which have existed there before, I am told, I came into the world and we know that wells have been dug there time and again in order to solve this problem without success. An extensive new drainage programme has to be devised, in order to solve this problem.

Also, there are the kinds of wells which have traditionally been dug and people have gone into wells choosing arbitrary depths of 18 ft., 20 ft. or 30 ft., as the wisdom of common sense accumulated over the ages had directed, with the result, that it has been a hit or miss operation. We feel that it is necessary to modify the kind of well that has been dug, by going down and going out horizontally, in order to make the receptacle for the water rather more commodious than it is, at the present time. Over and above this, the occupation of well-digging is not a particularly inviting one for young Barbadian males or females. It is the sort of work that a lot of Barbadians cannot be induced to do.

The Ministry, in the past, has let this work out on contract and the contractors have been unable to fulfill their obligations because they cannot get well-diggers. It is, therefore, on the cards that either the Government must purchase well-digging equipment, which I am advised

is very expensive or enter into contracts with private bodies owning this equipment, in order to carry out this work. But, where well-digging is considered an effective means in dealing with the problem of drainage, our programme has been interfered with because of the paucity of qualified people available to do this work and the difficulty in getting funds to acquire those with expensive equipment to do the job. Quite apart from that, our technical staff are now convinced that they have to look at other ways of solving the drainage problem, apart from the simple response of well-digging.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I take it, that the answer to the Honourable Member's question is yes, but, I should like to ask the Honourable Member, when he said, there is a drainage problem in the Ivy, whether he is suggesting that his constituents are draining him or whether he intends to drain out the Ivy. I was not quite clear on that, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a proper supplementary.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: He said there is a drainage problem in the Ivy.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary, Sir. Is the Honourable Minister aware that there are areas, for example, Halls Road, Arthur's Land, where there are existing wells, but the problem lies in the maintenance of those wells and minor expenditure in redirecting major current of water, during heavy floods? Is the Honourable Minister aware that not much is being done to keep those wells in a clean and proper state which would make it more commodious for the fluid which is intended to go into it?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister will be directed not to reply. (ASIDE: Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: You have to put that as a separate question.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In view of the Honourable Minister's explanation of the difficulty surrounding well-digging and well-diggers, has the Honourable Minister given consideration, or will the Honourable Minister give consideration to the acquisition of modern equipment for well cleaning and well-digging?

Mr. SPEAKER: That is not a proper supplementary. That brings us to the end of Question Sorry.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Honourable Minister, in his reply, said that the wells referred to in this question were cleaned and deepened. I wonder if the Honourable Minister could indicate, when was the last occasion on which these wells were cleaned and deepened? (PAUSE)

I am asking the Honourable Minister, in view of the reply which he gave, indicating that the wells in the areas referred to were cleaned and deepened, existing wells were cleaned and deepened, whether he could tell this Honourable House, when was the last occasion on which the wells were cleaned and deepened?

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, it is part of an on-going programme of the Ministry of Works to clean and deepen things that need cleaning and deepening. (LAUGHTER)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, this is not a supplementary. I have a question and I was not in my place and Your Honour directed that it should be tabled. Since coming in, I asked for the Reply and I learned that it has not been tabled. In view of that, I wonder whether I could have been given permission to ask the question orally, Sir. The question was not tabled. It is question Number 3, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please. Now, I gave instruction.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: For it to be laid.

Mr. SPEAKER:.....that the reply be laid.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes Sir. It was not laid, Sir. So I wonder if....

Mr. SPEAKER: Once the instruction was given, it is as good as if the reply had been laid because it must be laid.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It has not been laid, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well, it must be laid.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I have not the benefit of the Reply, either orally or by having it on the table, Sir. That is the problem.

Mr. SPEAKER: The point is, I cannot function in the Chair and at the Table at the same time. I gave the instruction that the Reply must be laid and that is as far as I can go and I am not now going back on my own words because you happened to be absent.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: My position, Sir.....

Mr. SPEAKER: And, this is what I would say.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am pointing to your Honour, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: ...at this moment. If my instruction has not been carried out, it ought to have been conveyed to me firstly, that my instruction was not carried out.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, Sir. My problem...

Mr. SPEAKER: and let me convey it to you.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, Sir. My position was — I am not questioning the matter, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: But, my instruction being disobeyed...

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Well, you have to deal with that, Sir, not me.

Mr. SPEAKER:.....and it being conveyed to you that my instruction was disobeyed for you to rise now and tell me that my instruction has not been obeyed, so, I should do so and so or can I do so and so, is most improper. The business of Parliament cannot be allowed to function like this.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: My problem Sir, is that I have probably to wait for the newspapers to read it.

Mr. SPEAKER: I appreciate that we will all have problems from time to time.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You have more than I have, Sir, with them.

Mr. SPEAKER: Perhaps. It is the end of Question Time.
3.15 p.m.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

It is now time for Private Members' Business. When time for Private Members' Business expired on the last occasion the hon. member for St. Michael North West was addressing the Chair. The same hon. member is entitled to continue if he so desires. He has now five minutes in which to complete his address.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I was at that time concluding my speech and I was pointing out that the National Health Service was given a grant of \$8 million and it was noticeable that from the report on the discussion by the Kaiser Foundation, that about 60% of that sum was estimated for the primary health care scheme. That being an important part of the scheme itself, one wondered why it was not given priority over the other areas.

Mr. Speaker, I believe there may have been some difficulty between the Ministry and the medical profession, and seeing that there could have been a stalemate even up to now without any kind of indication that that

particular aspect of the scheme may be implemented in a hurry, I believe that the tone of this Resolution calling for a task force might be of some help to the Minister in solving that particular problem. Thereby when you look at the whole scheme itself, you will discover that the other areas that are in function seem to raise the question of the one per cent levy.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at the polyclinics themselves, which are going to be an essential part of the National Health Service, you will find that prior to 1979 these health clinics were performing a service which I will outline. Some had the pre-natal care going on, some had the out-patients section going on, there was the Family Planning Association as well, and there were the dental services also. This meant that before the implementation of this scheme the people were benefiting already from that particular part of the service. If you look at the drug service itself you will see that the polyclinics themselves was a service as well.

What I am trying to point out here, Sir, is that one wonders why we have to pay for services that were already free, because there were people who were 65 years old and over who were already benefiting from this service in the clinics, and there were also the children's clinics as well, and it seems to me that part of the Government's policy, as has happened in the Sewerage Project, that before you can really start to benefit from a scheme you are asked to pay for it. Mr. Speaker, I would like to feel that one should pay for services that they do get.

The Drug Service itself has been implemented in a way in which I do not think that both the pharmacists, both private and possibly the public sector, are coping well enough with. One gets the impression that it is more costly, and I would like to tell the Minister, or support him in a way that you cannot get cheap health services. No matter how you try to look at drugs in a cheap way, they are not really cheap, for what usually happens is that you will get some drugs which are a little more expensive than others, and although you get the impression that there is a lowering in the cost of drugs, I will point out that it is not cheap.

If you look at the National Formulary, which is the key to the low cost of the service, you will see what has happened. There are some drugs, just to give you some idea how drugs circulate and how they are priced, even under this scheme there are drugs 90 tablets of which might cost \$255. Although the cost might have been lower, you can see immediately that it is not cheap, and as you go through the Formulary you will discover that a lowering of the cost does not necessarily meet the need of those people who are not really benefiting from the service, and surely it was intended that one would be able to purchase drugs because one of the reasons

I believe that motivated the Government into trying to act in bringing the cost of drugs down was that pharmacists were charging too much.

If you look back long before the service, you will find that there are some drugs which will cost a penny, but at the same time there were drugs like antibiotics and so on where the price just goes out of reach and naturally people could not buy them, and we in the pharmaceutical section were blamed for this high cost. At least I am sure the Minister will now find out that pharmacists were not really indeed responsible for it. I would like to assure him on this note that the pharmacists are very willing to support the services and to give of their best, but it must also be a case in which too much load must not be put on one sector.

The pharmacists, apart from offering a service, are also businessmen, and one of the things that this service has probably done is that you lower the cost and you put the pharmacists at a disadvantage in this respect. The pricing of drugs was based on a formula, therefore if the base is lower obviously the profit margin becomes less. Now, what you have actually done is that in days of expensive developments and businesses and so on, that while you have reduced the cost of the drugs and the profit margin for these people, you have also got to take into consideration that the overhead cost starts to rise in a similar proportion. In other words, if you reduce the cost by 20% it is almost fair to believe that in a similar way the cost of overheads will go up. The result is that this particular group of people who are willing to support the service will find it very difficult to continue to do so, and I hope not, that it will not reach a stage where the pharmacists themselves may be in a position like the doctors.

I have pointed out already that we are operating on a kind of gentleman's agreement where some of the pharmacists have accepted to go in and others have not, and if you can sort of settle this particular problem, I am sure that they will continue to give the best of their service.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I believe that these are areas in which the Resolution would be of great help, because in the final analysis you are going to discover, no matter how many experts you bring in, no matter how many kinds of Commissions you set up, you will still have to come back to the people who have been functioning all the years in the service.
3.25 p.m.

I hope that the Minister himself, when he comes to the final analysis in solving these problems, will take into consideration the seriousness and devotion that the pharmacists and hopefully the doctors themselves will probably give to this service.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, in rising to support this Resolution which thanks His Excellency the Governor-General for the Throne Speech and which suggests that the Government would wish to participate in the formation of a task force to make recommendations for the amelioration of conditions prevailing in Barbados at the moment, until the hon. member for St. Thomas spoke on this Resolution last week, I was of the view that there was no one in Barbados left who had any doubt about conditions prevailing in Barbados which are in need of amelioration, and I together with a number of other hon. members certainly on this side, sat in utter amazement as we heard the contribution from the Rt. Hon. Gentleman from St. Thomas, the Prime Minister of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, among a number of other amazing things he said, he indicated that all during last year and this year he had been warning the people of Barbados of the dire situation coming. He said that he had directed people in his Ministry to find instances and from the impression he left me there were numerous instances in which he had warned the people of Barbados of the impending economic situation.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe a more amazing statement has been made in this Honourable House in either of the sessions in which I have had the honour to participate. I do not believe that that Honourable Gentleman could expect the people of Barbados, perhaps he could expect some hon. members in this House, but not the people of Barbados to accept that for the last eighteen months he was in the process of warning them of what was to come in the months of August and September. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that it does not take long nor is it difficult to find a number of instances in which the Prime Minister of this country and his parliamentary colleagues went the length and breadth of this country to demonstrate that Barbadians never had it so good. I would have thought that having made a contribution on a previous Resolution in which this matter was laid to rest that it would require a subnormal amount of nerve for anyone representing the Government to make a statement to the effect that they had not in fact mislead the people of Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, I have already alluded to certain pages in Hansard, page 5043, for example, where the hon. member for Christ Church East Central spoke in clear unambiguous terms of how good it was. I have already spoken about the Prime Minister himself making statements during that debate, but, Mr. Speaker, not only did they make these statements in here. On Sunday, 7th June, 1981, as little ago as June, the Prime Minister of Barbados at a meeting of the Barbados Labour Party held in Carlisle Park....

Mr. SPEAKER: Not in this Honourable House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: What not in this Honourable House? I said not only did he make statements in this Honourable House, but outside of this Honourable House.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it had nothing to do with this Honourable House....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes, Sir, it was a statement concerning the state of the economy. At a meeting of the Barbados Labour Party in Carlisle Park, the Prime Minister said to the people that they were going to spend \$1,000 million dollars, \$1 billion, if they were returned to power on June 18. \$1 billion is what he told them in Carlisle Park. Now, Mr. Speaker, how can one man in June tell the people in Barbados he is in a position to spend \$1 billion over a five year period for developing Barbados and then come back in October and tell the people of Barbados that he was warning them about the circumstances of this economy. At Brittons Hill on Friday, 5th June, 1981.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am warning the hon. member. What the Prime Minister said at Carlisle Park or at Brittons Hill does not concern here.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want respect.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I have to give it to you.

Mr. SPEAKER: I say it does not concern us here.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well it concerns what he said and I am seeking to prove that what he said in here could not be valid.

Mr. SPEAKER: Debate what he said in here.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am stating categorically that it cannot fall out of his mouth to come in here and say he has been warning the people of Barbados when I can show that he has been going outside of this Honourable House to the people of Barbados and telling them the contrary. I was trying to prove to Your Honour that he has not been warning the people of Barbados. Mr. Speaker, if that does not form part of this Resolution, then I do not know what forms part of it. He said to the hon. members of this House, I heard him say it, and I am saying that at Brittons Hill on the 5th June.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am warning the hon. member now that what the Prime Minister said or what the hon. member himself said at Eagle Hall corner does not concern this Honourable House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Your Honour. The Prime Minister has spoken to Barbadians and has said that his party had restored prosperity to Barbados. He said it right on the floor of this Honourable House. And now he seeks to give the people of Barbados the impression that he has been giving them dire warning. I say that is a form of behaviour which the people of Barbados are not going to look upon in the same manner as they had done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, a very interesting thing has been happening. It would seem as if the Prime Minister and his Government feel that if they make statements often enough of a certain kind that people will get tired of the economic debate, that people will get tired of hearing the same arguments put, rebutted and put again, and then people would tend to forget the circumstances. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, is that when the Prime Minister says "I am proud of the fact that people are coming to Barbados and spending \$300 million to \$500 million, and I am also proud of the fact that Barbadians are leaving Barbados and going abroad and spending \$25 million to \$30 million of their own money", he cannot be heard to say three months later that he was warning the people of a tight situation.

Mr. Speaker, he also spoke about the employment situation in Barbados, and one thought one would have put this to rest.
3.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the only reports which come out of the Government to which one could refer for information on Employment Statistics would be the Barbados Economic Report. Mr. Speaker, for sometime now I have been seeking to see if Government could clarify a situation which appears in publications of the Barbados Government publications in which they seek to give details on the employment situation in Barbados and again, the Prime Minister in his contribution to this Resolution indicated that the employment figures had shown a tremendous drop in unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1978 Economic Report, the end of the year information given for 1978 is 91.6. The professional, technical, total employed is given as 91.6. For 1976 it is given as 91.0. That would mean, Sir, that between 1976 and 1978 the total employed labour force, the total number of jobs created could only be 6,000 persons and, Mr. Speaker, if you carry that through logically, based on information published in the two following Reports, you will find that the total number of jobs that could possibly have been created was 13,100 over the period from 1976 to the present, 13,100. Not another one, according to this information, and yet, Sir, they have put out information that they have created 25,000 jobs. They have put out information that they have created 25,000 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, what I am seeking to do is to demonstrate that they put the people of Barbados into a psychological state of euphoria. The result has been that now that the hammer has started to fall, people are discovering that the situation could not possibly be anywhere nearly as good as the Prime Minister indicated and now he comes to tell this Honourable House that he had been warning the people all the time.

Mr. Speaker, there is another aspect to this Throne Speech to which I think illusions have been made from that side and I would like to refer to it, Sir. In the Throne Speech it says "This principle" referring to — I had better read it, Sir, "My Government is firmly committed that in administrative decisions full regard should be paid to the privacy of human rights. This principle has been applied to the immigration policy of Barbados which has been viewed as among the fairest in this region."

Mr. Speaker, in recent times some very interesting things have been happening with regard to these so-called fair decisions which are being made concerning immigration in this country. Yesterday morning a young man, 22 years old, I believe he is a Canadian, took up a new job at Sunley Project, the Heywoods Project. He is going to receive, as I understand it, \$500 a week, Sir. His title is sub-agent, but, Mr. Speaker, from the information which I have gathered, he is going to work as a general foreman.

Mr. Speaker, he is only one of some 10 or 11 persons who have been brought to work on this particular site. Within the context of their operation on that site, persons have been able to come to Barbados on vacation, do a month's relief work, relieving colleagues who had gone on vacation and returned from whence they came without merely a work permit or any permission.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at that or when you look at the kinds of wages or salaries which these persons have been able to draw down and then you hear the Deputy Prime Minister talking about the increased cost of the Heywoods Project, you have to start wondering, Mr. Speaker, what kind of administrative arrangements are being made by the Government of Barbados when the people of Barbados are being asked to meet an additional \$30 million or \$40 million for a project which the administration originally said they had no interest in prosecuting. They were more concerned in prosecuting the members of the previous Government who had developed the project and who at that time had conceived the project and costed it at something less than a third of the present cost.

Mr. Speaker, you have to start raising questions about the quality of the decision-making in the administrative sections of this Government, notwithstanding their statement about it being the fairest in the region.

The immigration policy, further more, Sir, I had better not make this a document of the House yet, Sir. I have a document here which I believe I had better not make it a document of the House. Let me go on to say that among the other problems of the immigration policy in this country, is the whole question of their attitude towards the Indian community. Now, Mr. Speaker, I know of my own knowledge, and told to me by persons who ought to know, that they are at least 21 persons or people staying at 21 locations that are known to officials of the Government that are staying here in some state of questionable status.

I am told that the word is that they are not to be touched. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that is so, it is questionable whether the Government has the authority, the moral authority, to make the statement that their immigration policy has been viewed as among the fairest in this region but there is a problem arising out of that. There are persons in Barbados of Indian decent who have been living here in excess of 30 years. They are being stopped along the streets and being treated with a certain lack of respect. They are being hounded, as I understand it, because they look Indian, because they are Indians.

Now, I believe, Sir, that our immigration services are made up in such a way or ought to be made up in such a way that we ought to be able to identify persons who are here illegally, apprehend them and deal with them and I believe the Immigration Officer ought to be able to do that without hindrance from any Minister whether he has a Portfolio or not, from any Parliamentary Secretary, from any Parliamentarian, or from any Permanent Secretary. Once a man has been appointed to a job as an Immigration Officer, he should be able to do his job without let or hindrance.

I believe that when this is happening then the Government is in a position to talk about Barbados having an immigration policy which is being viewed as the fairest in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I will not do the persons, where these persons are located, the disservice of putting their names on the Record of Hansard but I say to the Minister responsible for Immigration that I have that information and would be happy to pass it on to him if he so desires and if I have the assurance that the matter is going to be dealt with in a manner commensurate with a proper decision — making administration.

3.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech also talks about small businessmen. It says that it is committed to the development of small business. We have had to suffer a lot of discussion of what can only be described as elementary economic principles. It is fairly remarkable that there are Honourable Members on that Side and

other people in the community, who are prepared to see the present Rt. Hon. Minister responsible for Finance, as being an economist. Mr. Speaker I would make bold to say that never before, anywhere in the world, was that Honourable gentlemen described as an economist, until the Manifesto of the Barbados Labour Party in 1976. And so, it is perfectly acceptable to have to listen from time to time, to these attempts on the part of some Honourable Members to demonstrate that they have finally grasped certain economic principles. Some of the economic principles which are discussed are so elementary and they tend to give the population the impression that some wisdom is flowing from on high, when these various principles, words and phrases, are being thrust upon them.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that is indicative of the state of the economy in this country as the state of the small businessman in Barbados today. You think of it, Mr. Speaker. A small businessman who was operating, barely operating with an overdraft of say 12 percent, suddenly discovered that the Central Bank has directed that his overdraft limit be not raised, that the interest on his overdraft has gone up to 17 percent or 18 percent. You begin to see, Mr. Speaker, that the money available to him necessarily must be reduced, because if his interest payments are higher and his overdraft cannot be raised, there will have to be a reduction of the amount he can have available to him. When you add to that, Mr. Speaker, the fact that the cost of items for the small business man continue to rise at a phenomenal rate without any input from, apparently from the Government on trying to control the prices of raw materials and/or goods going to the small businessman, it is small wonder that more than 15 percent of small business in this country has been shutting down on a monthly basis.

I challenge the Honourable Minister responsible for Finance or the Honourable Minister responsible for Industry in this country to deny that small business in this country is contracting on a rapid basis, arising out of the measures that have been taken by this Government, using credit as a mechanism for pressuring the community and making no provision to assist those who are in productive enterprise.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that the Central Bank was to create a Trust for the small businessman. So far, we have heard nothing of that Trust and what is beginning to happen is that both the Central Bank and the Ministry concerned have been paying lip service to the development of small business. But, in essence, a number of the small businessmen are finding that the bankers are beginning to pressure them. The bankers are calling for their money and the bankers are saying that it is the Central Bank that is calling on them to call in money.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you consider that this recession in Barbados, this crisis in Barbados is not slated to come to any end before, at the earliest, June next year, when you consider that it is being suggested that the productive part of the economy is the only sector to which money should be made available and when you consider that the small businessman, in this society is without such funds, you have to begin to wonder what is the policy, what is the real objective of the Barbados Labour Party Government, in the context of this crisis. When they pay lip service and say there is no crisis, there is more to it than meets the eye, but that will come at another time and another place. The one area where we can assist in reducing the Balance of Payments deficit, where most of the raw materials if not all, is indigenous is the handicraft development area.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Government with paying scant attention to the development of handicraft. I am not charging them with making scant noises. They have made a large number of noises concerning the development of handicraft. But, any examination in depth of the handicraft industry in this country would show that whatever growth there has been, has been less as a result of any particular thrust on the part of the decision-makers than it has been the kind of spill-off which comes from people trying to find another way to make a living.

Mr. Speaker, if you go into certain supermarkets in this country today, you can find such things as pickled snails. But, Mr. Speaker, you can also find for the tourists who come here — you can still find handicraft that has been made in Japan, handicrafts that have been made in Hong Kong, handicrafts that have been made outside of this region. I am contending — as I have contended since 1974, when we wrote the Handicraft Development Plan, a Plan which was accepted by the Honourable Members on that Side and which they promised they would develop and bring to fruition, sometime in 1979 the promise was made — I am contending if a fundamental exploration of the handicraft capability of this country were made that a significant saving in foreign exchange would be made and at the same time, we would be providing a large number of people with high skills in areas where they can make a living commensurate with a proper status in the community.

Mr. Speaker, the handicraft development in Barbados, like the farmers in Barbados, are not considered to be exotic by the decision-makers and as a result, they have constantly to be going with cap in hand seeking to get some assistance. I am told we have large tracks of unused agricultural and sub-agricultural land. I see no reason why the Government — they ask for solutions — why has the Government not so far grown any number of acres of pandanus grass? Why can the

Government not grow 25 acre of pandanus and provide proper farming of that pandanus, so that the end result would provide the raw material that is necessary to provide a number of artifacts which the people coming here as tourists look forward to getting.

Mr. Speaker, a tourist who comes from the United States is not interested in getting a Japanese-made product here. He is interested in finding something that is essentially — and quintessence essentially to Barbadians. He is interested in finding that the workmanship which has gone into a Barbadian doll is entirely indigenous. We have scraps coming from the manufacturing sectors. I am satisfied that a co-ordinated programme for the development of handicraft will thrust a strict regime of import control of such artifacts and will go a long way towards relieving us of some of the burdens which have been imposed for Balance of Payments purposes because, Mr. Speaker, we have spent up too much of our money on unessentials.

I go further, Mr. Speaker, I say, that even if the Government is able to point successfully to a few measures over the last 10 weeks, that the germ was laid in the first six months of its regime in 1976, when it systematically, whether inadvertently or not, developed a psychology in the market place in this community which allowed:

- (a) the merchants to feel that any number could play so, they could import at will and sell as they like;

and

- (b) the people who had money — I have to say "had", Sir, because over five years, a lot of them have not — a number of people were allowed to have the feeling that they can spend and spend and spend because there was a lot more where that came from.

I challenge them to deny that that is the psychology that went abroad in the heavy months of late 1976 and early 1977. And, the Central Bank's Reports clearly demonstrate where the turn was made in the first Quarter of 1977, where the psychological aspects of our economic development were dealt with in a manner that is now coming home to roost.
3.55 p.m.

We are now suffering the results of that heady period in our development when the people of Barbados were allowed to feel that the gates are open wide. This is what we charge the Prime Minister with, and this for a small open economy is mismanagement. Mismanagement is not only the movement of cyphers, mismanagement has nothing to do with merely the buying and selling of

shares or the buying and selling of funds in the Capital Works or in the Current Account, it has to do with the leadership which is provided to the community both in the economic and the social spheres. It has to do, Mr. Speaker, with setting the right tone so that the people who make up this small community of a quarter of a million people can understand the basis on which our economic development must go forward. It is useless for you to trot out statistics talking about per capita income. It is useless to throw around phrases as we hear from time to time in this Hon. House about Balance of Payments, etc. What is important and what ought to be important for both sides of this Hon. House is the quality of life index for the people of Barbados.

We wish to hear the hon. member for Christ Church East, the hon. member for Christ Church East Central and the Prime Minister talking about the real quality of life of the people of Barbados. What is it going to profit a young farmer in Barbados to receive an income of \$5,000 a year more, if in fact his quality of life has remained the same place it was when he started in the area of farming? And that is precisely what has happened. The Prime Minister talks about 15% inflation as if there was nothing to it. He talks and compares the inflationary period between 1973 and 1975. He has probably convinced himself, but that is an elementary lesson. What he cannot do is deal with the cumulative result to the average individual, to the man in the street between 1976 and 1980, the degradation which has occurred as a result of the social.... Mr. Speaker, let me put it this way. The social fabric having begun to fall, the average man in the street cannot catch up over a period of five years, and what we have had is a steady decline.

We have been measuring our progress in terms of statistics but we have not been looking at the body politic, and now, Mr. Speaker, it has come home to roost. What we are saying on this side, let us provide you with a task force. You admit already that you are not able to run the ship. I do not mind the fulminations of my hon. friend, the member for Christ Church East, when he says that they are the task force, anyone who examines them in detail knows, Sir, that they do not represent a winning task force. A winning political party, but a task force to set the stage for Barbados in the 21st century requires an input from all of the winning citizens of this community. This is what this Resolution is about, we are not trying to take power from them, they have already ceded their capacity to manage the economy when people see five months after the election, two months after the election, four weeks after the election a complete change around. That is not the point, the point is where do we go from here? What kind of preparation will we make for the future? How are we going to deal with 1985 and 1995? What are we going to tell the 500 children who are coming out of school?

Mr. Speaker, we are stating that the task force will provide them, and as it says in the Resolution, it will provide them with a recommendation....

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has another minute in which to wind up.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, in that minute let me put the lie to the point the Prime Minister was trying to make that he was warning the people. Even a member not unknown to be friendly with them in the Other Place has put it succinctly when he said: Tell us how it has been so good in June and so bad in August. It is impossible, unless something radical was wrong with the information which we got in June.

That is my charge, Mr. Speaker, and that is the charge of this side, and that is why we are recommending a task force to assist them in setting the record straight for the future.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. A. TRUSS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Resolution to create an impartial task force in my view cannot be supported by members on this side. The hon. member for St. James South when he spoke at the last meeting talked quite a lot on education, but one would believe that the party to which he belongs, the Democratic Labour Party, did such a tremendous job for education, because it was the Democratic Labour Party who kicked out the 14 year olds from school. I would like to know where the member for St. James South was when the Democratic Labour Party turned out the 14 year olds, Sir. He was talking on the Resolution.

The hon. member who introduced the Resolution said the economy is in crisis. The hon. member, the Leader of the Opposition, for St. John said the country was in serious trouble, when he spoke. The hon. members for St. Michael South Central and St. James South talked about the redistribution of income. The last member who sat down, the hon. member for St. Michael West, spoke about small businessmen and assistance to small manufacturers, or the lack thereof.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, a task force was needed in 1974 when the Democratic Labour Party was in power. When the hon. member who just sat down got up on television and said that Barbados was in a crisis, it was a bleak and black Christmas, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition got up the night after and said there was no crisis. We needed a task force in 1974. At the last election the people of Barbados decided that the Barbados Labour Party was capable, they were efficient, they had the men and women and the capability to handle the complexities of modern government, and they

put us in here. We are the task force. If they thought that the Democratic Labour Party had the ideas, they would be on this side and we would be on that side, or outside, Sir.

I remember only too well in 1974 we had a real crisis. Do you remember the lights on one night, lights off the next? In the north when it was dark, in the south you had light. In the east when you had light, in the west it was dark. Do you remember the days of the privileged pump? Those were the days of crisis.

The hon. member for St. Michael North West talked about cries for the lower income group and redistribution. I will get to that in a while, Mr. Speaker. The member for St. Michael South Central, speaking on this same Resolution, talked about gambling and how we are allowing the slot machines to run away in this country. He quoted the Crichlow Report but he quoted it incorrectly. The Crichlow Report stated that they needed more arcades, the Crichlow Report never said anything about restricting the amount of slot machines to 400, so when the hon. member for St. Michael South Central must quote a Report, I wish he would quote the Report properly.

About gambling, Sir, the Democratic Labour Party really does not have such a good record with gambling. I have not yet forgotten the West Indies Hospital Sweepstakes. I have some here I can make documents of the House. I will quote for you from the back: "The Barbados Government legalises the West Indies Hospital Sweepstakes." If I may read it for you, Sir, and to enlighten other hon. members of the House as well, about the intellectual dishonesty of members on the other side, when they can come and talk to us about gambling.
4.05 p.m.

It says; "In 1964, the Barbados General Assembly and Legislative Council passed the Act under which the Sweepstake operates. Under the Act, West Indies Hospital Fund Limited is granted the authority to conduct Hospital Sweepstakes. The Act also specifies the proportion of gross receipts which by agreement with the Government of Barbados will be turned over to the Government of Barbados and will be utilised for Hospitals and other welfare purposes."

They show you a lot of faces with a lot of names of different countries, no names and addresses, "River Rouge, Michigan" and so on, very mysterious and clouded with a clandestine type of operation and it says on the back of it when they reel out these tickets to people all over the world to support hospitals in Barbados: "Dear Friend, I hope you will further assist the development of hospitals in Barbados by selling or buying one or more of these tickets." And then they say "Envelopes containing your counterfoils and remittances should be addressed as

follows: "Mr. Harry West, Shore Lane Motel, Room 3313, Collymore's Drive, Bridgetown, Barbados." That place does not exist. I can make this a document of the House. It is a fraud perpetuated by the Democratic Labour Party, and they have the gall to come in here and talk to us about gambling. "Harry West, Shore Lane Motel, Room 3313, Collymore's Drive, Bridgetown, Barbados." And then, Sir, in fine print it says: "Important - Please read carefully" and they give you a list of items and Item 8 says "Don't address envelopes to West Indies Hospital Fund Limited."

Now what does that mean? They are telling you where you must not send the money although it is West Indies Hospital Sweepstake Fund Limited.

Sir, when we came into power the slot machines were already here. We legalised them, we made some money out of them for the benefit of Barbadians, not for the benefit of the few people who had them and ripped off the country and the people in the country. Where the slot machine operators paid members of the Democratic Labour Party allegedly, they are now paying into the Treasury of Barbados for the benefit of Barbadians. So don't talk to me about gambling.

The last hon. member who sat down talked about small businesses closing down on a 15% monthly basis. I would like him to bring the proper documentation to this Honourable Chamber to back up what he said because I have documentation to prove that he is trying to mislead this Honourable Chamber, but I know you will not allow it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I withdraw the words.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want you to produce the documentation first and then leave it to the House to say well yes, this proves that the House has been misled.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I apologise, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Produce the information first.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I apologise and withdraw that. I know that you will not allow the hon. member to mislead this Honourable Chamber.

Sir, in manufacturing, in 1976 under the Democratic Labour Party a total of \$78,443,000 was produced. As of this year \$243 million has been produced and a significant amount of these people are now small business people. In 1976 they could not get any money for the small business sector. Today you have a maximum of \$100,000 given to small business by the Barbados Development Bank. Now we are dealing with small business. In April of

1981 it was \$161,138.43 by the BDB, in May \$273,735.98; in June \$103,795.74; in July \$184,138.06; in August \$301,691.21; in September \$1,023,498.72. This is small businesses alone and he makes the statement that small businesses are closing down at the rate of 15% per month. Absolute nonsense.

Sir, I am prepared to make this a document of the House. This is the Financial Times dated Wednesday, December 3, 1980, and in an article written by Mr. Raymond Whittaker under the headline "Five Consecutive Years of Growth" and the sub-headline "Economy" you find, and I quote: "Among the 13 member-States of the Caribbean Community and Common Market, (CARICOM) Barbados recorded by far the highest real economic growth despite the oil wealth of Trinidad and Tobago and the bauxite resources of Jamaica and Guyana." So we were not the only ones who were shouting from the housetops that you never had it so good. The Financial Times was doing so. So when hon. members on that side try to give the impression that we on this side were misleading the public during the general elections and before the general elections, I am saying that is not true. We were reflecting accurately at the time what was happening in Barbados. It goes on to say, because the hon. member for St. Michael West who last spoke talked about businesses closing down at the rate of 15% per month: "The response of Mr. Barrow's Government to the economic problems caused by the first round of OPEC price increases was to widen the system of import licensing, first introduced in 1973, and to increase sharply the number of items subject to price controls. By election time, many goods had disappeared from the shops and about 500 of the island's 1,200 small rural shopkeepers had gone out of business."

That was 1976. 500 of the island's 1,200 small rural shopkeepers had gone out of business under the hon. member for St. Michael West who was Minister of Trade at the time. He said the days of the one door shops had passed, and now has the gall to come in here and talk about what we on this side are trying to do in the interest of Barbados. It goes on to say in the same article in the Financial Times: "Mr. Adams and his Cabinet have taken the view that the unemployed were the main beneficiaries of the recovery in 1978 and 1979 which increased the number of jobs, and that 1980 should see existing wage-earners sharing the spoils".

The hon. member for St. Michael West made the point, Sir, that we did not.....

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, may I just refer to Standing Order No. 28 "Rules of Debate" at page 34. Rule (1) states "A Member may not read his speech, but he may read extracts from books or papers other than newspapers in support of his argument, and may refresh his memory by reference to notes."

As I understand it, the Financial Times is a newspaper and it would seem to me that in accordance with the provisions of that Rule the hon. member may not read an extract from that newspaper.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now I have heard the hon. member on his point of order, and I believe that the hon. member can read well and I invite him to understand what he reads. The hon. member whom he interrupts has stated that the document from which he is quoting he is making a document of the House. As for his reference to his notes, I agree he is following them quite copiously, but I am prepared to look into the fact that they are studded with figures and no one would expect a normal human being to contain all of those notes accurately in his head at any one time, and in my view he is well within the Orders of this Honourable House. The hon. member may continue.

Mr. A. TRUSS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I prefaced my remarks by saying I was quoting from the Financial Times, and I shall continue.
4.15 p.m.

The last paragraph, Sir, of this article written by Mr. Raymond Whittaker states:—

"Government employees have doubled their incomes during Mr. Adams' term of office, while the wages of the lowest-paid have more than trebled.

The 1980 Budget cut income taxes by 30 per cent, with almost half of all taxpayers no longer having to make PAYE contribution."

The last member who sat down, Sir, talked about we are not creating the many jobs which we said we are creating.

When the Democratic Labour Party was in power, Sir, the Retail Price Index as a result of the probable effects of the oil crisis, Sir, I have taken a list of 36 countries, Sir, which ranged from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Guyana, the Bahamas, Jamaica, Antigua, El Salvador, Ecuador, all of the South Central and the Caribbean countries. Of the 32 countries in terms of increase in inflation, Barbados was the 32nd out of the 36 countries in terms of the increase in inflation. The Democratic Labour Party were political dunces, in other words, Sir, because out of a class of 36, if you come 32nd, you do not know what is going on and they are now talking about a task force?

The last hon. member who spoke the last time, Sir, mentioned the licensing system which the Democratic Labour Party had when they were in power and when he was Minister of Trade. Sir, I have done a little research

on the Licensing Department as well and between January and August of 1976, 9,226 licences were applied for through the Minister of Trade, the very same hon. member for St. Michael West, 9,226 licences, Sir for beef, medicaments, soups, prepared foods, flour etc. Of all those 9,226 licences that were applied for, 44 were used. They had a big Minister sitting down everyday, going through licences only to approve them. That did not make sense so when they talk about licensing in order to control this and to control that, that is foolishness. When we did away with the licensing we did so because we figured that it made no sense having a Minister of Government going through 9,226 licences to approve 44. The hon. member may have had his reasons for wanting to have licences.

There were 26 different price controls on corned beef when we came into power on September, 2, 1976; 26 different ones and for those people in 1976 who owned sewing machines or ate toothpaste were satisfied because the hon. member for St. Michael West, as Minister of Trade, controlled the price of sewing machines and toothpaste and rampant inflation went oh so if you owned sewing machines, Sir, and ate toothpaste, you were doing well.

Sir, when they talked about the re-distribution of income, I sat back here and I made some notes because I could not believe, in all fairness to the Barbados Labour Party Government, in all fairness to that front bench who have given sterling service to the people of Barbados, sterling service in terms of their time, energy and effort. They worked around the clock seven days a week for five years to accomplish something for this country of ours and instead of coming in here and giving Jack his jacket by acknowledging at least that in politics one must oppose, but one must not oppose so vehemently, one must deal with the facts and the figures, Sir.

The Hon. Minister of Finance when he talked about re-distribution of wealth, made it tax-free for all those persons who earned up to \$115 a week. Prior to that, in 1976, if you earned \$25, you paid tax and they talk about the re-distribution of wealth or of incomes.

We introduced the separate assessment for working wives, the widening of the tax span which favours the taxpayers. Personal allowances in 1976 was \$1,200. In 1981 it is \$2,400, Sir. Up to \$500 was allowed tax-free for gardeners. Tax-free claims for Insurance was increased from \$1,200 to \$1,500, in favour of the broad masses of Barbadians, Sir, the re-distribution of the wealth.

Mr. Speaker, tax-free interest on mortgage payments up to \$6,000 was introduced. The abolition of the 5% Sales Tax which was a regressive tax introduced by the

Democratic Labour Party, we knocked it off and saved the taxpayers \$60 million.

The Barbados Workers' Union is very closely aligned to the Democratic Labour Party yet the Democratic Labour Party did not find it fit to assist them. The Barbados Labour Party made available to the Barbados Workers' Union \$1 million to build houses for workers and they will talk to us, Sir, about the distribution of income.

Mr. Speaker, tax credits for all those persons who earn less than \$6,001 and \$300. All those persons who earn less than \$8,001 and \$600, all those persons 65 years and older special age allowance, chattel house mortgages interest on money borrowed, repairs to chattel houses, tax-free, never before done in this country. Eighteen thousand people, Sir, 18,000 low income workers in Barbados were granted Income Tax relief in the 1981 Budget with a tax credit of \$18,700 to the old people and they are going to talk to us about distribution of income, more money in the pockets of Barbadians.

Then the point was made on the Other Side, Sir, during this same discussion about the social services in Barbados as offered under the Barbados Labour Party. We introduced day nurseries, and Skills Training programmes. We have spent \$5,000 in 1981 for the Skills Training Programme, training poor people, Sir. Rich people do not need it, the poor people, teaching them a trade, teaching them how to make money, how to become a breadwinner. The Home Help Service instituted by the Government, \$380,000 allocated this year. The National Training Board has been established, \$300,000 allocated this year. Community Development \$1¼ million allocated this year. Increased aid to welfare institutions, all welfare institutions in Barbados received increased aid through the Barbados Labour Party Government.

The Day Care Centre for Senior Citizens the first in Barbados to be implemented. The first fully-fledged Foster Care system introduced by this Government; doubling of the Dependency Grant for children, doubling, Sir; 8,000 children benefiting under Child Care — \$4.6 million was allocated this year. Under Welfare Services, Sir, National Assistance, \$29 million was allocated for 1981. Children now receive \$5 weekly and adults \$8 weekly.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have been accused about not doing sufficient for the masses. Let me continue, Mr. Speaker. Old age pension in 1976 was \$13 and was increased to \$28 in 1981. Who benefited, the poor old people. The qualifying age for life pension was 55 years. This Government reduced it to 50. The qualifying age for old age pensions was 68 years.

4.25 p.m.

We reduced it to 65 and brought 3 000 more old people into the system.

The spouse, Sir, of an old age pensioner is now able to receive a pension in their own right. Before, if somebody in the house received a pension, you could not get one. Now, in your own right, because you have reached the age of eligibility, you get your own pension irregardless of who else lives in the house and gets a pension too. Pensions for the blind have been reduced from 40 to 25. Pensions for the deaf have been reduced from 25 to 18. All persons 65 years and over travel on the buses free. Some pensioners, Sir, their water rates and electricity rates are now being paid by the Government. Eleven thousand persons have gone into that scheme. Food stamps, cash grants, clothing, gifts in kind, all of that is done by the Welfare Department, to a magnitude of \$29 million Sir, for 1981. The Free Textbooks Scheme, the Free School Meals Scheme, \$100 per child entering secondary school. Can these things be quantified, Mr. Speaker? The establishment of new centres.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am advised that the Honourable Member must wind up in another four minutes.

Mr. A. TRUSS: Thank you, Sir. Sir, I do not believe that these things can be quantified and I stand behind the Labour Party, I stand behind the Honourable Members on the front bench. I think they have done a fantastic job.

Sir, before I break new ground, there are a few points that I would have liked to have made, but time does not permit me, so rather than start a new ground, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to represent this Side. (APPLAUSE)

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I would like to return to the debate, if I can and to join in thanks to His Excellency for the Throne Speech on 21st July, 1981.

When the Honourable Member for St. Michael Central sat, I was still at a loss to understand what was the purport of his whole statement and as to the relevance of his contribution to the debate. It seems to me that what he was concerned to do was to establish that the Barbados Labour Party Government had done a good job, over the years. That seems to have been the purpose of his contribution, a total recitation of parts of the programme of the Barbados Labour Party Administration over the last five years. (ASIDE: Do you see anything wrong with that?) Nothing at all wrong with it, but I am saying that he did not touch fully, deal with the issues which we are concerned about. Was it intended to deny that today there exists a crisis in Barbados? Was it intended to deny that there are problems in the community which need to be looked at?

Now, Mr. Speaker, whilst we note the contents of the Governor-General's Statement, from what has been

said there we are strengthened in our conviction that we accuse the Government, quite rightly, of improper planning, as far as the development of this country is concerned and I want to take a look, particularly at the programme in relation to Transport and Works, as articulated in the Governor-General's Statement and to show how our statement, our accusation that the Government is guilty of improper planning is justified.

Now, the Statement on Transport and Works in the Throne Speech to which I wish to refer at the beginning appears on page 13. I refer to the Section where it says:

"A new Transport Authority will be established and it will take over the present responsibilities of the Board and will have the task of integrating the minibuses in the overall transportation system as well as developing a system for licensing and allocation of routes which will provide commuters in all parts of the island with a regular and reliable service."

Now, in the six weeks that have passed since the making of — the outlining of the speech by the Governor-General and the introduction of the, what we call the "mini budget" on the 8th September, we have had a new dimension added to this outline of Government's policy.

In the Governor-General's Statement, he spoke of a new Transport Authority being established. Six weeks later, we have a new dimension in that a new Transport Authority will be responsible, in addition to Transport, will also be responsible for roads, so that what we are in essence having is a new Authority which is going to be responsible for Transport and Highways all in one which seems to me to be a departure from the Statement, as outlined by the Governor-General in the Speech from the Throne.

Now, in addition to that, we have the creation and the function and the administration of this new Authority being financed by the Transport Levy, what is called the Transport Levy. We find that this new Authority has not yet been established, but yet, we are in the unusual situation, where we find one statutory corporation collecting monies for another statutory corporation which is not yet in existence and we are saying, on this Side, that the collection of monies, by the National Insurance Board — a statutory corporation — for this new Transport Authority which does not yet exist is something unusual. We say it is something unconstitutional in fact, because we charge that the collection.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, I take it that you are not reflecting on a vote of this Honourable House?

Mr. M. A. KING: Now, Mr. Speaker, I could not be reflecting on a vote of the Honourable House. I said that.....

Mr. SPEAKER: It is unconstitutional. You say it is unconstitutional.

Mr. M. A. KING: The collection of funds.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you say it is unconstitutional? Do you agree that you have said so?

Mr. M. A. KING: I said it is unconstitutional, yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: Alright, is that not a reflection on a vote of the Honourable House? Please.

Mr. M. A. KING: The Honourable House has voted on the matter, the Honourable House has not voted on the Constitutional.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please withdraw your remark.

Mr. M. A. KING: If Your Honour orders me to withdraw, I withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not if Your Honour does this, or does that.

Mr. M. A. KING: But, I can only withdraw if Your Honour asks me to withdraw, I cannot withdraw otherwise.

Mr. SPEAKER: Common sense ought to dictate that you do not use the remark at all.

Mr. M. A. KING: Sometimes common sense.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Withdraw and do not argue with the Chair.

Mr. M. A. KING: I am not arguing with the Chair. I said, if Your Honour asks me to withdraw, I withdraw.

Mr. SPEAKER: Go ahead.

Mr. M. A. KING: We are faced with a situation, where one statutory corporation is collecting money for a statutory corporation which does not exist. That is a fact. That is the position, as it stands today and we are saying that that is an unusual situation and what the Government should do is come to this Honourable House with a proper plan, set out as to how the business of Transport and Works should be organised. If we have proper planning, we would not be in a situation, where you are collecting funds for an organisation which does not exist.

My colleague from St. Michael North West has already adverted in his address to a situation, where the health levy is being collected to finance a programme which does not exist as yet.
4.35 p.m.

We are saying that with proper planning, and that is the purport of my whole thesis, that with proper planning you would have your institutions established and then talk about collecting the money to finance the running costs, but you do not have that before hand, have it all sitting down there and then talk about proper planning. The whole point about my statement, about my comment, about my charge against the Government is that its concepts do not seem to have any basis in deep thought, because in one breath we are talking about setting up a Transport Authority which is going to deal with the responsibilities which the Transport Board now holds, and in the other breath we are going to add a new dimension when we are talking about the same thing, adding Highways on to that.

In my view the establishment of a new authority does not make any difference whatsoever to dealing with the problems which confront statutory institutions in this country, and if you are talking about the Transport Board having problems, what you have to do is to look at the existing institution which you have, the Statutory Corporation known as the Transport Board, reorganise it if necessary, take all the necessary steps to see that that institution is properly functioning and do not talk about creating something else just for the sake of creating a new institution. And there are a lot of problems with the Transport Board.

We say if structural changes are needed in that Board, ensure that those changes are carried out. If you are saying that the Act needs amending to give greater authority here or there or to achieve certain results, amend it accordingly, but it does not make sense talking about setting up a new institution and replacing or removing one that is there just for the sake of doing so. We say that if the Transport Board is suffering from a lack of proper and efficient staff, that attention should be given to the appointment of proper staff for the Corporation. You have to eliminate all the unnecessary bickering which goes on between the Chairman and other members of the Corporation. I understand that persons in the top positions of the Transport Board are still in acting positions and have been so for a long time. Now, that is not good for the morale of the Corporation, and obviously if you need to appoint proper staff you have to come to grips with the problems which really exist.

Some of us may remember that some time ago the Chairman in talking about the problems at the Transport Board, about the difficulties which it faced with cash, talked about some \$30,000 daily which was missing from the Transport Board, presumably because of theft by someone, and we remember the gratuitous insult which was given to all Transport Board Workers in the first analysis until sober reflection made a change somewhere along the line. We have not heard any statement from the Minister about whether the position in relation

to the loss of that \$30,000 daily has been adjusted, whether there has been any change in that position. We need to know all these things if we are talking about setting up a new Transport Authority, reorganising the existing authority, and ensuring that the authority, whichever it is which is responsible for transport, is properly functioning in this country.

Now, you have to look and rationalise the whole problem about cost in the transport industry. We find that some half million dollars annually is spent on washing buses, and still we find buses being driven all over the place in a very dirty condition. We have to consider whether the spending of that money on washing buses is the best use of the funds of the Transport Board, or whether some attention should not be given to looking at this whole problem and devising a more economic way of making sure that the buses are clean and tidy.

So that all these problems which exist at the Transport Board add up to one thing. They add up to a gross inefficiency in the Board, they add up to a situation that the management of the Corporation needs to be seriously looked at, and we feel that in the outline of Government's policy matters of this sort should be more fully and effectively dealt with, and that this is the direction in which the drive for better management, better functioning of the whole transport system should be directed and that the problems of a transport industry are not cured purely by setting up a new institution and by calling upon the people of this country to underwrite the existing inefficiency by having to pay a transport levy and things of that sort, increased bus fares, etc.

Before I pass off this subject of the Transport Board, I would just like also to state, Mr. Speaker, that the whole position of the Minister *vis-a-vis* the Board has to be rationalised. I am not quite sure what the present position is. We hear of the Minister planning to go to the United States to investigate the possibility of getting buses from the United States market. As far as I understand the structure and function of Statutory Boards, Statutory Boards are autonomous corporations set up by Statute, and as I understand it, the Minister is not part of the day to day administration of statutory corporations and it would seem to me that a policy like participating directly in the investigation of the purchase of buses is a thing which should be properly the function of the corporation, is part of the day to day business of the corporation and is not part of the functions of a Minister. So that I say that this whole area of the relationship between the Minister and the Corporation needs to be looked at and to be rationalised.

I would like to turn now for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to the works programme of the Government, reference to which.....

Mr. SPEAKER: We have come to the end of Private Members' Business for today. Government Business is the instant order of the day.
4.45 p.m.

THE COMPANIES (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 5 stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Finance, to move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Companies Act.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this Bill and one that will come subsequently deals with a situation which has arisen and has been drawn to the attention of the Government. Resulting from the existing law relating to priorities in the event of a liquidation of a company, we feel that very often where companies find themselves in a cash shortage that money which they received really as trustees or transmission agents on behalf of the Income Tax authorities or on behalf of the National Insurance Corporation both arising under the laws which obligate employers to make certain deductions from employees' wages on account of taxes or national insurance, and in the case of national insurance on account of the employers' contributions, that that money is money which should not be available to be shared among creditors; so the object of this Bill is to ensure that a liquidator in paying out of money gives preference to the national insurance contributions and income tax payments which have been deducted and were supposed to have been paid over to the Inland Revenue. That is the object of this Bill.

We have had factual situations where people's pensions are interrupted because of the failure of the employers to pay over money which they deducted for the purposes of this country, and these are the objects.

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

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

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I should just like to ask the Minister who has introduced this Bill whether the purpose of the amendment is to give priority or rather let me put it this way; section 195 of the Companies Act already gives contributions under the National Insurance Act and taxes due to Government a preferential position. They have priority over all other debts and I should just like the Minister to clarify if the purpose is solely to put it above the wages of employees and the other items (b) and (c) of section 195, because it already exists as section 195. Contributions from the National Insurance Act, contributions under the Severance Payments Act, all Local Government Taxes, public taxes already have priority, but in addition to that there are

wages and salaries of employees which are payable before the company went into liquidation. Is the purpose to advance these particular items of debt above those of 195?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, this is precisely the object. This is really trustee money. When you deduct national insurance and the company is booked, it usually arises where a company is in acute cash shortage, the balance is paid out, but instead of paying it over to the relevant authorities, they hold it, so that when they go bankrupt the question arises as to the priorities between that money which was due and owing and which should have been paid over long ago, and a serious consequence is that the employee, when he comes to get his national insurance benefits finds that he is not eligible for a national insurance benefit because when the contribution cards are called for, they are in arrears; so we want to preserve his pension.

The question that the Bill be now read a second time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee without amendment and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

THE BANKRUPTCY (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 4 stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Finance, to move the second reading of a Bill to amend the Bankruptcy Act.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this Bill is the companion Bill and it deals with the situation in which an individual who is not incorporated carries on business in Barbados and a similar situation arises. This Bill will settle

the order of priority in respect of those two bits of money due and owing for national insurance and money due and owing for income tax. I do not need to advert to the arguments as they are exactly similar to the ones in relation to Companies.

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

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I beg to second that.

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

On motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.
4.55 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

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

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That concludes Government Business for today.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, this is the end of Government Business for today and I beg to move that this House now stand adjourned until Tuesday, 17th November, 1981 at 12 noon.

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

5.00 p.m.