
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 6th October, 1981.

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

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW, Q.C., B.Sc., LL.D., (Leader of the Opposition); Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House); Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Q.C., LL.B., (Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry); His Honour C. L. BOLDEN, LL.B., (Deputy Speaker); Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.; 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. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, (Minister of Housing and Lands); 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. W. O. FRANKLIN, A.I.A.S., J.P.; Mr. N. K. SIMMONS; Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN and Mr. A. TRUSS.

Prayers were read.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 29th September, 1981.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the 29th September, 1981, be taken as read.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations from hon. members, let those Minutes stand confirmed.

Mr. SANDIFORD entered the Chamber and took his seat.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Minister of Labour and Social Security, I beg to lay the Instruments adopted at the 67th Session of the International Labour Conference held in June, 1981.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE RAISED

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege.

Under Standing Order 76 which states that a member may raise a matter of privilege at any time before public business is commenced, I move that the matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

Mr. KING entered the Chamber and took his seat.

I intimated the circumstances to Your Honour a week ago to raise a matter arising out of a report in the Advocate News of Thursday, 10th September, on page 2, which I now pass to Your Honour and which I intend to make a document of the House.

The report reads as follows:

BARROW ACCUSED OF DOUBLE STANDARDS

Government backbencher Mr. Henry Forde has accused Opposition Leader Mr. Errol Barrow of double standards in his dealing with the Judiciary.

Mr. Forde, a former Minister of External Affairs and a former Attorney-General was speaking on a Resolution last Tuesday to approve the Civil Establishment (General Amendment No. 3) Order, 1981 which provides for the regrading of a number of public officers.

Mr. Barrow has read out a letter to Parliament, which he said had been submitted to the Chief Establishments Officer by officers in the Legal Department. The letter, he said, had complained about certain anomalies which were created with magistrates.

In addition the Opposition Leader said that when he was in charge of the Establishments he had dealt with such matters by appointing a committee made up of senior government officers.

But, Mr. Forde charged that Mr. Barrow had done more to run down the Judiciary in the country, and when the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) took power in 1976, the legal officers were not as well catered for as they were at the moment.

Now Your Honour, that report is 100 per cent inaccurate in more than one respect. I never read out a letter which I claimed to have been submitted to the Chief Establishments Officer by Officers of the Legal Department. I read out a letter which purported to come from the Chief Establishments Officer addressed to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Legal Affairs. That is the letter that I read out. But what I am complaining of is a gross breach of privilege is where a statement is attributed to the hon. member for Christ Church West where in my recollection and hearing and the recollection of the hon. member the hon. member never made, and where the report said that Mr. Forde charged that Mr. Barrow had done more to run down the judiciary of the country, and where it also says in the beginning of the article that Mr. Forde had accused the Opposition Leader, Mr. Errol Barrow of double standards in his dealings with the Judiciary. The judiciary was never discussed in that debate at all, and I am requesting, Your Honour, that this matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

I am aware that there was a single opportunity for me to raise it, but circumstances over which I had no control precluded both my Learned Friend and I from being present on that occasion since we were both in various capacities representing the country at the Belize Independence celebrations, and I apologise to Your Honour for not having been able to do so. I did not have the report, I do not have the report now. I prefer not to go into that because I am frequently instructed and informed that I am only entitled to a copy of my own speech. My friend and colleague was not available for him to make the request for the speech, and I apologise for any delay, but since it does affect accuracy, it is not a matter personal to me, Mr. Speaker; it is a matter of somebody else being misquoted which is a very serious matter which would reflect on the way in which the rule of law is observed in Barbados where members here are saying that we do not observe the rule of law, and when statements are attributed to hon. members which the hon. members have not made, particularly where

they are members of the legal profession, I respectfully suggest that it is a gross breach of privilege.

Mr. SPEAKER: In seeking to raise a matter of privilege before this Honourable House, the time factor is very, very essential. It is an essential ingredient, if I were to put it that way.
12.25 p.m.

In other words, it is necessary that the matter of privilege be drawn to the attention of this Honourable House at the earliest possible opportunity.

In the present circumstances I learned from the Hon. Leader of the House that he had made every effort to get copies of the relevant Reports to assist him in placing the matter before this Honourable House at the earliest possible opportunity but, there was an element of frustration, a matter which I will have investigated.

However, I will promise all hon. members that in future as long as I remain in this Chair, I will see to it that under no similar circumstances will any other member be denied the opportunity to present a matter of privilege to bring it before this Honourable House at the earliest possible opportunity.

In the light of what the Hon. Leader of the House has said, I am satisfied that a *prima facie* case has been made out and accordingly, I rule that the matter be referred to the Committee of Privileges of this Honourable House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise almost on a similar matter where in the *Nation* Newspaper, October 1, 1981 under the caption "Taitt tables questions on casino", it reads as follows:—

Opposition Parliamentarian Branford Taitt, on Tuesday gave notice of a private member's resolution when the House of Assembly met.

His question which was addressed to the Minister of Finance, Prime Minister Tom Adams, read:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that fears are being expressed among many Barbadians that arrangements are being made for the establishment of a casino at a hotel on the southern part of the island?
- (2) Will the Minister state whether croupiers are being trained (or persons being trained as croupiers) for operation of a casino in Barbados shortly?
- (3) Will the Minister confirm whether the Hilton Hotel (owned by the Barbados Government) has recently completed construction of a games room where casino operations are likely to be implemented.

- (4) Will the Minister state Government's current policy on the establishment of a casino or similar type operation in Barbados?

If I recall, correctly, Sir, on the very Order Paper the Question is at paragraph 3, the Question tabled by the hon. member which reads as follows:—

- (3) Will the Minister confirm whether the Hilton Hotel (owned by the Barbados Government) has recently completed construction of a Games Room?

The paper goes on, Sir, to state "where casino operations are likely to be implemented" and, Mr. Speaker, I can only conclude, Sir, that this is a breach of the Privileges of the House whereby the Newspaper has carried something completely different from what has been tabled before this Honourable House and, Mr. Speaker, I beg to draw this to your attention and hope that you will look into this matter urgently for me, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I take it that you want that it be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The matter complained of by the Hon. Minister undoubtedly is a misrepresentation of the proceedings, of the hon. member for St. Michael West, in this Honourable House.

There is no doubt that if this type of behaviour is to be allowed that freedom of this Honourable House would have been swept completely from under our feet. Undoubtedly, a *prima facie* case has been made out and I also move that the matter referred to by the Hon. Minister should be referred to the Committee of Privileges.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, another matter I would like to draw to Your Honour's attention and in the same paper on Thursday the 1st of October under the caption on page 3, "Speaker warns crowd at debate". Sir, I am quite sure that I have never seen a crowd in here. It goes on as follows, Sir, "persons in the public gallery of the House of Assembly were on Tuesday given a stern warning by Speaker Burton Hinds as to how they should behave after they clapped at the conclusion of the debate by opposition parliamentarian, Branford Taitt."

We know it was empty, Sir, so they applauded. However, "the Speaker told the large crowd that they were only there as visitors" and that is exactly what they are, Sir. They are visitors to the gallery, Sir, to listen to debates and not to take part and therefore, Sir, I would like to draw to your attention that this here is

a little puzzling to me also, Mr. Speaker, that the standards of journalism and those persons who come to Parliament to Report debates should really have a better idea of what is going on in here, Sir.

It goes on: You, Mr. Speaker, "told the large crowd that they were only there as visitors and that they were not a part of the proceedings of the House and that thumpings on the floor and clapping were for the members of the House. He said that if discipline was necessary, they would be dealt with by the Chair". 12.35 p.m.

"He added that if they wanted to remain they should follow the rules of the House and if they were not in agreement, they were quite free to leave the gallery."

Sir, I draw this also to Your Honour's attention, Sir, of the words which really bother me, Sir, "large crowd" was in the gallery listening to the debate, Mr. Speaker. I am prepared, Sir, to make this a document of the Honourable House and Sir, that this be dealt with at the Committee of Privileges.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what does the Rt. Hon. Member rise?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am on a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Arising out of what?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Out of the Honourable Member's speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: There can be no debate.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am not debating, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, there can be no point of order.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Alright, Sir. Thanks.

Mr. SPEAKER: Any reference to visitors to this Honourable House as a "crowd" is setting about deliberately to diminish the respect that is due to this Honourable House of ours. Visitors who come here file into this Honourable House in an orderly manner, they take their seats in a disciplined manner. There can be no rushing and pushing and cramming as you find in the market square, bus stand and I am indeed very grateful to the Honourable Minister for his invitation to this Honourable House to seek to uphold its dignity at all costs.

I have been about here, about this Honourable House for a few years, not so many that they cannot be remembered, but, I have never seen any pushing and shoving and things to be associated with crowd activity. This is a place of order. The newspaper — the item the newspaper complained of is indeed insulting in my view to this Honourable House and to our visitors who come here from time to time. I think this is a proper case for reference to the Committee of Privileges and I now order that this be done.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Order Number Three was called — To move the resumption of debate on a motion for the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Town and Country Planning Act.

Mr. SPEAKER: At the adjournment, the Honourable Member for St. Michael North was addressing the Chair, the Honourable Member may continue to do so, if he feels inclined to exercise his right any further.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, there were two matters which I had intended addressing this Honourable House, in relation to the matter now before this Honourable Chamber. Since the adjournment on the last occasion, I have satisfied myself on both those points and, therefore, Sir, I do not propose to continue my address on this Bill.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Honourable Member, Sir, as I understand it has concluded his address.

Mr. Speaker, I must rise to correct an impression that the Honourable Member gave on the last occasion. I am very happy that he has now had an opportunity, in the interim, to have read the Bill because this Bill seeks to remedy a number of defects in the Town and Country Planning Law and these defects were pointed out a considerable period of time ago, indeed, not only within the life of this Administration, but within the life of the previous Administration and it relates to a number of problems which have arisen under the Town and Country Planning Act, the most important of which, I think, Sir, relates to the amendment in the definition of what is required, what planning permission is required when agricultural pursuit is being carried on, on land.

All of us, as politicians in Barbados must have had instances where people who are our constituents or who are our acquaintances have drawn to our attention problems which have arisen as a result of sub-division of land for agricultural purposes and people who live in the neighbourhood suddenly find that the amenity of lands that they have bought before the sub-division of a surrounding area has been seriously threatened by the fact that such things as pig farms, chickens farms and things of that kind are suddenly erected, not necessarily in a contiguous area, but within such a short distance from their areas that they suffer greatly from the inevitable smells that arise from the carrying out of such occupations.

As I understand it, the Law was that once you carried out an agricultural activity on land that that was presumed to have been the use of the land from the time there was Town and Country Planning in Barbados and that you did not have to ask for permission to carry out that specific type of agricultural activity. Now, this section in the Act so redefines the definition of what is permitted agricultural use of land, as to remove from that general provision this type of agricultural activity. That is my understanding of one of the objects of that amendment.

There used to be a habit in this country when Town Planning first came into operation that where developments which resulted in a substantial change in the use of activity in an immediate neighbourhood were applied for, the Town Planner would circulate the neighbouring owners to solicit any views they may have on the type of activity which planning permission was applied for.

12.45 p.m.

Regrettably, and I say this as a matter of I believe the viewpoint of a very large number of Barbadians, regrettably this practice of circulating people in the vicinity of new contemplated development of the use of land has fallen into abeyance, and I think it is time that we bring this practice back into operation, because a very serious problem has been arising in Barbados in which many people believe that their right of ownership of property is such an all pervasive right that they can carry on any type of activity on their land to the annoyance of their neighbours, and that the only remedy the neighbours have is to take them into the law courts in a private nuisance action. I believe that this situation has reached such an important stage now that the citizens, particularly older citizens in our country who have no time with the law courts, they cannot afford the cost of getting into the law courts, but who have legitimate and genuine grievances in that when they acquired their land in the neighbourhood the neighbourhood was a neighbourhood which was a residential area, it was a

neighbourhood in which the noise factor was what one would regard as normal and tolerable, certainly up to 11 o'clock at night, and it is something that has caused a tremendous amount of concern, of people converting residential places into discos with modern amplifying units, carrying on so called nightclubs in the open, all hours of the night with blaring music to the annoyance of people in the surrounding areas, and a tremendous amount of frustration is building up. When you check with the Town and Country Planning Office they tell you that they have not given permission for that specific activity.

We also found that the enforcement procedure for breach of Town and Country Planning permission was so long-winded, time consuming, that the Town and Country Planning Office was unwilling to indulge in the utilisation of the powers. As a matter of fact, under the law the penalties were demolition of the building or things of that kind.

Another part of this amendment is to give an immediate power to the Town Planner to issue stop orders in relation to particular categories of activity. In short, it is felt that this immediate power granted to the Town Planner would spur some action by the Town Planning Office which would help to relieve these very serious problems that we have in relation to these types of activity, many of which have not been authorised, and this type of activity is growing. There is a breed of Barbadian who feel that they are entitled to disregard completely in pursuit of their own enjoyment or their own commercial interest any rights of other people. Perhaps there is a great misunderstanding of so called rights in this community in this respect.

The right of ownership of property has many many limitations. You cannot use property that you own in such a manner as to infringe the right of ownership of your next door neighbour or the right of ownership of people who come within the vicinity of any activities which offend the law of nuisance. Perhaps every now and again people should be reminded of this. In my own constituency, Sir, I have had tremendous amount of problems in this area, particularly in Maxwell Coast, very great problems. I have had representations made to me only two weeks ago of people who carry on so called nightclubs there, and people drive up into other people's gaps at night when the nightclubs are going on, listening to the music, carrying out sexual activities on other people's properties, all encouraged by this feeling now that you can do exactly as you like, exactly as you please, without taking into account other people's interest, but I hope that the Town Planning Department will deal with these people very firmly.

We also have, Sir, other problems that have been drawn to our attention but which were on the files for

a very long period of time. The proposed amendments were circulated to the Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee, which is a body that was called for under the Town and Country Planning Act. I do not believe that this body was activated fully during the regime of the Democratic Labour Party. I know that one of the first acts that this Government did when it came into power in relation to town planning was to appoint this body, because it is an attempt in Barbados to have a consultative advisory committee which is representative of people who have expertise in this area so that they can act as a sort of buffer between the public and the powers of the community invested in the Town and Country Planning Officer, and they can advise the Government on the operation of the laws relating to town and country planning. The Town and Country Planning Advisory Committee went through all of the proposed amendments that were put forward, and the Bill does reflect suggestions made by them in relation to these powers.

We also have other areas which I feel as a parliamentary representative should be brought to the attention of this House, because I have tried and tried and tried in all of my capacities to get action from the Town and Country Planning Department in this area, and it relates to a growing problem that we have in Barbados whereby people acquire lots in sub-divisions and allow those lots to be overgrown with bush and weeds, to be used as garbage dumps to the annoyance of surrounding owners, and all of the laws we have on the Statute Book, all of the powers that we have, all the money that we spend to administer these laws seem to go to waste in respect of the enforcement of the very specific laws which were designed to deal with these matters.
12.55 p.m.

This also has been a matter which has caused my constituents concern, and I am sure a large number of hon. members in here must have constituents who bring these matters to their attention, and it is only if we as politicians speak out and demand that the laws that have been passed with the concurrence of all of us should be enforced by the respective departments whose function it is to enforce them that we will get any action.

It is a shocking state of affairs that one cannot pick up the newspaper and not see complaint after complaint being drawn to the attention of the authorities in Barbados that this is a very serious problem which is occurring in our community. I confess that I have raised it at all levels; perhaps now we have raised it at the highest level in here we will get some action. It is a shocking scandal that in this community we permit people, very often they are not in Barbados, to think so little of the country, that they have bought a plot of land, they leave it here, they go abroad and leave the rest of the community of

Barbados to have to put up with overgrown bush, derelict buildings and insanitary conditions on those lots, and despite the fact that there are laws on the Statute Book, the people who have to administer the laws do not carry out their functions. Our Constitution, Sir, ties the hands of politicians in this respect. A politician can only exhort; a politician can only beseech, a politician can only point out that the law is there. The people who have to carry out the law should take their duties seriously in this respect. My constituents have drawn it to my Ministry's attention, they have written to the newspaper, they have written to the Ministry of Health, they have written to the Ministry of Town Planning, they have written all around, and there is absolutely no action taken on this. There is no will, Mr. Speaker, to carry out the laws, and as legislators we must remind the people whose function it is that the taxpayers' money is the money that pays them their salaries and they must carry out their duties.

Another important area, Sir, that is defective in relation to this issue is that there are still complaints in Barbados, despite that which has been done under this administration to greatly improve the speeding up of planning decisions, that the period of time that it takes to get planning decisions is a little long. There has been a great improvement, but there are still instances where specific complaints are made to all of us that it takes an unreasonable period of time to get planning decisions, and attention is also drawn to us that some people are able to get a decision in record time. Now we have had instances of that too. I hope, Sir, that as a result of improving these powers here in relation to the stop orders that a number of these nuisances, a number of these irritations to the general public in Barbados will cease. Let us not fool ourselves; this is not a question relating to one particular segment or class of the community. I have among my constituents people of all classes. All of them have drawn to my attention this frustration that arises where their livelihood, their life, their quality of life is seriously impaired by the failure of some people in other parts of their neighbourhood to act in a good neighbourly fashion.

We are reaching the stage in Barbados where we must educate our people to understand that with the limited land mass that we have, we will be increasingly making more intensive use of land in that we will be having more and more either town house or condominium development type schemes. Now they can only operate in communities in which people have a clear understanding that property ownership has obligations too, that you are entitled to enjoy your property, but you must not enjoy it in such a manner as to infringe the enjoyment of other people. That is a very important point, because increasingly we shall have to make use of this type of ownership structure in house building in Barbados, and it will relate not only to higher income groups; it will relate

to all income groups in Barbados. The time is gradually coming when this will become the representative type of ownership in Barbados. This is a phenomena that has occurred not only here. It has occurred all over the world.

The other very important area that the Bill seeks to deal with, Mr. Speaker, is to limit the life of planning permission. Now for the life of me I could not understand the objections that were raised originally by the hon. member for St. Michael North. For a long period of time it was recognised that if you are to operate your planning law within the context of a physical development plan, you have to concede that there will be a periodic need to review this physical development plan. Under our Constitution the Government has to pay compensation not only where it acquires land, but also where it deprives a person of the use for which they have planning permission, because if you prohibit the use for which the permission has already been granted, you have to get compensation; but as we have to review our physical development plan, a clear break on the freedom to review, that is pre-existing permission, and people buy land, get planning permission, some pieces of land have as many as seven different types of planning permission in relation to that particular piece of land, but they do not carry it out within the development plan period. They wait and hold trying to speculate with this particular piece of land.

The law therefore has to be amended to limit the life of that planning permission. It does not prevent people from re-applying after the expiry of the particular period of time, but when they re-apply the Town Planner is in a position to treat the matter as a new application and to treat it in the light of the requirements under the physical development plan, the project physical development plan and the change of circumstances which has occurred since the previous planning permission had been granted. This is very important. It does not take away anything. It only ensures that the community is not held up to ransom by people who have bought land, who have got planning permission and who have no intention of carrying out the particular development within a reasonable time span. So that when the physical development plan is reviewed and these planning permissions have expired, there is freedom to look at the best community use of the land. That is a very important point that I think we should remember.

1.05 p.m.

All in all, Sir, these amendments to the Town and Country Planning Act are amendments designed to cure defects in the operation of the Bill to create new machinery to ensure that teeth is put into the reinforcement of the Planning Legislation. I believe, Sir, that Town Planning has now been in operation in Barbados since

1959. There was an Interim Control Bill on Town Planning in Barbados since 1959.

As a whole, the community has accepted the concept of Town Planning. We have, I believe, now reached the stage where what is needed is to ensure that the few remaining people who believe that they can do as they like with their properties, they should be reminded that the ownership of property in any community is subject to obligations not only with respect to other owners of land but also to the obligations of the community as a whole, Sir.

I have great pleasure, Sir, in supporting this piece of legislation.

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

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are a couple of points which I would like to reply to. The hon. member for St. Michael North did raise a few questions. In fact, he invited explanations to two questions which he today has no longer sought further explanations. I suppose it was due to my explaining to him last week that there were a few matters that he should have known plus I did explain the two questions to him so I am very glad to hear him say that the explanation was quite satisfactory.

I take the hon. member for St. Philip North's point that there is concern about the cramped conditions that exist at the Town Planning Department. This situation was so for a number of years. I myself have visited the Town Planning Department and I too agree that there is something which must be done to assist the congested situation. It is totally impossible for the Town Planning Department to continue to operate bearing in mind that the volume of work is increasing and files are thrown all around the place. There are inadequate cupboards and cabinets for the keeping of such files.

I consider that the keeping of files especially in the Town Planning Department is of vital importance for the future planning of Barbados and I wish to give the hon. member and this Honourable Chamber the assurance that steps are already on the way or being undertaken to relieve this situation.

I too have realised that a number of persons have complained about the length of time which they have to wait for planning permission but on the other hand there are some persons who tend to have pretty close friends in the Department who are able to have their plans speeded up at a very minimal time. I hope that some kind of equilibrium will be brought to this particular situation and I am hoping that when the physical improvement takes place that all applications will be treated within as short a space of time as possible.

The question raised by the hon. member for St. George North about the decisions that were taken — I suppose he is referring to decisions against certain developments in Charles Rowe Bridge. I wish to give him the assurance that from time to time we will be looking at those matters and there are some that can be reviewed depending on circumstances.

There is the Review Committee which he should be aware of and I hope that those who feel aggrieved by decisions taken by the Town Planning Department will invite the Minister to consider those decisions. I want to give him the assurance that all matters dealing with decisions taken by that Department will be looked at with a view to satisfying both parties.

The Hon. Deputy Prime Minister has raised some very valid points which I hope that not only this Honourable Chamber takes a very serious look at but the country as a whole, the question of debushing. I am very, very concerned about lots that are left idle, over-grown by shrubs, weeds and trees, breeding rats and not only that but you have buildings that have been left there by people who sometimes have gone out of the country.

As far as these lots which are over-grown by trees, shrubs and so on are concerned, I want to make it abundantly clear that that is not the responsibility of my Ministry. This is the responsibility of the Ministry of Health and I do hope that the Ministry of Health will look into that area but where you find derelict buildings I want to sound a word of warning to those persons who have derelict buildings, persons who have left derelict buildings only to pose threats and hazards to the breeding of rats. I have taken a very firm stand on this and I have asked the Chief Town Planner who is empowered under the Act to execute as forcibly as possible the powers which he has.

From my Ministry's point of view, we are hoping to acquire those lots and those houses and clear them or we intend to build something on the houses and sell them. This is how this Ministry intends to deal with derelict buildings. Derelict buildings have caused nuisances not only in Barbados but in other countries. France has taken the same approach to the one I have disclosed in here in buying over the spots and developing them but even although there has been a very good programme there the whole question of derelict buildings has not yet been altogether solved.

I am appealing to those persons who have left those derelict buildings to do something about them because they pose a nuisance and we have been getting a number of complaints and it is tantamount to not taking care of their responsibility to society. We cannot have people ignoring their responsibility and causing other people lots of concern.

The Deputy Prime Minister has raised another interesting point and I want to tell him and tell this Honourable Chamber that we realise that land is a very scarce commodity and we have been looking at how best we can maximise the use of land and to this end the Barbados Labour Party in its Manifesto has clearly stated its policy in respect of this situation. That is why houses that are built at Rosemont, a phase at Wildey, Bottom Close and Haynesville will be sold to prospective tenants.
1.15 p.m.

I have got a draft of the conveyance which would give people who rented terrace houses the opportunity to purchase those units. The aim of this policy is to encourage those people to buy houses leasehold. It is a matter now occupying my Ministry and very shortly, within a matter of weeks, the public will have the opportunity to purchase those houses at Rosemont.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Bill has been well canvassed both by the Town Planning Committee and the town planning society. All of them have made very valuable reports and as I said when I introduced this Bill, the aim is to tighten up planning control in Barbados. There is another Bill which will come before this Honourable Chamber later today, hopefully, and together with this Bill, will go a long way towards planning control in this island.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have touched on all the points raised and I now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

On the motion of Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW 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.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses One and Two inclusive were called and passed.

Clause Three was called.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause Three stand part.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is.....

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, Clause Three removes the prior provision of the time limit within which the Chief Town Planner could give notice of the time within which a matter could be dealt with. I wonder if this is a wise thing to do at this time, since we are trying to improve the efficiency in building. Clause 3(c). You get the point I am making. The original Section 17(2)(c) reads:

“for requiring the Chief Town Planner to give to any applicant for planning permission, within such time as may be prescribed by the Order.”

That time limit is now removed. The Chief Town Planner is not required to reply within a specific time. I wonder if that is a wise thing to do now that you are trying to improve the efficiency in building.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the Act has been structured to give the applicant an automatic right if his application is not dealt with within two months for referring that to the Minister for adjudication to the Advisory Panel. To this extent, the period of time is statutory. All this Section does is to spell out in clear language the provision.

I would tell the Honourable Member that when I had responsibility for Town Planning, what I administered was to compel the Chief Town Planner to submit to me in 30 days a list of all the applications which had come to him setting out in the form, the time he had the applications, the time he dealt with them and reasons why there was any delay in dealing with them and we were able to keep an exact time on what was happening with specific applications. I believe that is the format still being used, 65% were dealt with within the specific period and 35% were not dealt with because some Ministry would hold them up. It might be the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Communications and Works. What we did was to set up a meeting once a month with all persons concerned and ask officials to have their homework done and we improved that figure somewhat to 75% – 80%. The former Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands, now Honourable Minister for Parliamentary Affairs had kept up the same procedure of that regular meeting.

The other thing we did was that we changed the Regulations – those Regulations are still in force – where we took away from Ministers in other departments the right to pass town planning permission. The application would leave, say, the Ministry of Home Affairs and go to the Ministry of Agriculture and the Chief Agricultural Officer or a Technical Officer would give an opinion on whether the land should be changed to agricultural use or should not be changed. This held up the procedure,

I am sure, in the Town and Country Planning department. I do not know what it feels like now, I only dealt with it for about one and a half years and asked to be relieved of it because it is a very onerous duty to have with other duties. In fact, I think it is now where it should be, in the Ministry of Housing and Lands, but, to have it tied on to other Ministries was a little bit unfair to the Ministers concerned. We had a system where there was this greater efficiency.

So that, although my friend is quite correct to raise the point, I believe that within the provisions, there are enough safeguards to ensure that applications are dealt with speedily and also, if the administrative machinery is set up, we should be able to maintain about an average of 75% – 80% of the applications being dealt with within a period of two months, which is the statutory period called for.

1.25 p.m.

There will be one or two that you will always have problems with, Sir, sometimes because the applicants themselves did not send in the relevant information. Sometimes that is also lacking, there will always be those, but I do not think the change is as deleterious as it might look at first sight to my friend, the hon. member for St. Philip North, Sir.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I believe the hon. member who has just sat down raised some very pertinent points which I believe are unknown to the population generally when dealing with Town and Country Planning applications. Now, the hon. member said that sometimes the hold up occurs between the Ministry of Communications and Works, and in other cases between the Ministry of Agriculture. I have had the opportunity to sit in both of these Ministries and I believe that at this point in time there is a very serious need for a meeting between the Town and Country Planning Division, the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Communications and Works to come to a consensus as to what they require, what is needed before any application can be passed. I do not what to say whether two months is an appropriate time for an application to be dealt with or not, that is the decision which must be taken after the relevant authorities or institutions have met and decided what is the best time they think for coming to a decision based on the requirements of each Department.

There are serious problems existing in all the Departments dealing with Town and Country Planning applications, Mr. Chairman. In the Ministry of Communications and Works the file has got to be dealt with by the Waterworks Department, which is now the Water Authority, because it has to relate to whether there is enough provision for water in the particular area, whether there is need for planning, whether there is need for the enlargement of water mains, etc. and that also comes

under the Ministry of Communications and Works, and the decision would have to be linked with any decision being given out of the Ministry.

In the Ministry of Communications and Works itself, Mr. Chairman, the decision is based on whether or not the proposed roads mesh correctly with the general highway in the area. The technicians at the Ministry of Communications and Works are very peculiar, very fanciful over the roadwork and how private developers come into or mix in with their roads. We have an example in which the Town Planning Department has issued a permission for a development to be carried on in Peterkins Road. It is after flooding occurs, and this is the problem, that many private developers seek to use the cheapest possible method of putting in roads, putting in wells, etc. and when it is passed by Town and Country Planning, then the resulting problems fall with the Ministry of Communications and Works to remedy the defects created by the developers, and it then becomes a nuisance to the land owner who has bought on to the development.

If you take the whole Wotton district, that whole area going up to the junction by Balls, at the present moment we estimated in the Ministry of Communications and Works that you would have to spend something like five to six million dollars to correct the problems which have been created by developers developing land throughout that area. Government wanted to put up a school at Wotton, and when it came to us even the private consultants were telling the Ministry of Communications and Works we will build a school, we will design a road, but you must cure the flooding problem that is existing in the area. This is why I said that there is a serious need for consultation, a meeting between the various departments to come to one general rule as to what we need for development today.

In any housing development, let me put it this way, starting from Husbands, would you believe, Mr. Chairman, that the Housing Authority has bought over all the spots in Husbands from CDC, as it was called before, but retained the roads, the verge and the suckwells? But when flooding occurs in the Oxnards and Husbands area, the only person they resort to is the Ministry of Communications and Works, because everybody in Barbados believes that every time there is flooding the only person who is responsible for clearing the defect is the Ministry of Communications and Works.

We have tried to impress upon the Town Planning Department, we have tried to impress upon National Housing that in order to correct the flooding problems in Barbados wells must now be sunk to between 80 and 90 feet. At the minute every developer sinks a well to 40 feet, and as I said, in the whole Wotton area, that whole area stretching back to Balls, you have found that the

wells in that area are no deeper than 40 feet, after the development has been passed, after it has been sold out, after the roads have been eroded, then MCW is required to go in and cure the defects which should have been cured from the beginning.

When I was there, I suggested to the Town and Country Planning Department that we should have a stage inspection of every development. I said when you are putting in roads, as soon as they cut down to base they should be made to call on the Ministry of Communications and Works for an inspection to show that they have gone down to our specifications. When you put in your various portions, when you are ready to finish off the road, each section should have been inspected. The wells should have been inspected by us, but everybody is saying that will take too long. The result is that every development you can name — Eden Lodge, coming back to Elizabeth Park — every one of them within two years of construction you will find that everybody then refers to the Ministry of Communications and Works to correct the defects which were there from the inception.

The hon. member for Christ Church East will tell you of a problem he has in his constituency, that a whole development has been developed in Ealing Grove and Ealing Park where the road has fallen down in holes, not holes but wells, less than two years after they have got a certificate of compliance, and the hon. member was killing me because I could not go out and fix it right away. These are problems which could have been avoided, provided that there had been the necessary consultation or an agreed principle between the various departments dealing with land development in this country.

There is another concept, Mr. Chairman. Look at gutters, drains. A private developer will put in a drain from either a development to the main road or off somebody's property to correct a drainage problem. Up to this day nobody knows who is responsible clearly for drains in this country. If the private developer puts them in, nobody cleans them thereafter, you will hear it is the Ministry of Health to clean them, or somebody says no, it is the Ministry of Communications and Works to look after them. Nobody has a clear idea of what is to be done, and these are matters that need to be cleared up before we get into further problems. All the flooding we have in Barbados is a result of planners developing development areas without taking into consideration the disposal of the excess water.

If you build in what was a natural water course, you have to throw the water somewhere else. Go up there by "Big B" in Worthing. Every time it rains that area is flooded out simply because a hotel has been built on the natural water course and no provision was made for the disposal of the flood waters. Up by Blue Waters you have

the same problem, because the area has been built up with no consideration for the disposal of the water. 1.35 p.m.

When we have to go to a land owner, the Government finds itself in a position of having to acquire some other person's land who was enjoying nice peaceful occupation of his land without flooding, but now you have to acquire their land to relieve flooding created by somebody else.

Go to John's Plain in St. James, a development which was passed as a private development where the land has been sold, but the verge, the roads and all such like have been retained in the ownership of the developer. Now the people in John's Plain complained to my Ministry and I told them at the time that since you bought the land and you have not been sold the road, the verge, etc., the people owning that have a duty to you to give you reasonable access to your property. Do you know what they said to me? We want you as the Government to do something and then we will go back to the owners. But John's Plain has not been fully sold out as yet. There is still a firm owning the land in John's Plain. The roads belong to them, the verge belongs to them. They had a Housing Committee which was supposed to cut the trees, but I believe it was to be a private area where only certain people were supposed to own land up there. Unfortunately, as I have been told, somebody crept in and has broken the original plan, and they now expect the Government to do it, and this is why I say and I repeat that it is time that the various departments get together and come up with a set of rules which should be published so that every developer would know what is expected of them before they put a plan into the Town and Country Planning Department.

Take the Ministry of Agriculture. There are serious problems in the Ministry of Agriculture between the Chief Agricultural Officer and the other technicians as to where should be developed and where should not be developed. When a file comes to that department it invariably lands on the Minister's desk because there are two sets of opinions. One set of officers go out and come back and say it is marginal land, it is expensive to work, it is low producing and therefore they would agree that it be taken out of agriculture. Another set of officers would say "Oh no, you can grow nuts on it or you can grow pangola grass or you can do so and so." So you have two decisions. Now it is the poor Minister down the line that has to make up his mind which side he is going to fall on, and this is the problem we face, Mr. Chairman.

If we had a set of guidelines, then I believe everybody submitting plans to Town and Country Planning would at least know reasonably well what is expected of

them, and that would be my recommendation, Mr. Chairman. Not only that. There is another point I want to raise, the question of persons not connected to land having it passed through Town and Country Planning Department. (*Asides*) You know something I have always wondered! I do not know if you understand which side of the House you are on. If the Chairman has not stopped me, how do you want to stop me? Are you afraid of something? I can talk about housing areas. I can talk about National Housing; I can talk a lot more about National Housing.

Mr. Chairman, I am clearing up issues which have been raised by an hon. member on this side, and he has told me to stop talking. Do you want me to talk about National Housing that does not apply to anybody for planning permission? Or that all the problems of flooding in this country have come about by the sloppy planning of National Housing during his era, or how he was Minister when they bought over Oxnards and Husbands and then he phoned me and begged to take over the wells and drains? So what is he talking about?

Mr. Chairman, I am begging the Minister responsible to take careful note of what I have said and make sure that the several departments of Government, Town Planning, Agriculture, Communications and Works, the Water Authority and the Ministry of Health sit down together and come up with a set of criteria, a set of rules, principles that everybody will know how to work when applying to Town and Country Planning. Other than that we will always have the complaints, we will always have the problems. I can tell you developments that have been passed and certain lots cannot be built on because the Town Planner has passed a part of the development and left a part in abeyance so if they are going to change their decision within a certain time, there must be rules and regulations, and developers must know precisely what they are dealing with when they have to deal with that particular department.

The question that Clause 3 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 4 was called and passed.

Clause 5 was called.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, in moving that this Clause stand part, there is a repeal here and it makes it obligatory for the Chief Town Planner to issue a decision within a two months' period.

I beg to move that Clause 5 stand part.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

X Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I merely want to raise a matter here in respect of this Clause. As a matter of fact, from what we have heard from both hon. members on the back bench, it would appear to me that two months is indeed too short a period to require the Town Planning Officer to make a decision and communicate such decision to the applicant. What in fact we are doing is removing after two months the applications automatically from the Town Planning Department and referring them to the Minister responsible.

Now we have heard today the problems that do exist when the files are referred from one Ministry to another and do not reach back to Chief Town Planner's office in time to make a decision. The procedure as it now operates is that the Chief Town Planner has a discretion beyond the two months' period. If after the file has done its rounds and a two months' period has elapsed, the Town Planner when he is ready to make a decision can write the applicant and ask him for an extension of time. Now this removes that kind of discretionary power from the Chief Town Planner and what in fact this Clause does is to make it obligatory that all such applications, so long as they exceed the two months' period for whatever reason — it may not be the fault of the applicant, it might be just a question of consultation between Ministries — must be referred to the Minister.

I wonder what is the real reason for referring this to the Minister and taking away from the Chief Town Planner that discretionary power which he had for issuing a decision outside of the time while all that the Chief Town Planner really did was that he wrote to the applicant and asked the applicant for an extension of time within which to make a decision. I would like to know what is the reason for removing this from the Chief Town Planner.

X Hon. H. deB. FORDE: When this Bill was drafted during the time that I had responsibility for the Ministry of the Attorney General, the recommendation came from the Town and Country Planning Advisory Council which advises the Minister after taking consultation with the Chief Town Planner that this provision would be one way of improving the efficiency of the Town Planning Office, and the Town Planner sits on that Committee. You had to have a cut off time and date. It does not prevent the Town Planner from getting the applicant's consent of a further extension of time a little later, but it does give a number of applicants who were complaining an opportunity to sue them to bring the matter to an appellate tribunal or to get the Town Planner to do something about it, and this was one of the reasons strongly advanced in the recommendations coming from that Committee, and with no one dissenting, the Town Planner did not disagree with this recommendation because his contention was that the area of default was not really with him, but was somewhere else, and it would

give him an opportunity to put forward his reasons for the default. So I do not think you will find that a further extension of time would help one way or another.
1.45 p.m.

In my view I think some applicants will start bombarding the Ministers and what is more before the statutory period of time. Very frequently you have to say to them you must go through the procedure and wait for the statutory period of time. Some applicants did so.

There were other legitimate cases who would have to wait and they were being met with the fact that you file in this place and you file somewhere else. Sometimes the Departments would be blaming each other and it would be better that the matter should go to the Advisory Committee, sorry, to the Planner.

The hon. member says the Minister. Yes. In the last resort it comes to the Minister but there is no appeal. It is treated as though it is an application for review. Not that the Minister deals with it *de novo*. It is treated as a refusal and an application for review and there is none of these cases that is treated by the Minister *de novo*. They all go before a Tribunal which is headed by Lawyers usually or somebody qualified, a Town Planner, and at least one other person, usually two, and invariably their recommendations are dealt with if it becomes necessary.

It does not make it longer, Sir. The hon. member may think that it makes it longer but I found again, this is my experience, that there were enough panels that you could get a decision from that panel from the time the appeal was in in less than two or three weeks and I believe during the regime of the Hon. Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and I am hoping during the regime of the present Minister.

When I was there, Sir, applications were dealt with extremely speedily, very very speedily, Sir, and as I said, I do not think that this recommendation which I accepted during my period of time, I thought it was a useful recommendation to be well considered. I saw the arguments on both sides and that is why I believe the change was made, Sir.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I take the advice of the former Minister who dealt with the particular Portfolio but my experiences and my thinking on this is that you are holding up hope to the applicant which is not really going to be meaningful in that on those applications on those panels, the Town Planner's representative is still asked for his input and the reasoning from the Town Planner for the decision one way or another.

Therefore my contention is that the Town Planner will have to reach a decision by the time he comes to the panel or to advise the panel and therefore I know that this is one of the causes for the complaint of the Officers and that two months was not long enough and in quite a few cases I am heartened to hear that 65% of the applications have been dealt with within a time.

In a few cases there have been the remainder of the decisions being ready in another four to five weeks and they are right in asking for this Commission so I would say that one should have a serious look at it and personally I think that this is holding out hope to the applicant that the process would be dealt with so much faster than if you went through the normal channels.

The question that Clause 5 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 6 was called.

Hon. DeL. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, Clause 6 being Section 32, the fairly new Section 32 (a) to 32 (e). In introducing this Bill on the Second Reading I was at pains to explain why we have this new Section. It deals with the duration and the time with which permission is granted and the time which the developer is allowed to carry out the development. I do not think that there is any problem or there should be any questions on this since the hon. member for St. Michael North did raise a question on it and I think he is satisfied with the explanation.

I beg to move, Mr. Chairman, that Clause 6 stand part.

One other point, Mr. Chairman. I want to move that there be a deletion of page 9, 32 (b). It should read "The Chief Town Planner may, having regard to the development plan and any other material considerations, in relation to any outline planning permission to which subsection (3) applies, give notice." I wish to move that the word "to" be deleted.

The question that Clause 6 as amended stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 7 was called.

Hon. DeL. BRADSHAW: I beg to move that Clause 7 stand part. This deals with the provision of a 28-day life for the enforcement of this.

The question that Clause 7 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clauses 8 to 10 inclusive were called and passed.
1.55 p.m.

Clause 11 was called.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, in moving that Clause 11 stand part, I would like to give an explanation to this. It is to empower the Chief Town Planner to inspect documents.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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

Clause 12 was called.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that Clause 12 stand part.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Clause.....

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Just one observation. I notice that the penalty in Clause 12 for withholding information or misstatement is \$500 while the penalty in Clause 11 non production of plans is only \$100. In Clause 11 the penalty for non production of documents is \$100, while Clause 12 if you withhold information, the penalty is \$500. I wonder why there is that difference between the two penalties. (ASIDES)

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Could the Honourable Member repeat the question.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, in Clause 11: "Any person upon whom a notice under subsection (3) is served who without reasonable excuse fails to produce for inspection any document or plan mentioned in the notice is guilty of an offence and is liable on summary conviction to a fine of one hundred dollars."

In Clause 12 any person who withholds or makes misstatements is subject to a penalty of \$500.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: I suppose the Honourable Member, if you were to take Section 36 and Section 78, this is a provision for harsher fines for breaching the legislation. (ASIDES) You interpret it similar offence, but I think that the legal luminaries would think that there are two different things.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Sir, one is for inspection of documents and the other is for failing to give any information whatsoever in relation to an interest in land and the question of fines there, I do not think really is that

great, the difference between them. Although, if the Honourable Minister so pleases, it is possible to put the fine under the new Section 11 — if he so pleases — to the same \$500 to standardise them. They are of a similar nature, but, there is not a substantial point in that, Sir.

We have been trying — again, when I was in the Ministry, we tried to standardise penalties as much as possible. Perhaps you may want to recommit 11 and put it at the same \$500.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Clause 12 stand part.....

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

I am advised that it is 2.00 o'clock. I must report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

The question that the Chairman report progress and ask for leave to sit again was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

Mr. SPEAKER: The time is now 2.00 o'clock.

SUSPENSION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting 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. I am advised that there are no replies to questions ready. As a consequence, we go into Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Order Number One.

RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THANKS TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL FOR THE THRONE SPEECH OF TUESDAY 21ST JULY 1981, NOTING THE CONTENTS OF THAT SPEECH, AND CALLING UPON GOVERNMENT TO ESTABLISH A COMPETENT AND IMPARTIAL TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE CONDITIONS PREVAILING IN BARBADOS AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THEIR AMELIORATION

Order Number One was called — To move the passing of a Resolution expressing thanks to His Excellency the

Governor General for the Throne Speech of Tuesday 21st July 1981, noting the contents of that Speech, and calling upon Government to establish a competent and impartial task force to study the conditions prevailing in Barbados and make recommendations for their amelioration.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am moving the passing of the resolution referred to, the exact terms of which is as follows:

"That this Honourable House of Assembly expresses thanks to His Excellency the Governor General for the Throne Speech so graciously delivered to Parliament on Tuesday, 21st July, 1981 takes note of the contents of that speech, regrets that the Government is still persisting in policies which are contributing to a serious deterioration in the economic, social, political and cultural position of the people of Barbados and calls upon the Government to establish a highly competent and impartial task force to study the conditions prevailing in Barbados and make recommendations for their amelioration."

Courtesy is an essential part of our parliamentary traditions and it is only fitting that when the Governor General comes to Parliament to deliver the Throne Speech that this Honourable Chamber should courteously extend thanks to him for having delivered that Throne Speech and so, it is in keeping with these traditions of courtesy that this resolution seeks to express thanks to the Governor General on that particular occasion. I do not think that there would be any disagreement with that particular aspect of the resolution. It is, of course, in other Parliaments, particularly the Parliament at Westminster that such motions of thanks are moved by the Government and that it is the Government, in Government's time which sets aside the opportunity for debate. But, inasmuch as this has not been the practice or the.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Clerk, kindly get the Marshall to see if he could do something about this noise in the ante-room. The noise is disturbing this Honourable House.

Mr. SANDIFORD:.....Inasmuch as on this occasion and indeed, on the last occasion this was not done, therefore, the Opposition is moving a motion, in the terms that it has been moved. I think the Governor General read the Speech and he did so in fine diction and in elegant terms and we are all pleased to see that he was in such fine fettle.

Mr. Speaker, it is well-known that the Speech was prepared by the Government and it is also well-known

that it represents Government's proposals over this Session, of Parliament, it represents Government's proposals for the development of this country and those plans that it hopes to implement. This resolution is to give this Parliament an opportunity, this Honourable House of Assembly an opportunity to examine those programmes and to have a wide ranging discussion on the implications of the proposals that the Government has laid before us. 2.55 p.m.

In doing so we will be registering our particular feeling that this House of Assembly is committed to carrying out one of its main functions, and that is a serious examination and a scrutiny of the proposals brought down by the Executive, that is, the Cabinet, and the Government for the development of this country. I am a committed parliamentarian and I wish of course to ensure not only that the Government is kept on its toes, but that the Opposition in all circumstances where the Government defaults in any way to ensure that the Government is kept on its toes.

I shall be arguing first of all that Barbados is experiencing a serious crisis in its public affairs as well as in those areas where public affairs impinge upon the lives of individuals. I shall be arguing, secondly, that the root causes of our present problems must be examined in depth and must be examined comprehensively if we are to understand the nature of the problem confronting us. We shall be arguing, thirdly, that the policies of the Government cannot be exempted from a measure of blame in terms of the present crisis that we are experiencing, and fourthly, I shall be arguing that the best way to study this crisis and to understand the nature of the problem would be by means of the establishment of a highly competent task force to carry out an examination of the problems that we refer to, a highly competent and impartial task force.

Now, as far as the crisis is concerned, the first point I shall be addressing my mind to, I do not think that I need to spend much time on this, because even the Government spokesmen now acknowledge that Barbados is experiencing a crisis. There was a time when perhaps they might not have wished to use those particular words and they would venture into all kinds of circumlocution and all kinds of roundabout expressions to describe the present situation and the present state in which the country finds itself, but I think it is recognised generally by the populace of this country that where any crisis — and I would like to use some of the words by Government spokesmen in identifying this crisis and in trying to set the kind of limits as far as the Government sees it of the present crisis, but a rose by any other name is also or is still a rose — but let me look at the Throne Speech to identify the nature of this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to look at the proposals that were put forward. If I go to the statement by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning, as he termed it, financial proposals and the state of the economy, delivered to this Hon. Chamber some weeks ago, he described the situation in Barbados as one in which the economy is experiencing strong recessionary pressures. Note the term, strong recessionary pressures. Now, recessionary pressures are bad in any language, and when you add the word "strong" to the recessionary pressures I think that is ample indication that the situation is in crisis, strong recessionary pressures.

Then a little later on in the speech the Prime Minister referred to the prevailing economic difficulties, yet another indication that things are bad in this country, prevailing economic difficulties. We are told that these strong recessionary pressures and these prevailing economic difficulties are evidenced in the fall in the rate of growth, of output, there is a deterioration in the balance of payments and also in the condition of public finances. Any one of these by themselves would represent a serious blow to the economy and the public affairs in this country when combined with these things which so conjointly meet, as Shakespeare says in one of his many plays, it must be Julius Caesar, I believe, I think it indicates a measure of crisis. Of course, in order to keep intact the Government's position and to retain some continuity in the economic threads, the Prime Minister did say that these current problems, and I am quoting from page 1 of that statement: "The Government is satisfied that our Island's current problems are not the result of any basic flaws in the development strategy to which we are committed and it is therefore not Government's intention to depart from the economic path which the country has followed,...." (Hon. Dr. CHELTENHAM: With success).
3.05 p.m.

Of course, "with success" is missing from that particular part of it. May be that was added on the political platform, but of course that is an assertion just as in Britain Margaret Thatcher declares that she is not moving from her particular economic mix of policies and not moving from Thatcherism; so our Prime Minister here says "no basic flaws in the Government's economic and developmental strategies". Of course, that in itself is open to question and should be open to examination because it may be that in the analysis it would be shown or it might be shown that there is need for a qualification of the overall economic strategies.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is also indicated and it is common knowledge that sugar is badly affected. I do not think there is any need to conceal this or to hide it. Sugar is such an important sector of the economy that we cannot just sit by and hope that things will get better.

The situation calls for examination. Sugar is a substantial employer of people in this country. It is a major user of capital funds. It is an important client of banking institutions in this country and whatever happens to that particular sector therefore has spill over effects in the entire economy. It is limited not only to the sugar sector itself, but to the entire economy. If we are experiencing these difficulties, it is necessary, it is important that we should examine it.

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot have this heckling of the hon. member who is addressing the Chair.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I know that you will protect me and protect all hon. members. We are also told that tourism is down. The indicators coming in respect of the tourism sector are certainly not good. Whether it comes from those who manage the tourist plants, whether it comes from those who utilise tourist facilities here or whether it comes from those who are publicists and who comment upon the developments, there are serious danger signs as far as that particular sector is concerned.

We are told that energy production is also down. There is a decline in the production of crude oil in this country and that also is a matter of serious concern in this country. Our balance of payments is a cause for deep concern, and indeed the measures that have been introduced are directed towards dealing with that particular aspect of the public finances of this country. Inflation continues to be a worrying problem and that again is well documented, although our statistics vary from those of the Government, and we believe that the rate of inflation is sometimes higher than that rate identified by Government sources.

All of these matters to which I am making reference, Mr. Speaker, indicate a serious situation in this country. But that is not the extent of it. Crime is an important matter in this country and that is recognised by certain steps which have been taken and certain comments which have been made. It is a major problem. There seems to be a growing disorder in this country in which respect for the law, respect for the rules and the conventions which hold the society together all seem to be in some kind of crisis, and it is a matter that we cannot overlook. There seems to be a break down, Mr. Speaker, in family relationships, a break down in the goodwill that should exist between person and person, an increase apparently in the hostility of man to man and of man to woman. There seems to be a decline in the former standards of cleanliness that used to prevail in this country, and some of the Government officials themselves have commented on how unclean the whole country seems to be at the moment.

I do not think that I need to identify any other areas to show that when we put all of these areas together that they tend to represent a major combination of factors facing this country. There is need for an examination of all of these things. They need to be examined in depth and over the course of this debate my colleagues and myself will be examining the major areas and the major contributants to this critical situation and we will be calling upon the Government to take the necessary measures to study the matter in depth and to set up the necessary machinery whereby it can be studied in depth and some proposals and recommendations raised.

Now what we are proposing is that a task force should be set up and we are saying that that task force should have raw terms to study the present situation in this country and come up with proposals. Now we do not envisage that this is a matter to which solutions can be provided in one week. That is the responsibility of the Government to take short term measures to deal with problems as they arise, but we are calling for an indepth study which will take much more time, and we are calling for a broad-based body of persons including persons with qualifications, let us say, in the area of economics, in the area of sociology or social psychology, in the area of engineering or whatever it maybe, but we need a broad-based body with a variety of skills and backed up by a supporting administrative team to study this major problem.

Now I know that the Government seems to be a bit worried about the establishment of a task force. My friend the hon. member for Christ Church East, I believe, recently in a statement which I believe was due more to misguided mush than to any particular fundamental disagreement with the general principle, said that the Government is the task force. I think our best answer to that is to examine the record of the Government itself, because the Government itself is on record as saying that they need the expertise of people in this country to contribute towards the solution of the problems which may lead to a better Barbados.

3.15 p.m.

I believe it was in the 1977 Budget when the Prime Minister was floating around the idea of setting up a Tripartite Committee, I believe, or setting up — I cannot remember what was the name of the thing — the National Economic Council that apparently was still-born. I do not hear anything about that but he did say that it was necessary to draw upon the experience of persons in this community.

I believe the Minister of Agriculture himself recognises the contribution that persons with expertise are able to make and I would like to congratulate him certainly on the Chairman and other members whom he has appointed to the management of the Barbados

Marketing Corporation. He himself recognises the need to draw upon the skills in the community towards the solutions of these problems so I do not think the Government needs to take its pride and to believe that this is a measure that cannot meet with its approval and in a sense the setting up of a Task Force would somehow or another derogate from the authority of the Government.

They have set up a variety of Commissions. They have set up Duffus. They have set up a Commission on Gambling. They have set up a Commission on Dodds, on Housing and on a variety of things so the need to use the expertise in the community is not new.

I will be concluding very shortly. In a few minutes I will be winding up. I am now winding up and therefore I would say, Mr. Speaker, that it is necessary for the Government to think seriously about this particular Resolution and to make it possible for the Task Force to be established to study the problems that I have referred to.

It is not a question of pride. It is a question now that this situation in which we find ourselves is a very critical one, more critical than the study of any single particular problem in this country and that we need to examine it very carefully in order to come up with solutions and therefore I urge upon the Government not to get worried because this is a proposal coming from the Opposition.

This Opposition is a constructive Opposition and the proposals that we are making are proposals which will bring about benefits for the entire country and so long as the country benefits, the Government itself will benefit so you do not have to go on your pride and write in whatever you call it — I do not know what is the name of the person who writes in the *Advocate* News on Sundays. You do not have to take it as a matter of pride.

Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in commending this Resolution to this Honourable Chamber and I now beg to move the passing of this Resolution, the terms of which I have already given to this Honourable Chamber.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I rise to second the motion made by the hon. member for St. Michael South. The hon. member in his Resolution after the usual courtesies which are extended to a speech from the Throne regretted that the Government is still persisting in policies which have contributed to a serious deterioration in the economic, social, political and cultural positions of the people of Barbados and calls upon the Government to establish a competent and impartial Task Force to study the conditions prevailing in Barbados and make recommendations for their amelioration.

Any Government, Mr. Speaker, which boasts over a period of time of its skills in managing the affairs of a country, would hardly accommodate with equanimity a Resolution which suggests that that Government needs help because implicit in the call for a task force by the hon. member and I am not making any bones about it, is a suggestion that since the Government cannot manage, they had better call in some people who will be able to assist them in making recommendations for showing the way. That is what the Resolution in essence says.

Now, I do not really understand. I have never really understood what apart from their propaganda agents, a gentleman by the name of Mr. Desmond Bourne, I believe, claims credit for the slogan "The Great Combination" as part of their propaganda efforts now can believe that they, without any experience whatsoever would be able to manage the economy of this country without approaching the task, which in any country is a serious task, with an element of humility and learning the job from the ground up.

No one but no one is born in this century or in the centuries which have gone by endowed with the knowledge and ability of all of the intricacies of running a Government in the 20th Century. Basically, Mr. Speaker, the people who are the professionals are the people who should be guiding the Government, the public servants, and those public servants should be directed as to the policies which the Government being entrusted by the electorate from time to time in carrying out a programme which the Government wants to see implemented but what has happened here is that we have a lot of rhetoric and a lot of analysts and the people of Barbados have been fooled from month to month and from day to day.

The media has been rigidly controlled. Those that have not been bought outright by interests close to the Government Party — I mean literally bought out lock, stock and barrel — I do not want to call any names but the radio and newspaper. Those that are supposed to be independently owned. I am speaking about the *Nation* and Rediffusion if the hon. member wants to laugh. The *Nation* and Rediffusion are owned and controlled by members of the Government Party. The *Advocate News* and CBC are controlled by Mr. Nigel Barrow, who is a member of that side.

3.25 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know that the Rt. Hon. Member is speaking to the resolution.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: To the resolution Sir and to Your Honour. The other media which are supposed to be foreign controlled are concerned only in Government contracts-like the *Advocate-News* and making money and the people who are in charge of those media

befuddling the public, the unsuspecting public of Barbados and not reluctant to prostitute the high art of journalism in the interest of pecuniary advantage. This country of ours is in serious trouble, but if I may deal with the Throne Speech which was made before the disclosures on the Floor of this Honourable House on Tuesday, 8th September, 1981 by the Rt. Hon. Minister of Finance.

The Throne Speech followed the euphoria of the Elections of the 18th June and the Throne Speech was delivered on 21st July, 1981 by His Excellency and if I may deal with it seriatim. The first thing to which I wish to draw Your Honour's attention is that His Excellency, in the Throne Speech referred to the high performance — on page 7 — of the Barbados economy, but there would be a slow down from five percent to two percent. But, a few weeks later, the Honourable Minister said two percent, over the next two years. The Honourable Minister of Finance on 8th September informed this Honourable House that even when His Excellency had been given this Speech to read that they were aware that the economy of Barbados had slowed down to negative growth and I think, Mr. Speaker, that it is placing His Excellency in a most invidious position to invite him to make statements which at the time when he was making them were untrue and which, within a matter of weeks have been controverted by the statements made by the Honourable Minister of Finance himself. But, instead of giving us his true state, we only had a hint — on page 7 of the Speech, Sir, from the Official Gazette — that the Government might find it necessary to institute measures to restrain consumption and to moderate wage increases over the period in order to ensure the growth rate of two percent. Again, attacking the living standards of the working people of this island.

But, I want to say right at the outset that when His Excellency served, that subject to our approval at the appropriate time, it is proposed that broadcasting of the proceedings of both the Honourable Houses will become a regular feature, we, on this Side, although we think that important debates should be broadcast, like the last debate on the resolution moved by the Honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, a limited debate on the Budget proposals, how many other budgets they are going to have from time to time; perfectly admissible. We do not think that the public purposes is served by people getting up and attitudinising over the radio and television instead of making serious contributions to discussion of the country's problems.

And, the danger, Mr. Speaker, which I would like to warn you about is that when you allow Honourable Members to come in here playing star boys over radio and television on every meeting of the Honourable House,

that the level of debate is going to degenerate and no serious consideration will be given to the problems which the Honourable House should be getting along with and discussing. Every speech will be an electioneering speech and I think that this Honourable House of Assembly has got on very well over the last 300 years without all this posturing and taking up of the time when people want to watch "Dallas" or "Days of our Lives", or whatever it is they have on television — I do not have time to watch it, Mr. Speaker, I would love to have more time — is being pre-empted by long winded speeches made by Honourable Members who are — nowadays I suppose they are having every single word they say done on video tape, so that they can rush home and live through the whole day's proceedings during the next eight hours to see themselves on television. I do not think that the public purpose is being served if this is what is proposed in the Speech from the Throne that all the speeches of this Honourable House should be televised and broadcast. I do not agree with it and I do not think that the public purpose is being served by the broadcasting of all the debates of this Honourable Chamber. It is turning the whole thing into a mountebank show. That is my personal opinion and I think I am entitled to it and it is shared by some of my colleagues on this side.

I am very glad to hear, Mr. Speaker, that it is intended to improve the facilities of Parliament, including Your Honour's facilities. A lot of improvement, as you know, Sir, can be made around here in various directions which we need not mention in the course of this debate. We do not have to air our domestic problems on the floor of the Honourable House, here.

Mr. SPEAKER: You only speak to the motion, here.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That is the motion, the facilities of Parliament. When I say domestic, I do not mean domestic like how many domestics, I mean domestic to Parliament and to Your Honour. We have to straighten out a lot of things in Parliament. But, I do not see, Mr. Speaker, where improving the facilities of Parliament has anything to do with helping Honourable Members to maintain their constituency offices.

Now, what is the position at the moment? Honourable Members are paid some type of salary and they do their private work. You do not come in here to make politics your profession. If you are called upon to perform a ministerial job, well, that is something which you anticipated when you entered politics that you may have to make your contribution in that way. You do not necessarily want to lose any money, but you do it as a service to the country. You must be compensated. I accept all of that.

We already have constituency secretaries paid for by the taxpayers. Now, we are hearing in the Speech from the Throne that in order to improve the facilities of Parliament that we need constituency offices as well? Some of us in here have constituency offices, but our constituencies are the members themselves, probably on both Sides. I know one Honourable Member in here in the last Session had probably, the best constituency office of any of the Honourable Members for St. Michael, but he still lost his seat. So, having a big, elaborate constituency office does not.....(ASIDES).....Ezra. It was well kept, I mean from the point of view of paint work and so on. No heckling, Sir. Having a constituency office does not necessarily make an Honourable Member perform better as a representative.
3.35 p.m.

A member who wants to perform as a representative gets around the constituency, not sits down like a panjandrum and expects all the people to come and make obeisance to him, you get in and around like the hon. member for St. James North circulates in and out with the boys playing dominoes and so on at various places, he goes and he (ASIDE).. not any more.

What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is this, that already we have increased the number of members of the House, we have provided the members with constituency secretaries and I do not see that we should further burden the taxpayers with providing offices for members of the House of Assembly in their constituencies, because I personally do not think that it makes them more effective representatives when the taxpayers has to pay for these trappings of office.

Now, I come, Sir, to the part of the speech that deals with energy. There was a lot of rhetorical references to energy over the years, and amongst the things proposed was that there should be an expanded programme of petroleum and natural gas production. Well, hardly were the words out of the mouth of His Excellency the Governor General than we heard that petroleum production, that is, the drilling of crude oil from the soil of Barbados, had actually gone down, and then we heard that the reason why it had gone down within a matter of days of this statement being made is that the company had gone in for deep drilling, or some lame excuse like that. Deep drilling has been going on in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, as part of the petroleum winning activities for a very long time. The deepest wells in this island were drilled not even vertically but obliquely, in Mount Poyer in St. Lucy and other locations in that parish, to depths of over 14,000 feet. The average depth of a well in Barbados from which we are getting oil now is about 4,700 feet.

Every now and again we get this euphoria, you know, we have some seam of oil that is flowing here

from the Amazon or the Orinoco, all the way past Mayaro, past Tobago and up through to Barbados; a pure, unadulterated lot of nonsense. Every time you want to divert the people's attention from the real problems that are confronting this island, you tell them that we are about to open this big lake and river of oil that will flow all over the island, that we will have probably to build special roofs over our houses to prevent the oil from washing away the gardens, and then the next thing you hear is that oil production has gone down.

Now, as far as natural gas is concerned, what I am concerned about is this. We have a situation in which we do have a fair amount of natural gas reserves in this island. I cannot remember the exact figures, but we are not beginning to utilise anything, as far as I know, like one-tenth of the yearly reserves which are already in Barbados, but there are people in this island where the natural gas pipeline is passing their front door, and in some cases their back door. You come from a place called Moe's Bottom, you come down by Gregg Farm and then the line shoots across and it comes down through Rock Hall, all the way down there, down into Sunset Crest. Mr. Speaker, do you know with all those new developments in Sunset Crest and all along there, not one place has been supplied with natural gas? Not one, and you have little children, two and three years old, having to lift bottles of bottled gas, the small bottles, some of them on wheelbarrows. You see them on weekends trembling, sometimes queuing up in the gas stations, and natural gas pipelines are passing their front doors, and we have not really embarked on a serious programme to supply the people in the parishes of St. Michael and Christ Church, the parish of St. James, part of St. Thomas where there are new housing developments, where the natural gas pipelines passes.

It is true it is not a renewable source of energy, but while it is there we feel that the people of Barbados, particularly the poorer elements in Barbados, should have this facility available to them, but for all we hear in the Throne Speech we have an expanded programme of petroleum and natural gas production, but producing for whom? For Bayer in Christ Church? The most money spent in supplying anybody with natural gas was spent for a German firm. Any money for all the consumers put together was spent about two or three years ago to supply Bayer when the hon. member for whichever constituency it is supposed to be, the Minister of Housing, told us that the money which the Hon. Minister of Trade was coming for, he says, "well, at last now you are going to have bottled gas in Barbados". He did not really understand the nature of the operation.

When they talk about implementation of a wind energy pilot project to determine the future distribution and size of wind turbines, whenever you go to Hawaii,

Hawaii has done this. Down at Shorey Village in St. Andrew there has been a wind turbine of the most advanced design there for about 18 years supplying cells with electricity which is supposed to be adaptable for small farms. As far as I know, the wind turbine is still down there, and all you are hearing is that you are going to have an energy project to determine the future distribution and size.

Here in Barbados we have the advantage of being able to benefit from the experiences of other people outside. If we are going to spend money to go over all the things that have been done before, do you think we are the only people in Barbados who have ever had the idea of using wind turbines? A study was done here of the ridge which encompasses Farley Hill, Indian Ground, Sir, around there, and this was done over 17 to 18 years ago by a couple of universities, and it was felt — now, I am not a scientist, Sir, and I am not speaking authoritatively — that 100 turbines put on that ridge with the regime that we have here of constant breezes blowing off the Atlantic, except for three days a year, with an average velocity probably of about 15 knots, not kilometers, and using the principle of constant speed — variable pitch propellers, could supply all the electricity requirements for the northern parishes of this island. Now we hear that they are going to determine the future distribution and size of wind turbines. If they would only go and realise that when they got into office was not the beginning of creation, this island would be a lot further advanced than it is at the moment.

And now I come to the most fatuous one of all, the use of solar energy for a wide range of purposes.
3.45 p.m.

I agree that we should go and investigate every possible energy source, but again Hawaii is far in advance of any country in the world in the use of solar energy. We have allowed someone or the other, whoever it is I do not know — I am not being personal — to induce us to put at Graeme Hall a kind of solar energy project for air-conditioning the Ministry of Agriculture buildings and it costs more to pump the water back up to keep that system in operation than if we had put in the ordinary air-conditioning; so it is very pretty and very fanciful and very new, but the point is we know for instance that the alchemists can make gold, but you can buy gold at about \$457 an ounce, you can make gold at about \$30,000 an ounce. Well the solar energy project at Graeme Hall is the same kind of thing. You are air-conditioning a building with solar energy, but it costs you more in electricity to pump the water back up with the solar system than if you had bought it direct from the Light and Power Company, and it does not even work. Thank God it does not work because we would be more bankrupt than we are now.

Then we have the big wave energy. Now really, when a gentleman reaches the age of dignity as the Governor-General, you should not really put him in the position of having to make statements like this about wave energy and that you are going to install a wave energy device if deemed feasible. You will install a device, you do not know what the device is, but if deemed feasible, of all places out on the east coast, and I heard they are going to trap some part of the sea with all the erosion you have up there to have wave energy; so that is going to be another pie in the sky salvation for Barbados' energy problems. Exploration of the scope for the use of such sources as biomass and bagasse as energy feed stock. Well we have been doing that a long time ago. But they just closed down Uplands factory which is where we had the plant for separating sugar cane by a new process, and I do not see if you put everything in reverse how you can expect the taxpayers now to have to underwrite the cost of starting the experiments all over again.

I mention that to show the lack of realism in the proposals which are being made in the Speech from the Throne. The Speech from the Throne is a serious attempt to come to grips with the problems of the country. It is not a budget speech. It is not a fiscal display. A speech from the Throne tells you what plans you have for the people of this Island over a period of time, and I do not see anything here in this energy programme except the expenditure that will be of any short term or medium term or even possibly long term benefit to the people of this Island in helping them to solve their problems of the high cost of fuel where fuel charges on your electricity bill is something like 12 cents a kilowatt, and we have not really got down to cutting down on the wastage even in Government buildings of leaving lights on burning all night. That is one way to cut down the bill, or even using the resources which we have during the crop time when we are generating steam at the sugar factories of converting that energy in the villages immediately around and so taking the load off the company. Nearly every other country in the world that is producing sugar cane is doing this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to go through all of this. I am sticking strictly to the script. You cannot accuse me of not doing it this time, but I do not intend to go through every single paragraph of this Speech from the Throne. I have picked out that particular aspect of the Speech to show the complete lack of realism in the exposition which was made by the Government at the time when Parliament was opened.

I am very glad to hear that the Government will continue its effective policy of price controls, because I did not know that the Government had a policy of price controls, and I did not know that if it had a policy of price controls that it was an effective policy of price

controls, and I certainly will go out looking for this policy of price controls and speaking to a few housewives so that I myself would be able to take advantage of this effective policy. I have not been one of the beneficiaries of this policy. Maybe I am buying the wrong commodities, but my problem is that I normally consume the things which the ordinary Barbadian person consumes, and therefore I have not been in a position to be a beneficiary of the kind of commodities that the Government claims that it will be controlling so effectively, the selected number of essential food items and household requisites. It is all very well to say that the prices of other items will continue to be monitored. People do not want monitoring; people want controlling. There is no point in saying you are monitoring prices as I heard the former Minister who is in charge of this subject issue warning that he was monitoring. Monitoring gives the idea that he is running around them to see what they are doing all the time and then shaking his head and nodding approval. That is monitoring too, but that does not control the prices and wastes the time of the Price Control Inspectors. Instead of seeing if they are breaking the law, you are telling us that you are going to monitor prices.

Now, Sir, I come to another very important aspect of this.

I just want to say it and get the records straight. We increased the number of constituencies in the House of Assembly. In the Speech from the Throne they very generously said that they are going to increase the number of people in the Opposition. As far as we are concerned, it would have to be done within the existing number of members of the Other Place. The taxpayers of this country should not be any further burdened. When Jamaica first had the same Constitution as Barbados where they had two members of the Opposition and when it was decided to increase the representation of the Opposition in the Other Place, what the Jamaicans did was to remove those so-called Governor's nominees and let the Opposition nominate them. In truth and in fact now what we have is a position in which the Government nominates twelve, then His Excellency is told the seven that he should nominate and then the Opposition nominates two. I am saying that is the kind of.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that is the kindest remark that the hon. member could use.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I cannot put it another way. In effect it works out that when you look at the.....

Mr. SPEAKER: All you need say is that the Governor-General nominates seven.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: And fortuitously without His Excellency even knowing some of the seven he nominates are supporters of the Government, whichever Government may be in power. That is what is happening now. So let us do away with this kind of farce and let us do what the Jamaicans did. We have a precedent for it. Jamaica had twenty-one, 12-9-2 and then they changed the Constitution and they said twelve on this side and nine on the other side. This matter of how many does not really matter. If you want to increase, all it gives is a few more people exposure. We are not looking for sinecures for anybody on this side of the House. We were not always the Opposition and we will not be always the Opposition. They were not always the Government and they will not always be the Government. That is the name of the game. So the Constitution is the Constitution, but we are not agreeing to any increase in the numbers in the Senate. You can increase or change around the formula and make adjustments, but we cannot agree to any further burden on the people of Barbados by increasing the size of the Senate where the Senate will be nearly as big if not bigger than the House of Assembly.
3.55 p.m.

That is a suggestion that no one who is an elected representative can contemplate with any degree of equanimity.

I just want to say, Sir, as I wind up that I do hope that the people who are owed money for Carifesta will soon be paid. I thought a Supplementary for \$11 million or \$12 million would have been one of the first Supplementaries that would have been brought in here but I suppose that the Hon. Minister of Finance will be seeking succour and assistance in distant climes so that he will not have to come to the House to ask us for this. Well, the Cubans got theirs from Russia. They spent \$20 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that relevant to the Resolution?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes, Sir, Carifesta. When they had Carifesta the Cubans had to go to Russia to get \$20 million in additional funds. It looks as if we will have to go for the other \$11 million or \$12 million they say but up to last night, Sir, people were complaining to me, a man who had mini-mokes. Not like the one the hon. member for Christ Church used in his lecture but a man who has mini-mokes and they owe him \$6,000. He cannot get his money and the Banks are running him down and increasing his interest to over 14%. He cannot get paid. (ASIDES).

I am not concerned about that. That is his business. If he got mixed up in that he must know where the money is coming from. I am not concerned about him. I am concerned about the taxi drivers, the people with the mini-buses and so on who are waiting for their money and especially with the new taxes they have to pay.

I do not think the Hon. Minister of Finance should be afraid to come in here and ask us for the money because we know they owe the money and if most of it is owed to Barbadians then we would have to vote it. There is a little bit of mismanagement there but I could have told them that about eight months before Carifesta as soon as I heard the Personnel who were going to be in charge. As soon as I heard that I said "disaster, pure unadulterated disaster."

Mr. SPEAKER: Time is no longer in your favour.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Yes. I have great pleasure in seconding the Resolution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is fairly obvious from the tone of the speeches of the two hon. members from the Opposition, the proposer of the Motion and the seconder, that the Opposition is not serious at all, not in anyway serious in the pursuit of this Resolution.

The first speech could be characterised as an example of repetition, an example of playing on words and I am sure that the hon. member has now earned the reputation as being a past master of the art of setting out propositions upon subjects without any indepth analysis and of course without any remedial solutions being put forward for the maladies that he has outlined.

It is a little difficult for us on this side to follow up a line of action on the part of the Opposition when they are asking now for a national task force to deal with problems which they say they can clearly identify when in support of their arguments for this national task force they say that we, the Government, should accept it because we have been in the habit of appointing Commissions of Enquiry into a number of matters which in our judgement the Commission of Enquiry procedure was the apt way of dealing with them.

They were the same people who called the Government a Government by Commissions of Enquiry. They were the same people throughout the length and breadth of Barbados who stated that it was a waste of money to have Commissions of Enquiry. They were the same people, Mr. Speaker, Sir, who from the very beginning, the very inception of this Government when we invited them to participate in having a national consensus in certain areas of administration that the then Leader of the Opposition in this country got up and said "if you are elected to rule, rule. The Opposition will not be participating in any Boards, will not be co-operating with anything at all." That was the policy of the Government. It still is the policy of the Government.

The discrepancy between the contended speeches of the Governor-General and the proposals and the statements made by the Prime Minister in the introduction of

his measures to deal with certain financial difficulties which arose have on more than one occasion been dealt with by the people on this side and I will repeat it for the benefit of the hon. member because he was not here when we spoke.

He was not here when we spoke in reply to the other motion when some hon. members on the other side felt constrained not to participate in the debate, never mind that the hon. mover of the Resolution expected that they would have participated and kept the debate alive when his own members bluntly refused to back him up. When the time came for them to speak, as will happen no doubt on this occasion with this Resolution too, except that the hon. member who proposed it is now wise enough to know that he will not be leaving the Island otherwise his Resolution would receive the same fate from his brethren on the other side.

The position is that in June when the Election was taking place and in July there was still the hope, a definite feeling on this side that the weather would have changed, the weather would have broken and that there would be sufficient time to reap all of the cane crop in Barbados so what is the difficulty? I do not see that such a statement should provoke the kind of speeches that the hon. members on the other side have just indulged in.

The crux of the matter is that in June there was reasonable expectation of every person who was interested in the Sugar Industry in Barbados that there would have been a break in the weather and that given good weather we would have been able to reap the totality of the crop. The truth of the matter is that hon. members on the other side have done nothing, least of all the last spokesman.

The last spokesman has done more in this country to discourage people from recognising the importance of sugar in this economy than anybody else in the whole of Barbados. (*Cheers*). He still persists in it. He still persists in it so that the fact that you have a gap in export earnings *vis-a-vis* last year of some \$40 million is a factor of importance. It is a factor of importance.

The other point that we must recognise and the hon. member would know that this is of importance too that the currency of the European Economic Community members in June in their value relationship with the U.S. dollar changed significantly in the months of July and August. That is a fact. It is a matter of record. It is a matter of record so that when foreign exchange denominates, when our foreign exchange earnings denominates in European currency and we are receiving it, when that currency goes down, because of our relationship with the U.S. dollar we get less money because if the currency drops *vis-a-vis* the American dollar, so too will all receipts.

Hon. members on the other side should explain to the public that this is a factor in our economic relations that we always have to deal with and when there is currency stability in the parity of currencies that is one situation where you have a drastic devaluation of the currency. When you send your export receipts which are denominated in non-U.S. currency and you are likely to suffer from it and that is the position.

4.05 p.m.

So that, as far as our exports go, we get less and in Barbados because of the fact that we have — in order to encourage better hotel occupancy in the summer — we have been making a drive to get European business in the summer and they usually came in July, August and September. These are facts. What has happened is that a holiday in Barbados because of the drop in their currency became more expensive — nothing to do with the Government of Barbados. What is it to do with the Government of Barbados. It is that the international currency movements moved against us in that respect.

Sir, the Honourable Member now goes ahead, Sir, and I am going to deal with the last speaker because there is nothing in what the mover of the motion has said other than delineate the problems. I cannot reply to delineations of the problems because we have delineated the problems, too. The Honourable Member is only repeating what we have delineated. Now, Sir, the Rt. Hon. Member, the Rt. Hon. Leader of the Opposition talks about energy. The Rt. Hon. Member is so out of touch with what is going on in this country that the Rt. Hon. member makes an allegation in this Honourable House that the most expensive expenditure by the Natural Gas Corporation is to give the Bayer Corporation gas. Bayer Corporation does not have natural gas. The Rt. Hon. Member does not even know that fact. It does not have natural gas. Bayer Corporation does not have natural gas, it does not have natural gas. The Rt. Hon. member is not with it in Barbados. He is not aware of what is going along.

It has been repeatedly pointed out to the Rt. Hon. Member that the object of having the gas line between Woodbourne in Christ Church and Newton Industrial Estate was to back up the distribution system which started on the coastline and which ran through St. George. The gas used to go all the way down to the Belle, then, to be pumped back up to Christ Church at the other end and it was pointed out by experts that we were in a very dangerous situation because that Government built a transmission line between Woodbourne and the Belle, did not bury the line and built a transmission line along the old train line. And, that is the same way that in the crop time, you reaped your sugar crop, you passed them over the same line, so that, at any particular period of time, it is quite possible there could be an accident there in which

case, with your overhead line being exposed to damage, you have no back up system. That is a fact and the Rt. Hon. Member should know and understand — I am sure if the Hon. Member for St. Michael West Central were here that he would not lend support to the Rt. Hon. Member in the parading of his ignorance of the distribution system, here. The position is we then built this line to loop in at Oistin so that in the event of there being any damage in respect of that line going through the main transmission line which is an overhead line, we would have a back up further.

The Rt. Hon. Member talks about — you had better not mention the Natural Gas Corporation to me because I have some things about the Natural Gas Corporation that occurred in your time. You had better not get me hot on this. (ASIDES)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: A warning to the wise. You know what Carmichael used to say, "a word to the wise". Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want these facts to come out. Under the Administration of the Democratic Labour Party, every night in Barbados millions of cubic feet of gas used to be flared and go into the air and be wasted at Woodbourne. Immediately, as we went into power, we objected to that and we brought in consultants under the UNDP from Norway and in addition to that, we had consultants from UNIDO and they all recognised that it was criminal waste to allow the oil companies to flare gas when that oil could have been used by the Light and Power Company in off peak periods.

We had to convince Mr. Nelson from the Light and Power Company that it could be done. We had to challenge his technical opinion that it could be done and it has been done and today the percentage of flared gas is less than 3% per day. Under them it was 60% of our gas produced in Barbados. (ASIDES) Now, what foolishness is the Rt. Hon. Member parading here. Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious thing when you hold a responsible position and you are so indifferent to that position that you do not keep yourself even up-to-date on the factual situations surrounding these things, not even up-to-date. The Rt. Hon. Member is not even up to date on these matters.

As far as the gas in relation to households. I well remember that we explained to the Rt. Hon. Member — the same experts who identified the critical problem in relation to the line and the need for a back up supply — and had pointed out that it would be economic folly if you were a corporation that had the choice between expending capital money on an extension of the distribution service to householders and the expending of capital money to another user who would use it in off peak periods that the logical choice would be to expend that money first and that

is why the capital expenditure was directed to the solution of the problem of saving energy by flaring at night. That is why the line was put in so as to ensure that the electric supply could come on after 8.00 o'clock at night. When you expend money and you hook up the householders, Mr. Speaker after 8.00 o'clock, they still do not use the gas, they have finished their cooking. Now that that is in, the Natural Gas Corporation, I am positive will be able to point out that more and more householders are coming on to the line.

But, we also have another problem. It is known that there are a number of the old lines in the natural gas system that need to be upgraded because there is a thing called unaccounted for gas. The difference between what they buy, the difference between what they sell, there is a percentage in there. They brought down the detection specialist to try and do this, but their problems were also compounded by the fact that while the sewerage system was being done, a number of their lines were damaged and they have one engineer up there, two engineers, they brought in some others and all of these things need a technical staff to help with the expansion.

I believe there are now — the last time I checked on it — there were 7,900 people who were consumers of natural gas. There were far more than during the time when the Democratic Labour Party was in power and there will be more.

4.15 p.m.

I have heard the Chairman of the Natural Gas Corporation announce and say once a gas line is in the vicinity of a place, all they have to do is to petition the Natural Gas Corporation, they will go up there and do a survey, and provided they can pay the deposit, they will be able to get gas in their place, and that is what is happening. If you go into the tenancies in the St. Lawrence area you will see it. There are tenancies in other areas where it is done. An arrangement has been made with the Barbados National Bank to advance the initial cost to be paid over a period of time, just as Light and Power did. All of these things are happening, and the hon. member is totally unaware of what is going on around him. He spends all of his time now, as the hon. member said, in supermarkets purchasing food, specialising in cooking and satisfying his particular delicacies. He is not with it.

Now, on the question of the other areas, the hon. member talks about Brace Research. It is true Brace Research did set up an experimental unit in Shorey Village, St. Andrew, but I am amazed that the hon. member — of course he said that he is not a scientist — but I am amazed that the hon. member would make a serious statement on the floor of the House, the purport of which is that technology in relation to wind turbine generation has not advanced over the course of the last ten years. I am surprised that the hon. member

would make a statement of which that could be a reasonable conclusion. The research of Brace Research is ten years behind hand. There are modern wind turbine generators now which makes that research dated. In addition to that, the hon. member ought to know that the translation of an expenditure from a research project into a commercial project is something that is very costly, and although you may be able, in a research laboratory or in a special research unit, to demonstrate the feasibility of something, when you come to commercialised fact you have to take other factors into consideration, and one of the factors you have to take into consideration is the integration of wind turbine generation with a distribution system and the national grid system. That is why it was necessary to get the Caribbean Meteorological Institute to do a wind regime study on certain selected sites in Barbados to be able to have accurate data as to the wind speeds, their consistency and things of that kind, so that proper feasibility studies as to the economics of it could be done.

We do not intend to indulge in the expenditures like the hon. member and do the feasibility studies after, we prefer to do it the right way, do the feasibility study first and then after it is proved feasible we will make that decision. So it is not difficult to reply to the hon. member's attempt to pooh-pooh the well set out programmes in relation to alternate energy that we are pursuing.

As far as the bagasse is concerned, experimentation was done and we have pointed out that the new sugar factory which is being built, as well as at Foursquare, it has been demonstrated that it is possible to feed into the national grid electricity during the period of crop time, but the hon. member also would have heard in here that an argument arose between the Union and the Sugar Producers as to a job classification, because somebody had to flick a switch every morning at Foursquare to put it into the national grid, and the Union said one thing and the employers said something different. That is the problem, a job classification, as to whether flicking this switch was within the terms of the operator's duty, and if it is within the terms, whether he should get more remuneration. But in any event, in a very wet year like we had in Barbados this year, the amount of excess bagasse was strictly limited because Foursquare had to be supplying other factories with bagasse. This is a fact. This year was a bad year for the commercialisation of the experiment because a lot of the bagasse that would normally be excess was not excess this year. That is a fact, so I mean what is the difficulty?

As far as the oil exploration is concerned, I laugh sometimes when I hear any member on the other side speak about this. They have never in any one of their years drilled as much footage as during our period of time, had an annual production as during our period

of time, done the seismic work, never, they have never had it, annually, I have the figures in my head, I know. Never. And the fact that you have a decline in oil production in any particular year in the context of our present known state of geology — because there is only one point that you will learn when you are dealing with this oil business, and it is like you learn when you are dealing with politics and economics. If you put a hundred economists in this room you get a hundred different opinions over any particular problem. If you put a hundred geologists in this room you will get a hundred different opinions about a geological problem. It is not an exact science, and over the course of the last year, only the last year, exploratory drilling was the predominate objective of the company and not shallow drilling, and, Mr. Speaker, there was a shortage of wind capacity in Barbados to do what is known as in-fill drilling.

Now, we have a programme and that programme will be introduced as from next year, because the exploratory drilling has added to the knowledge of our geology down to that depth but it has not significantly added to our recoverable reserves, because although they have found sand at a deeper depth than the average 6,500 feet — and the hon. member is again mistaken, it is not 4,600, the average depth of the wells before was 6,500 — there have been problems in getting those sands at depths of 9,000 and 10,000 to produce. The logs look good, but when you come to get them to produce and you perforate them, problems arise in respect of what is called the tightness of the sand, and things of that kind.

There is a technique called fracturing and other secondary recovery techniques that can be used, but again this is building up information in respect of your geology, and the Government's position has been clear. The Government's position is that as a matter of policy we must try and have as much production out of the wells at whatever depths they are producible in Barbados as quickly as possible. That is our policy. As a matter of fact, we have had very strong meetings with the company on that. Part of our problem is that we were hidebound by an agreement which was signed, not by us, but by them were the only obligation of the company is to have one drilling rig in Barbados per year. 4.25 p.m.

We are arguing that in the light of the present price of oil that we should have more than one drilling rig in Barbados, and I must say that after a lot of argument and a lot of persuasion and a lot of threats that some progress is being made in that direction. But let the hon. member be assured he is not going to get any pleasure over a very great decline in the future. It is likely to come back up because the shallow drilling programme will continue. So if the hon. member is

hoping that the tide of events will go against us in that direction again, let the hon. member be assured that we will be doing everything in our power. If we had the power to stop the rain, we would have stopped the rain. We did not have the power because there are certain events over which no politician has any control. The hon. member knows quite well that when he was Prime Minister he used to dictate to the Governor-General who were to be his nominees. The hon. member always did that. That is how you had the peculiar circumstances of all leading members of the Democratic Labour Party, well-known strong supporters of the Democratic Labour Party being the Governor-General's nominees; so that was his working of the Constitution. If you do not want an increase in the Opposition in the Senate, that is a matter for hon. members on the other side. As far as the Government is concerned we have done everything in our power to institutionalise the concept of an Opposition in this country. We have never made a statement like the hon. member did that he would prefer to go to England with Dr. Verwoerd and Ian Smith rather than with the Opposition. We do not have that kind of hard feeling against an Opposition. We have been over there fifteen years and we know the role that an Opposition could perform. The only pity is that the hon. member as Leader of the Opposition does not perform the role nor would he allow people who are more capable of performing that role to assume the mantle of that role.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, in rising to support this Resolution this evening, sometimes I wonder when I listen to the other side why if it is so good we have now found ourselves in this position. I would like to get back to the terms of the Resolution which asks to take note of the contents of the Throne Speech, and in so doing I would like first of all to look at that Speech in one or two areas. The first area is that on page 7 at the second paragraph where it says: "The fiscal policy pursued by my Government in the past is considered to have met with great success in the redistribution of income towards the poorest section of the population."

Mr. Speaker, the question which I want to ask and which probably was disposed of by the Leader of the Opposition is whether the Government is still pursuing this policy considering the measures which have been taken since this House met in July, and I refer to the levies, the 1% levy as some people say for walking the road, the one-half of one per cent levy for medical care, indeed the taxes on the minibuses which have moved from \$250 to \$1,500.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member just needs to be reminded that he cannot in any way reflect on a vote that has already been taken in this Honourable House in this Session.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, I believe I will take your guidance. What I was referring to really is that in the Throne Speech it says that the Government would pursue a trend towards redistributing the wealth to the poorest sections of the population, and I was indicating that I was wondering whether this is a measure which would assist in also redistributing wealth to the poorest members of the community, but I will go on your guidance.

Mr. SPEAKER: I only wish to point out to you that whether it is half percent or no percent or whatever it is, whether it is a good thing, a bad thing, whatever, this House has already taken a decision on it.

Mr. SIMMONS: As Your Honour pleases. I would also, Mr. Speaker, like to know in view of certain pronouncements which have been made in recent times in another place about the moving of the Rastas from Broad Street, people who are indeed manufacturers, entrepreneurs in this country who need help, if the Government will see fit to assist them in the sense that to move them from Broad Street to my mind will reduce or indeed prevent the redistribution

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I have been listening to the hon. member quite carefully, and there is nothing in the Resolution which deals with Rastas in the Other House, Broad Street or any other place. I just seek to draw it to Your Honour's attention.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must try and stick to the Resolution.

Mr. SIMMONS: Mr. Speaker, with due respect, as I understand it. I was trying to elaborate on the point of redistribution of wealth towards the poor sections and what I was saying or trying to say was that if in effect the suggestion was made in another place to move people whom I consider to be poor from an area, what would the Government do to assist them with the income, as that would be doing away with the redistribution of income. That is all I was saying. I believe that the Resolution speaks of sections of this Throne Speech and I was making specific reference to sections of the Throne Speech which dealt with the redistribution of income in this country.

Mr. SPEAKER: I just invite the hon. member to keep the Resolution before his mind.

Mr. SIMMONS: I have the Resolution before my mind and I have the Throne Speech before my mind and I intend to refer to it as often as possible. I am also saying that it would reduce the income of those people to move them to Baxters Road where as I understand it you go not to buy manufactured goods, but indeed where

you go when you want a piece of chicken or a drink at night. These youngsters form the basis of a very essential element in this community and they are all poor, and possibly under another section in this Throne Speech where it deals with manufacturing we will say that they need more help than most. Very often, as I understand it, we leave these shores and go overseas looking for manufacturers to come here. These are people who are already manufacturing stuff here and should be given as much assistance as possible to develop their goods.

Mr. Speaker, to go further, I would like to make reference at this time to the question of education, because this falls within my special interest on this side. I believe all of us at this time must be concerned about education in this country, and although I have no real quarrel with the giving of \$100 in the form of a grant to a child per school year, I wonder if it is not a question of priorities. As we go around the country, it is obvious that the primary schools are lacking in certain facilities. 4.35 p.m.

Indeed, the surroundings are, to say the least, shabby and I wonder if more money could not have been spent in upgrading the surroundings of our schools. To my mind the school, like your home, should be a place for which you want to go. The school is a training ground for future life and everything should be done to ensure that this area is well taken care of.

Now, the Primary Schools are the foundation of our learning and unless this foundation is properly cemented, unless the foundation is strong, then the results which we get in the Secondary Schools must of necessity be poor.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, like all of us, you must know why all of us are concerned with the quality of the results which we get these days and it is not gainsaying that many a child going to the Secondary School finds it difficult to write the most simple sentence. I believe that this is true because of the fact that enough attention is not being paid to the foundation from which these children come, those are the Primary Schools.

The teachers, and we have seen it in a local paper lately, where some children have had to stand for a whole day. There are complaints that there are no desks. There are complaints that there is no toilet paper. There are complaints that the Teachers have not got the Teaching Aids for assisting the youngsters and indeed, in some cases, the votes for Elementary Schools in specific areas are at a minimum that they cannot get by with it for a term and I am therefore asking, Mr. Speaker, in looking at this that we consider our priorities in terms of giving out money.

Of course, I would like to say as well that for my information there is a procedure whereby people who are

in dire need of uniforms can go to the Welfare Department, put up their case, and get uniforms. As I said earlier, I am not quarrelling with the grant of money for uniforms but what I am suggesting is that some consideration be given to where the money is being spent.

I would also like, Mr. Speaker, to request or advise that more attention be paid to qualifying Teachers to teach youngsters who are suffering from learning disabilities and indeed it might be a good thing too if on transfer to the Secondary Schools that children who are backward in English and Arithmetic are allowed to be trained with youngsters, though of a younger age who are of a comparable level in that particular subject.

In other words, it seems to me to be of no sense a fellow being in 5A¹ if his reading ability is Form I and not too long ago when I had the opportunity to visit a school in Canada, there was a system whereby children who were of an equivalent age in a subject and weak in another at the time when that subject was being taught were able to go into the classroom and learn with the children of comparable levels irrespective of the age so that when a youngster leaves a school he is not only proficient in Maths but they have brought him up because of some deficiency at birth or otherwise which he had as he entered school and these things are important because we are training children for the future.

Another area which concerns me too is the Challenor Home for the Mentally Retarded and as we are dealing with Education in this Throne Speech I would like to say that I think it is time that the Government takes over the Challenor Home.

As I understand it at the present moment what is done is that they are given a grant but these youngsters are in more need of Education and attention than the average child. Indeed, from my reading on Education for backward children it is necessary to have one-in-one Teacher per pupil so as to ensure that they get the best of learning.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will kindly give way, Sir, I rise to speak on a point of order primarily to seek the indulgence of the Other Side and on this side for an extension of Private Members' Business, Mr. Speaker, up to 5 o'clock. (ASIDES). It is not necessary today? I am accommodating you. Do not try to scare me.

We crave your indulgence if members on the Other Side would agree to have Private Members' Business extended until 5 o'clock. We have done it before and I have no doubt that they will concur, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House that we continue Private Members' Business until 5 o'clock?

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, on this side we do not see any need for extending Private Members' Business on this occasion.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is not the pleasure of the House. This brings us to the end of Private Members' Business. Let us have some order.

When the suspension was taken the House was in Committee. To that it now reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and Mr. CHAIRMAN resumed the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee. Order, please. The hon. member for St. Joseph had already completed his speech.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, if you may check the Record I have spoken on a different Section of the Bill. The hon. member for St. Philip North had pointed out to the Chamber that Sections 11 and 12 were one and the same. Everybody seems to think that I am an idiot in here. It is time that the members in this Chamber understand that I have my own sense. I want them to understand on this side that I have my own sense. I am not as stupid as they think.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. member please take your seat until I check here with the Record?
4.45 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any Honourable Member wish to make his contribution to Section 12?

Mr. C. L. BOLDEN: The Honourable Member for St. Philip North raised the question that the amendment to Section 11 was one and the same to the amendment to Section 12. Section 12 changes the penalty clause in Section 78 of the substantial Act. That is what the Honourable Member, for St. Philip North, as I understood it was saying. (ASIDES) As I understood it, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North was querying why Section 11 was amended and he said it was similar to Section 12. That is as I understood it.

What I want to point out is that Section 11 in the amendment dealt with inspection of any document or survey and Section 12 dealt with the requirement for any person who had an occupier of premises or any person who had interest in the land and therefore the variation in penalty dealt with two different situations under the amendment and the substantial Act. That is what I rose to say when the adjournment was taken and that is what I want to point out to the Honourable Members on the other side that the penalties are different because the offences are different.

The question that Clause 12 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 13 was called.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Clause 13 stand part.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is...

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Honourable Minister and the Honourable House would be so kind as to have Clause 6 recommitted.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I have no objection in acceding to the request. I therefore move that Clause 6 be recommitted.

The question that Clause 6 be recommitted was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Clause 6. The Honourable Member for St. Philip North.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, Clause 6(3) in my opinion worries me quite a lot, Clause 6 Section 32A(3) reads as follows:

"The Chief Town Planner may, having regard to the development plan and any other material consideration, attach to a planning permission a condition that the development to which it relates shall be begun not later than the expiration of such period, whether shorter or longer than two years, from the date of the permission as the Chief Town Planner considers appropriate."

Mr. Chairman, in my opinion, this can be a very serious clause, since there is no minimum period and although we expect town planners to be considerate people, this is open that the Chief Town Planner can give a period that may be completely unrealistic for the completion of a development under this Section.

I would like to hear the Honourable Minister assure me that this section would not be abused in any way and what were the real reasons for the section as presently drafted?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, I do not see the difficulty in which the Honourable Member finds himself with this Section. Under the existing Town and Country Planning legislation, Sir, the Town Planner can attach all sorts of conditions including a time condition

to the grant of permission and as the Law at present stands, he is entitled to grant permission on condition that you commence construction within "X" months or "X" days, as the Law at present stands. He has a rather wide discretion in attaching conditions and there is no limitation in the Act which says that that condition can only be limited to conditions dealing with curved walls or the height of buildings or aesthetic conditions as to design and therefore, there is really no change here.

There are situations, of course, in which the Town Planner may want to ask, having regard to the nature of the development plan whether it be a development plan for the whole of the area or a development plan for a limited area or having regard to the nature of development taking place in this particular area, that the planning for which permission is sought should commence within a particular time.

I think the Honourable Member need have no fear that the Town Planner will abuse this situation or this provision. There is another reason why this is so, Sir, because it is open to the applicant for planning permission always to appeal against the exercise of the Town Planner's discretion where he acts arbitrarily or wantonly. The appeal can be in two ways. The appeal can either be to the Minister under the Act, or if it is an arbitrary and wanton exercise on the part of the Town Planner, there is sufficient provision in administrative law for an appeal to be taken. Now, the tragedy is that very few people have made use of the administrative remedies which are available within our Law in order to safeguard their rights, but, more and more, I expect that this would happen.

So, I can assure the Honourable Member from a legal point of view, there is enough safeguard within that Section to deal with a Town Planner who might be arbitrary and, of course, as the Honourable Member quite rightly assumes, we cannot always expect that each Town Planner will exercise his discretion in the same way.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question.....

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I am very grateful to the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, but as he well knows, the poor people are the ones that he so rightly pointed out are not familiar with the administrative machinery available for redress. I am only suggesting that it might be better drafted, if in this Section a minimum period, say, "the Town Planner shall begin not later" for argument's sake, "for a period not less than 28 days notice" which would mean that you would have some idea of a discretionary period and you would not force poor people to have to go to administrative machinery for redress against the Town

Planner. This is what I am saying. I would be happier if there were some minimal time given and not a *carte blanche* open arrangement where the Town Planner as a reasonable person can give you a day to carry out a particular section of a development.

4.55 p.m.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Chairman, I am sure like the hon. member we know that the Chief Town Planner will exercise the discretion that he knows that he has always exercised. I am well aware of the fears that he has expressed. It is a discretion and these are the powers which are usually given to the Chief Town Planner and I do not think there is any call for any alarm at this moment. I wish to give you the assurance that the Minister, certainly this Minister, will be only too willing to look at any complaints that come to his attention as a result of any display of any such conduct which will cause the development to be agreed. I do not think it calls for any great concern as far as these powers are given to the Chief Town Planner.

The question that clause 6 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, 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. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Item No. 1 be the instant Order of the day.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 1 is the instant Order of the day.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

On the 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 of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1981-82, No. 5

Head 32 - Prisons - Item 2 - Other Personal Emoluments

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, this is for \$55,000 for the purpose of supplementing the Estimates

in order to allow the Government to pay certain of the Prison Officers allowances which have been agreed. It is necessary that this sum be voted to meet the cost of the revised allowances.

As hon. members are aware, negotiations from time to time go on with various sections of the Civil Service over the scale of allowances. These allowances are intended in a number of the various areas to allow the officers to recoup the cost of expenses which they have to incur by virtue of the fact that they are required to have either certain uniforms, in which case they will have to have washing allowances, or they are required to do extra periods of time, in which case they have certain allowances for the period of time that they have to work in addition to the normal allowances. There is always a continuous review of these allowances so as to keep them on par with the state in which they are fixed originally.

I am sure in the Ministry of Establishments there are a lot of negotiations going on now over a whole host of allowances. It is not always possible, due to differences of opinion — and in these matters there are always differences of opinion — to conclude all of these matters as speedily as one would like, but this Government has had the habit, which we will continue, of backdating the allowances from the date when they were due, when the discussions started, whenever agreement is arrived at. Hence you will see in this, Sir, although this may have taken a little time, that the effective date is 1st April, 1979, so that no injustice is done.

It is not a question of bowing to pressure. This Government is accustomed to being written up in the newspapers, to be threatened, all those things, but we have a responsibility to ensure that these things are dealt with in a fair manner, and whenever a decision is made no injustice is done, because they are backdated.

I beg to move that this sum stand part.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.
5.05 p.m.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, we on this side are of course very pleased to see that the provision for paying the officers of the Prison Department their revised allowances has come to Parliament, and I think this would have come as the Minister introducing the Resolution has stated after a period of negotiations but we would like to have some information on this particular matter. It does seem to us that the period has been somewhat protracted, and we would be glad if the Minister could give us some information as to why it has taken this long period of time to arrive at the final settlement, and indeed if he could tell us when the settlement was actually arrived at, because it does sound

as though it is over an extended period of time dating back to 1979, and no doubt the request would have been put in even before 1st April, 1979. Maybe the Minister could say a little more about this matter in view of the fact that the Prison Service is one of the vital services in this country. They render a most important job, the Prison Officers, in ensuring that our whole community is protected. They are part of those protective services and no doubt they are also part of the hopes of rehabilitation, and I think this House could be given a little bit more information as to the nature of the special problems that were encountered and so on.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other hon. member wish to make a contribution?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, there were no special problems. There were the usual problems that arise, disagreement as to the quantum, as to whether this now costs that when it used to cost that and the percentage. That is all. It takes time to negotiate this and obviously in the interim there were a number of other matters. There was the whole reclassification and regrading exercise that was going on. There are still outstanding matters in relation to travelling for instance, so that it is a question of your establishment having to deal with all these myriad problems, and no doubt between 1979 and now they were arguing over the massive regrading that took place. In that interim you had a salaries revision and there were arguments in relation to that. The hon. member, I am sure, towards the close of the century will have to grapple with these problems, and he will understand that very often there is a scale of priorities by Unions themselves. They have their scale of priorities, and I am sure that the fact that this amount involved was so small that it just did not reach the order of priority in respect of other things, but we have backdated it. They will get their money as soon as we pass this.

An agreement was reached earlier this year just before the event. The hon. member will know that as soon as the regrading is over, they go back. As soon as you settle regradings, everything else then comes up. We have others. We have one with travelling, we have another one with leave passages order, discrimination and there are about seven or eight of these things. It is not that we do not want to do it, but there is a certain amount of time for negotiations when you are dealing with a salaries revision and then the regrading subsequent to that, equally as important but not as important as these other major matters, so we are trying to clear the desk so to speak in respect of these establishment matters.

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

On the motion of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, the Resolution was read a first and second time and agreed to.

THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (PAYMENT OF PASSAGES) ORDER, 1981

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 2 stands in the name of the Hon. Leader of the House to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (Payment of Passages) Order, 1981.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the object of this Resolution is to remove yet another vestige of discrimination which exists between a man and a woman in Barbados. The conditions of service of men and women in Barbados definitely indicated discrimination in relation to the ladies. It has been drawn to the attention of the Government by the Commission on the Status of Women, one of those famous Commissions which reported in the last Session to the great objection of the other side, that there were a number of areas in the General Orders where women were placed at a very great disadvantage in relation to men. In the instant case, Sir, the Regulations provided that an officer recruited from abroad could have the passage of the officer and his family paid for by the Government and their expenses, their plane fares or sea fares paid to come to Barbados to work in the Government Service. That was all very well when it was a man bringing his wife, but when it was a lady bringing her husband, the legal opinion was that family did not include the husband in case the officer was a wife.

Now strenuous objections were taken to this particularly by people working in the medical profession, because it must not be forgotten that a large number of people in all of the professions now are women, and they are likely to have husbands too and they are likely to have children.
5.15 p.m.

In order to remove this barrier in recruitment, in order to remove discrimination, the Government has decided to bring them this Civil Establishment (Payment of Passages) (Amendment) Order and we will replace, Sir, the previous 1974 Order so as to redefine the word "family" to include spouse and child.

This, I believe, has also been identified by the Commission on the Status of Women as an area of discrimination which will be removed, Sir.

I do not anticipate, despite the fact that there is only one member in this House who could conceivably benefit from this or who could conceivably have strong feelings on this, that there would be any difficulty on the Other Side. I believe that it would be a little difficult for them, Sir, to return home tonight, Sir, so that I have no doubt that this will receive the unanimous support of all hon. members.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I do not expect that any other hon. member would expect this occasion to pass without some comment on my part. My love for women is so deeply founded, it is so well-known, Sir, that anything which seeks to improve their conditions must be welcomed by me if by no other person in this community.

This is only one of the other archaic rules which operated to the serious disadvantage of the women of this country, only one of them. There are still some other archaic legal as well as administrative rules and practices in the Public Service and several unfortunate rules in the private sector which should be removed if women are to be truly liberated in this country and I hope to see, Sir, that all of the recommendations of the National Commission on the Status of Women will be fully implemented by the Government as promised not only in its Manifesto of 1976 but in its Manifesto of 1981 as well. I know that we have taken very positive steps to implement a large number of those recommendations and that there are further steps still in the process of being taken on the part of the Government.

I know that it is true that today in the Public Service men and women are being like remunerated for like jobs but I still believe that the pace at which women have been promoted to senior positions in the Public Service is a bit too slow and there is still a great hesitancy on those persons who have the responsibility for promotion or the recommendation for promotion and they are not Ministers on the political side of Government to deal rapidly with the problem of seeing that women rise quickly to carry the responsibility which they are capable of carrying in the Public Service.

I believe that the Minister is as much aware as I am that they are still some private sector employees who discriminate seriously against women in the benefits to which they are entitled as employees and there are still Firms in this country who would grant Leave Passages or Leave Conditions to husbands to carry their wives but refuse to grant reciprocal conditions to wives to carry their husbands. That is wrong, Sir. In this case the husband would be the beneficiary but if we genuinely believe that humans are humanbeings then there is no

reason why family employees should be discriminated against in this way.

I am also aware that some of the Firms in town and some of the Banks still demand when women go to borrow money or to take goods on credit and they happen to be married women that they must get their husband's signature for this. This is an archaic and unnecessary practice and I have had on one or two occasions to advise the women to go back and tell these persons, their creditors, that that practice should have been abolished a long time ago.

I do not want, of course, Mr. Speaker, and I would have had to seek your permission in any event to mention the names of one or two Firms or Companies who still indulge in the practice but I think that we ought to give some publicity to it because in some instances the wives are earning more than their husbands and in any event most of them are more responsible in their financial attitude and their financial business than men are in similar circumstances.

There is one practice in particular which obtains in the Public Service which I would like to draw to the attention of the Minister and although it may not be based primarily on the principle of sex, it discriminates very seriously against women officers in the Public Service. Several of the gentlemen in the Foreign Service who are posted abroad are married to women who themselves are public officers and they obtain permission to accompany their husbands abroad acting on behalf of Barbados for the period during which the husband is posted abroad. I know of exactly six cases who have suffered in this respect.

They find themselves at a disadvantage in relation to promotion because they are off the scene and of course nobody is putting in an Annual Report on their performance and they also find themselves at a disadvantage in that that period that they are abroad with their husbands is not treated as pensionable service for the time during which they are serving abroad and a lady who is in line for promotion could well find herself losing five and sometimes ten years of pensionable service and coming back remaining at a junior position and at the same time of the current age getting less pension and gratuity.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, during my time as Minister of Foreign Affairs I took up that issue with the Ministry of Establishments and I have never seen such utter nonsense and archaic attitudes as manifested by the men who had to pass on this question. In the long and short it comes down almost sometimes to a personal thing as to whether they believe some officers' wives and they may know the officer is going to benefit than to look at the logic of the position.

I was asked to collect information as to the countries in which the practice was different to the practice in Barbados. We pointed out that the practice was different in Canada, for instance, but because they could not find like the U.K. or somebody having changed their practice, their recommendation was that there was no case for this to be done.

Barbados must be innovative. It must lead in some of these questions. When they see real discrimination they must deal with it and unfortunately the Elections overtook events and I did not have time to fight the issue from inside the Government but I intend to fight it from inside this House and to let the Officers who advise their Ministers know that they had better get with it in the 20th and 21st Century rather than looking at such archaic attitudes when it comes to dealing with the rights of women and particularly of married women who are married to public officers.

5.25 p.m.

A wife who accompanies her husband overseas is giving as much service and sometimes more service than some of the other people who go overseas and it is unpaid service. Very often, she is at a great disadvantage in having to inconvenience herself to entertain people including the very officers from home, including Honourable Members of Parliament on behalf of her country without any remuneration to make speeches on behalf of Barbados and it seems to me that the Government should set an example in this respect, that the Government should set an example to the private sector, so that when a private sector wife, a wife employed in a private sector accompanies her husband who may be in the public sector, that the private sector will not use against her that she has broken service.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to say that in relation to the wife of at least one officer who was transferred overseas during my period as Minister and the wife was working with a private sector employer, I was able to get a favourable response from that organisation. It is true it is a regional organisation, but it set an example which the Government would well copy in this respect and I thought that I should approach the issue again. I intend formally, of course, to raise it with my successor and in due course, if necessary, to write to the Honourable Minister of Establishments and if necessary, to bring a question to the Honourable House and if necessary to bring a resolution before the Honourable House on the issue because I think it is too important where the rights of these ladies are concerned to be left without some form of representation.

But, Sir, if there is one thing which has characterised this Government in its progressive and revolutionary social policy, it has been the measures which the Government has taken on behalf of women in this country and

which it continues to take. It is a long cry, Mr. Speaker, Sir, from the days when you and I sat on the other side. You will recall, Sir, when you joined with me in those days in seeking to persuade the then Government, the present Opposition, to at least set up a commission to look at the rights of women, to at least take positive steps to do something to put some of the ills against the women right. They have become latter day converts, latter day converts, Sir to the issue of crying against discrimination against women. We welcome their conversion, Sir. Even Paul, Saul as he was, on the road to Damascus became a convert and then, was a more serious christian than any other of the disciples of whom we know. So, I hope that the Opposition will at least — now that they are convinced of the righteousness and of the correctness of the cause of women in this country — join with us in the progressive measures such as this one which seeks to put paid to discrimination against women.

One last word, Sir, there are still some chauvinistic men, who every time you get up and talk about women's rights telephone me or write me letters, or meet and make comments about why you are fighting so hard for women, they have enough already. Enough of what, Sir? It is not recognised that even now, women are still at a great disadvantage in relation to their legal rights. We are still waiting, for instance, for the Family Law Bill to be promulgated. The rules are ready and it is just a matter of getting the Judicial Advisory Council to prepare the rules. But, until then, they have really serious problems in struggling for their rights in relation to the matrimonial home and assets acquired during marriage. Cabinet has only one lady in the Cabinet and I know how strongly as a matter of conviction and not because of her sex she feels on these issues. She had extensive practise in family law and saw a lot of the abuses that occur. But, I hope that the Cabinet will continue with the progressive legislation and bring a Bill dealing with matrimonial property.

Since I have gone back to the Bar, Sir, I am amazed at the number of suits in which women are being unfaired in relation to their rights during marriage, dealing with the assets acquired during marriage, a lot of them. The men say, "well have you got a piece of paper?" She has not got a legal document. They say, "but where you went out to work?" And, she might have worked as hard as them at home and even when she has gone out to work, they say, "well, show us that you earned as much as us", Sir, and very frequently, the arrangement is that she uses her money to run the house, whilst he uses his money to buy the land, pay the mortgage, *et cetera*, but her name is not down on that piece of paper and she has to fight all the way, if she can get a lawyer sometimes to fight for her to get any entitlement in the evening of her days, Sir.

Now, Sir, I have not got the plaster of a frontbench minister, so I can talk as freely as I can on this. So, I intend to articulate the cause. Just as I articulated it from

the Other Side and I tried my best to articulate it from the frontbench, I can assure Honourable Members — they may get tired of hearing me — on any occasion it presents itself, Mr. Speaker, and with your permission and within the rules of this Honourable House, I will be articulating their cause and I will keep reminding my friends that there is necessity for a Matrimonial Home's Bill. I am giving my Party notice now that if the Government does not bring the Bill — giving them notice, Sir, — that if they do not bring the Bill within a year, it will be here as a Private Members Bill moved by myself from the backbench, Sir. A Bill dealing with the division of the matrimonial home and the matrimonial assets, as recommended by the National Commission on the Status of Women. There are still a lot of chauvinists who are frightened to deal with this, but, if a woman sits down and lives with a man for seven years, she is entitled to some of everything that he had, she had to put up with him for seven years, Sir. That is a lot of burden. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I know your views, Sir.

Back on the Leave Passages. I am happy to support this particular measure before the Honourable House, Sir.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, my intervention will be very brief. I would like first of all to pay a word of tribute to the work that my friend and colleague, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West has done on behalf of the women of this country. I know he has some men very concerned about the stands and positions that he has taken, but, he will be able to battle with that particular aspect of it. But, I am certain that he speaks from a position of concern and deep commitment in this particular cause and it is good when those of us who are in public life can lay it out as we see it and speak with conviction on these matters. Of course, I was particularly moved when he said that having gone back to private practise he has been able to see some of the wrongs that are being done to women and it merely highlights the fact that no matter how hard a particular Government may work, there are still problems to be solved and there will be problems to be solved.

Sometimes we used to believe — and that Side over there used to make it appear as though this Government had done nothing for women. I would just like to remind the Honourable House that when we came into power, we found that there were very many areas of discrimination against women. For instance, headteachers at Boscobel. If you had a female headteacher at a school let us say, Boscobel, in the good constituency of St. Peter, that headteacher would have been paid less than her male counterpart in another school, let us say, Boscobel Boys, as it was called at that time and we worked to correct that. Women in the Public Service also were being paid less than men for doing the same work.
5.35 p.m.

We found that when we came into power and in the sixties we had to correct that. It was impossible for us to correct all the problems and anomalies, and I am hearing the Minister who is responsible for Women's Affairs saying that there are still problems which have to be corrected and we recognise that particular problem, but we have no objection to this particular measure that is before us. It is yet one in which the progress will be registered in this country, and we are happy to support the Resolution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I do not think there is any need in view of the near unanimity in this particular Resolution — there was none on some of the other statements that were made — for me to reply. Of course the Government will give due consideration to some of the other statements that were made, but as you know, Sir, before the matter could become a Government measure there has to be a degree of unanimity on those points, but the Government is seriously interested in removing the last vestige of discrimination within the General Orders of the Civil Service, and we share the concern of the hon. member for Christ Church West that given the number of women that there are in the Civil Service in Barbados, and given the number of very serious positions from which they are absent, it would appear as though according to the normal rules that perhaps there is some merit in his contention that there is still lurking in the background that feeling that there are certain jobs which cannot be performed by women with equal competence as men.

That is all, Sir, I have to say and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Item No. 7 be the instant Order of the day.

Mr. Speaker: Item No. 7 is the instant Order of the day.

THE LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this and the accompanying Bill both deal with an amendment of the Land Tax Act in Barbados to put a penalty so to speak on the use or the failure to use agricultural land for its natural purpose. One Bill allows the Minister to charge an additional land tax, and the other Bill — and they must be taken together — permits the Minister to revoke the land tax which would normally be payable once the Commissioner of Valuations certifies that the land is used

for agriculture and that the type of agriculture that is carried on realises a certain amount per hectare.

So that in looking at the Bills one must look at them in the context that relief is being granted to encourage people to use agricultural land for agriculture, and at the same time, where you own agricultural land and you do nothing with it a penalty is attached as a disincentive for non-use of agricultural land. We have heard a lot of talk on this question of agriculture, and this is another attempt by Government to bring back into cultivation a large amount of agricultural land which went out of production in the sixties and seventies. I believe it was estimated to have been in the vicinity of some 12,000 acres. I think that was the estimate.

Now, it is known that all of this did not necessarily go out of total agricultural production, because some of it is used for the growing of grass, some of it is used because its terrain in some areas, particularly in the Scotland area for tree tops, we also have some that has gone into housing, so that the only thing the Government can do now is to try and recapture that proportion of the land that has not been irretrievably lost. As you will recall, Sir, other provisions have been introduced not so long ago in this House to deal with further inducement, and there will be more coming.

That is the object of the Bill, Sir. Some may ask why is it that it is the Commissioner of Valuations who has to deal with this matter. To be quite frank, Sir, this job was offered to the Ministry of Agriculture but their view is that in view of its nature that it would not be good for them to be the judge and the jury, or the adviser and the jury at the same time, and the Commissioner of Valuations is a very important post in Barbados, and it is he who does the valuations in respect of land, so that one would presume that a Commissioner of Valuations would be in a position to know agricultural land from non-agricultural land and therefore it was felt that he could be the best person to administer it in an objective manner. So that his certificate has been the one by section 9(2) which would be the basis for the refund of the levy.

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

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

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, there is more than one way of trying to stimulate production of any particular thing, and that includes agriculture. One way of course is to impose penalties. I am not so sure how satisfactory a way that is. Another way, of course, is by incentives. These two Acts taken together — we seem to be doing the two Acts at this time — but when we look at them they seem to combine an element of both. In

one Act it seems to penalise the agriculturalists, the farmers, agricultural land owners for not cultivating their land and bringing it to productive use. I am not sure what the other Act says, but from what the hon. member who has just introduced the Bill has said, it is intended to give, I assume, some rebate. It does not say for what purpose, that Act is particularly silent on how, in what circumstances, under what conditions that rebate will be allowed by the Hon. Minister of Finance.

5. 45 p.m.

I assume from what the hon. introducer of the Bill said that it was in fact intended for that very purpose. Sir, I think we have to look at what is happening in agriculture today, and for this reason I do not think that the imposition of a penalty is appropriate. I have a feeling, Sir, that some members on the other side would agree with this.

For some years now many of the plantations in Barbados have been losing money, and only about two or three weeks ago we heard that a very sizable plantation in St. Philip, River Plantation, — I said sizable because I understand it comprises somewhere around 1,000 acres or thereabouts of land — is going out of production. (*Asides*). If it is 680 acres, it is still a sizable plantation, but it is going out of production because it has run itself into bankruptcy. Mr. Speaker, no amount of penalties is going to bring this plantation back into production. In fact it is only going to make the matter worse. I am inviting Government to think again this particular matter particularly at this time. This is not an isolated case of a plantation which has gone out of production. We had other cases. I think the Minister of Labour might know of cases in St. Lucy and there are cases throughout Barbados where you find that agriculture today as traditionally practised is not paying and for this reason I think a penalty is completely unsuitable and that is why I agree with the hon. member for St. Joseph who a couple of sittings ago, it may have been last Tuesday, suggested that the time has come when we should treat agriculture the same way as we treat tourism. I think at this time that we should be giving incentives and not imposing penalties, and I am inviting hon. members to think again about this particular Bill.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, I am indeed, as the hon. member for St. Michael North stated, rather concerned that at this particular time this budgetary proposal of 1980 is coming into play. We heard in a debate last week of the problems in the tractor scheme. We heard of all the problems that the peasant farmers are having as far as the necessary provision of incentives for agriculture are concerned, and I think that this type of penalty should only be introduced after the Government is in a position to really seriously state that they are providing the services to make it easy and reasonable

for people to cultivate their lands to produce this type of income.

I am a little surprised that the Commissioner of Valuations has accepted to be the person to police this particular bit of legislation since he is taking upon himself the fact that the agricultural imports etc. are on the pieces of land he has to monitor. I do not know what administrative machinery he would set up to make sure that the gross income received from agriculture is \$1,000 a year. I am not even sure in my mind that with the work-load that his officers are presently carrying they are in a position to really properly police this and administer it properly, but the assurance was given that the present Commissioner of Valuations has undertaken to carry out this function, and I can only say that he must have discussed it with his staff and is assured that the function can be properly carried out, but I am a little concerned and I think that the Government would be well advised to hold strain on this particular bit of legislation until they can comfortably say that they can provide the necessary infrastructure to make it reasonable for farmers to put any lands into production to produce this type of income.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, arable land in Barbados is too important a resource to be kept idle, and the Government is rigid in its determination to ensure that all the productive land is put to use. I think we ought to put this particular matter into perspective, and thought I do not want to look back too much, Mr. Speaker, it is not always helpful, I think it ought to be said that during the last seven years of the Democratic Labour Party administration approximately 1,000 acres of land per year went out of production in Barbados. For a small country like Barbados to have pursued that as a deliberate policy is in effect, Mr. Speaker, to have laid the national interest and the sub-sector of agriculture in Barbados very significantly indeed. Perhaps in Christ Church where I know best this particular problem can be very dramatically illustrated. For example, the entire area surrounding the Searles Factory went out of production to the point that Searles Factory itself had to be closed down. I refer to estates such as Chancery Lane, such as Gibbons, such as Lower Searles, parts of Coverley and Lowlands. All of the surrounding areas went out of agriculture and, as I said, we took lands out of agriculture at the rate of something like 1,000 acres per year. Even though since 1976 we have been partially successful in returning land from idleness to active production, and the best illustration in terms of one large track of this, Mr. Speaker, is perhaps Bath Plantation, we have a far way to go.

The fact that we are experiencing difficulty is a reflection of a wide range of problems, attitudinal problems, the fact that traditional farming in Barbados

has not been profitable, the fact that there are difficulties in securing labour and so on. We can always have a division of opinion, Mr. Speaker, as to how best any particular goal in public life can be realised, particularly when the public sector itself is not carrying it out. You can either use the carrot approach which is the incentive approach, or you can use the stick approach which is the penalty approach, or you can use both. I myself take the view, Mr. Speaker, that no single approach is likely to be adequate in relation to the enormity of the task that lies ahead of us in relation to bringing back land into active use, and I agree with the views expressed both today and on a previous occasion that agriculture needs to be put on a footing no different from industry and tourism. So although I support the stick approach, the penalty approach, my view is that that cannot be the complete answer, and I am hoping that some time in the new year I will be able to bring to the House a fiscal incentive package that will put agriculture on a footing comparable to what has been done now for the last fifteen or twenty years in industry and in tourism.

May I just say, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of the idle land in Barbados is to be found not on plantations, but is to be found in the ownership of small-holders, small individuals with four, five or six acres, like Neils or Rouens, for example that was cut up just before we came to office, and they have made application to me to support them in their attempt to bring in labouring hands from St. Vincent and Dominica. They have been finding, Mr. Speaker, that it is not profitable to cultivate four or five acres.

5.55 p.m.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: It turns out to be a very expensive hobby; worst so, Mr. Speaker, when you cannot get the labour and so at the heart of this difficulty is an attitudinal problem, a problem that people in this country, Mr. Speaker, are not prepared to work for \$130, \$140 or \$150 a week as labourers. We can continue talking as much as we have been.

In recent years in this country significant damage has been done to the outlook of the young people in this country in relation to agricultural activity and although we sometimes only tease the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John in relation to the speech which he made a few years ago saying that he was looking forward to the day when not a single cane blade would be seen alive in this country, the truth is that it must have been the most devastating pronouncement that he has made in his lifetime. It has led considerably to the attitude which people have in this country to agricultural activity.

My friend and colleague on my left says that he is unrepenting of it but I credit him with more intelligence than that notwithstanding the public face which he wears in relation to this matter that he has not at

least now recognised that it was an unwise, inconsiderate and a totally devastating pronouncement which he made on that occasion at the Labour College.

The problems are not easy, Mr. Speaker. They have not been problems of our creation but I can assure hon. members that it is the wish on this side to continue to tackle the problems. I agree that the stick approach is not the only approach which we shall be pursuing and I very much look forward to the day hopefully in the year ahead when with the support of the Ministry of Finance, very important, I can come to this House and provide the country with an incentive package for the whole sub-sector of Agriculture.

Mr. H. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have listened to most of the speeches on this Resolution and I too would like to make a contribution here.

Now the hon. member who just spoke, the hon. member for Christ Church East, admitted that most of the idle land is small farmer land as we would say and because of this this is the reason why we over on this side say that that is one good reason why incentives should be used and not penalties because if you listen to hon. members speaking you would have heard that the rainfall this year was over-heavy.

When you take into consideration also that the small farmer has to pay now to get his land tilled, when you take into consideration increases in the cost of feed and fertiliser, I would say that all of these things militate against the small farmer and to put a penalty on him now is a further burden to the small farmer and I believe that this penalty instead of causing the small farmer to make his land more productive, will drive him out of business.

I have over the last year or year and a half tried to study most of the developments in agriculture in developing countries and I cannot recall in any of these studies where penalties were put on small farmers for not increasing production. In all of those studies that I have taken — I admit that I have not studied all, but I have studied most of them — in most of these incentives are used to get people to produce and I have had difficulty to understand why in Barbados instead of treating Agriculture as you treat Tourism and any one of the industries by incentives, why you should be putting penalties, penalties which in the long run can only affect small farmers.

The Hon. Minister for Christ Church East also said that all productive land should be put to good use and we agree with this but we just do not agree that a penalty is the way to put land back into production and we would prefer to see incentives used instead of penalties. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker I think this is a very important question that we are talking about, this whole question of Agriculture and I do not believe that it is one that we can approach by way of penalties. I think what we need is encouragement.

The fact that this is part of the Budgetary Proposals does not necessarily mean that the nature of the proposal is not open to debate. This is the whole function of Parliament and we want to make the point that there seems to be a development whereby the Government passes Laws, lays down edicts and dictates but it is always saying do as I say but not as I do.

We had a classic case in which we had the Laws of the country which state that vehicles should be licensed and then we hear that this should not apply to the Transport Board. They should have been licensed by a certain time.

In this particular case we have the case of penalties being imposed but one of the greatest offenders as far as the utilisation of agricultural land is concerned is the Government and its Agencies. There is a lot of unused and under-utilised land under Government control at a number of Government Plantations. Government is one of the largest land owners in this country through the Agricultural Development Corporation.

Now the types of areas that have gone out of agricultural production did not go out of production because the owners felt that it would be a good thing to get out of agriculture *per se*. There was an economic factor involved. (ASIDES). You can call it speculation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Kindly address the Chair.

Mr. SANDIFORD: When land goes out of production there is a special reason for it and the reason is that it is not making money. There are money making people as well. You do not want to invest in land merely for the pleasure of being called a gentleman farmer. That is all right if I have a 1/16th of an acre and I play around with that, not like my friend the member for St. Michael West Central. I believe he is a farmer now and he is a gentleman too so he is a gentleman farmer but you see, Mr. Speaker, when we look at it we can go through this country from the beginning.

It was one Plantation at the beginning and the history of this country has been the alienation of land for purposes other than agriculture. You do not have to go for the areas up in Christ Church only. You can mention them and it was not only in the Democratic Labour Party.

6.05 p.m.

I can mention the very area that I represent, the Bay Estate. It did not go out of agriculture in the time of the Democratic Labour Party, that went out of production in the time of the Barbados Labour Party. We can call all of them. Grazettes was a sugar plantation. (ASIDES) Pardon, alright in the forties then. The point I am making is that that was not.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, let us stop the cross talk now.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: That was not in the time of the Democratic Labour Party and there are estates which went out of production when the Barbados Labour Party formed the Government of this country. That is the history. I would not get up and blame the Barbados Labour Party because plantations went out of production for economic purposes. Indeed, one aspect of the development of this country has been the series of crises that arise from time to time as far as that major sector was concerned — sugar — and we are not going to escape from this particular pattern simply by imposing penalties on people.

First of all, the Government will have to set an example and it will have to demonstrate that the lands that it presently controls that it makes particular use of them as far as, agricultural production is concerned. That is a necessity. I believe that the present Honourable Minister, as indeed, the past Honourable Minister tried, but, there are many problems involved and I think that we are going the wrong way about it by penalising people to try to bring about some kind of agricultural production when in fact, there are no economic returns involved. If the River plantation goes out of production, that is not in the time of the Democratic Labour Party. There are underlying reasons for it and I would urge this Government to get out of the habit of talking in terms of penalising people and let Government itself be a centre for agricultural excellence in the country.

I will have other things to say when we come to talk about the BMC and Lower Estate and the running of a poultry processing plant. I am not against the poultry processing plant, but, I am against that type of management, but that is another matter which I will deal with. I merely want to under line the point that it is a major problem and it is not due to the delinquency of the Democratic Labour Party that lands went out of production. I heard the Honourable Minister now says that there were one thousand acres per year which went out.

I have asked a question in here about how many acres of land the Government has brought back into production (ASIDES) and up to this particular time, I have not received the answer to that. It is one thing to have the slogans but there are serious problems involved, and

we are advancing from this Side that it is not by way of penalties that you are going to get production, but, by way of incentives and when we see the Government setting the example and demonstrating that it can provide not only employment, but, that at the end of the day as they say now, the bottom line shows plus rather than minus, that is the time that you may get a regeneration in agriculture.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I thought that this debate had somewhat been very prolonged and I certainly did not want to add my own quota to its length, but in light of certain remarks made on the other Side, I thought that I should really rise to put a few matters into true perspective.

Now, as far as, the part of penalties and incentives are concerned, this Government has been looking very carefully at the question of incentives from the time it was returned to office in 1976. We have never failed. There are a number of incentive measures given within the Ministry of Agriculture in order to help small farmers. It is not so much the question of what is traditionally known to us, as the Honourable Member for St. Philip South was eloquently holding forth, the question of his knowledge of what attitudes are adopted in countries all over the world. He may not know all of them, but for what he knows, he knows that incentives are always given. That is very true, in the United States of America, all over the world incentives are given, but there is a world of difference between giving incentives to traditional farmers and a number of people who have acquired large house spots over the past ten to fifteen years, four and sixteen acre lots to do absolutely nothing. Those are the people that you have to aim at.

Just drive across in Christ Church through Frere Pilgrim and you would see the amount of idle lands lying there. Come in to St. George and you would see, as well those estates that were owned by the McKenzies and then, next door and you go as far as, Cane Garden and you will see all the developments that were taking place, developments with the best agricultural land in the country that you can think about. Any sensible Government puts its priorities first and has a clear perspective as to what lands should be constantly retained into agriculture and I am very sure that if you were going to retain land for agriculture, you would not cut up places like Frere Pilgrim, Belle, Cane Garden, Blowers, Neils and a host of them. The question of Atlantic Shores and St. Philip those are the places which you will be concerned to put into house spots for any size of spots, as long as the people are going to pay to have them in order to have them there, if they want ranches for house spots.

But, we are concerned that very valuable lands that used to be extremely productive in the past have gone out of cultivation and the people in this country

have been made to suffer as a result of those lands going out of cultivation. I suppose it is well-known that within the total St. George Valley, though, where the stakes are, you have some of the best rainfall in Barbados. In addition to that, you have perfectly good lands, lands that can be mechanically ploughed, cultivated and where you can reap canes without difficulty. Therefore, it is not the problem of this Government. We have seen the justification for imposing penalties.

The Honourable Minister has given this Honourable House an assurance and we will give him the support when the package is put forward that he will come to this Honourable House in the fullness of time with a package of additional incentives to small farmers in this island. But, it is not the traditional small farmers that we are particularly concerned about because those are the peasants in this country, those are the people who work on the estates and use the estates' lands, sometimes, their own lands as a side line. They have done very well. In my own constituency of St. Andrew many people have educated their children and given them professions as a result of their own land.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South talked about Government bringing its own lands back into cultivation. He is right, but, he does not know what is going on, we have already done that. In Bath in St. John, we brought back over 160 acres of lands into cultivation. As a result, we were able to reap, in 1980, in the region of 4,500 tons of canes, that is what we reaped. Also, in St. Andrew the Government lands were let out to a co-operative there known as the Sedge Pond Co-operative. Nearly 100 acres of lands were let to that co-operative group and last year, they rented over 13 acres of lands. So, the Government is looking around. If you go, you do not see in Government's estates again, like in St. Andrew, where you have land that was fallow. They are no longer like that. The only lands you see like that are those lands that are planted in pangola grass and indeed, you cannot regard them as fallow land because they are serving the purpose of feeding animals and they have been planted for that reason. We are taking, Mr. Speaker, all corrective measures to make sure that our lands which are limited and a very precious resource are put to the best use in this country.

6.15 p.m.

We can only do this by offering incentives on the one hand to the peasants who are the traditional farmers, the peasants who have always been on the land, the peasants who have always worked the land. We give to them incentives and penalties will be imposed on those who have the large house spots of four and six acres and who have decided that they will lie there for evermore. It cannot work that way.

I want to say this in addition, and I also offer this now as a warning to the people out there that those lands that are uncultivated, with a tremendous amount of bush, encouraging all kinds of insects, encouraging the aedes egypti mosquito which will lead to dengue fever for the Government to be told they are doing nothing about it, get ready to clean up or I will get ready to prosecute. It is as simple as that, and I hope that the Opposition will join with us when that time comes, in the interest of good health in this country, to make sure that all lands are worked up and cleaned up.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish before the Minister closes the Bill to make a suggestion to the Government that these two Bills be combined in one measure in order to save parliamentary time. They basically deal with the same subject and the only thing that Bill No. 2 does is to introduce the new section 24A dealing with the conditions under which a rebate may be granted in respect of agricultural land, and I am sure with the leave of the House and of all sides of the House we can in Committee introduce the rebate section as a new subsection (3) of the main Bill now before the House, and then seek the House's leave to withdraw the second Bill. Certainly it will save parliamentary time both here and in the Other Place. Mostly the issue has been discussed in debate so far by both sides of the House. It should be one Bill. What has happened here is that I believe two draughtsmen may have dealt with the matter and they have gone through Cabinet separately, but at this stage it is still possible for us to combine them together.

Mr. Speaker, normally I do not get into the arguments on agriculture because everybody in this country is an agriculturalist, everybody knows more about agriculture than the planters, everybody has the solution to agriculture, and therefore people like me who are merely the bystanders should not really get in among the experts, but my late adopted mother always said that book sense is not common sense, and I believe that there are a few common sense points that ought to be made on the question of agriculture and particularly the work attitudes of people.

I keep saying it is no point in Barbados in the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century to keep harking back to slavery, except in so far as it is a reminder of our past. The destiny of this country in the future will not be determined by attitudes that are based on historical wrongs suffered a long time ago, it will be determined on the strength and determination and the character of the people who now control the political destiny of this country to take steps to redress any economic imbalances there are, so that people can share in a greater measure in the increasing wealth of this country, and it must be the increasing wealth of this

country. If we took all the wealth in Barbados today and allowed the crop to stand still and divided it up among us equally, we would still all be poor, and therefore we can only do better in Barbados if we produce more.

The other general statement I would like to make is this, Sir, that any country that has made it in the world, be it Germany, be it the United States, be it Rome of the past, be it the United Kingdom, they have all either had a very solid agricultural base or they have had access at very low cost to an abundance of raw resources in colonies and empires overseas. We have not got access, except perhaps with Switzerland in some limited sense, although it has a very strong agricultural base, and any country as small as our own is fooling itself if it believes that it must not have and continue to have a strong agricultural base. That all of us have to accept.

Now, some of us have to work in agriculture. All of us will not work in the law, all of us will not work in sanitation, all of us will not work as directors of companies, all of us will not work as teachers. What we have to set about to do is to make agriculture attractive in terms of living conditions and attractive in terms of remuneration. Now living conditions on the agricultural plantations, both governmental and non-governmental, have been archaic. I believe that the Government should use part of the funds accumulated for the purpose of improving conditions on the Government's plantations setting an example to the private sector to do likewise on the private sector plantations. There is a strong case, Mr. Speaker, for improving the equipment and the clothing which agricultural workers have to use in agriculture, and I hope that the Minister's package of incentives will be directed in this respect as well. The welfare of the working agricultural labourer is important and it will create conditions under which he can function and function properly. Likewise the physical conditions existing not only for recreation but for the physical comfort of the agricultural worker must be upgraded. Likewise the equipment used by the agricultural worker must be upgraded, and I would like to see a greater use of the funds collected under the various levies as well for benefiting the agricultural worker as much as some other members of the general public have benefited from these funds.

Having said so, Sir, one of the greatest areas in which we ought to concentrate — and I believe the Minister is aware of this — is in the area of training. I think that the Government's programme in the future has a great incentive for creating a cadre of well qualified agricultural workers and craftsmen. There is no point pretending that Barbados can have a vibrant agricultural section into the 20th and 21st centuries unless we are prepared to use the upgraded equipment and technology available in other parts of the world. That is why

I think the Government's programme for an agricultural training college at Sayes Court, training school first at Sayers Court and finally an agricultural training college, is a bold and imaginative part of the Government's programme for revitalising agriculture in Barbados, and I wish to commend to the Minister, I know it is in his constituency, I hope he will take urgent steps to see that that part of the Government's Manifesto is implemented at an early stage.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a word about sugar, because I believe that we are getting bogged down in the rhetoric of emotion in politics in this country and people are not keeping their heads on. I believe that there is a case for massive assistance to the sugar industry at this time, and I really must take issue with those who will go around shouting from the house tops that you are taking workers' money and using it for revitalising the industry for the benefit of a few planters. I think that is a cheap argument, I think it is based on purely emotive analysis and not a proper consideration of what are the facts confronting the sugar industry, or indeed the manner in which the levies were established. 6.25 p.m.

If one looks back at the historical past you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that at the turn of the century the British Government put up a large sum of money to be used then for a similar purpose, for the capital development of agriculture, and it was out of that revitalising of the capital structure of agriculture that we were able in the future to establish enough welfare programmes to benefit the island as a whole and not only a few of the planting class.

The other point which one must always stress in this House is that the Government today is the biggest single holder of agricultural land in this country, and that means that the people of Barbados today own more of the sugar plantations than they have owned at any time in these 300 years of the country, and that any capital injection of funds into agriculture is going to strengthen the ownership position of the masses of the population of Barbados contrary to the cheap arguments that I hear that you are putting it in the hands of a few plantation owners. I think a lot of people have not watched the shift that is occurring in the ownership of the resources of this country, but be it in Bridgetown or elsewhere, the pension funds, the mutual funds owned by all of us who are policy holders in insurance companies are coming to own more of the real wealth and production of Barbados, and what is happening is that those of us who have the real ownership are not doing the real guidance, and we are not watching the point of development that has taken place in the country, how there is a silent revolution, but a revolution it is that is occurring in which many of us are missing the opportunity to use this shift for effective control of the

economy guidance of Barbados. Instead we waste our time on a lot of colour business; we waste our time on shooting words at a few people and grudging people for what they have and not getting up and making use of the real opportunity.

I am an unrepentent believer in shifting the distribution of the economic resources so that a wider sector of the community has access to these resources both in terms of opportunity and in terms of the wealth they have, but it calls for proper objective analysis; it calls for a proper look at plans that can be really effective, and emotion in this is not going to get us anywhere. That is why I am telling the Government that they know they have my wholehearted support on this. They must stand up on the issue of resuscitating the sugar industry in this country. Anybody who likes Barbados must recognise that we have to base sugar as the main plank of our agricultural thrust for a long time to come, because we do not know how to do many other things properly, and although we have made some real progress in the last 25 years in non-sugar agriculture, it is going to take us much longer to become self-sufficient or near self-sufficient in non-sugar agriculture than it will take us to revitalise the sugar sector of agriculture to maintain proper reserves and to maintain proper progress and economic development in Barbados.

It has only taken one year of a bad crop where we have a short fall of \$43 million in foreign exchange to see the total effect that it could have on the economy, and no matter how much the Opposition talks, no matter how much the Opposition may say, no matter how many Resolutions they may bring down to the House, the fact remains that no economy such as Barbados can withstand a hit to agriculture in one year to the extent of \$43 million in foreign exchange without a Government that has guts taking drastic measures to deal with the position. I talk in this House from the position of a member with the highest votes in the House, so I talk from a position of strength, any my constituents know that anything I say here I repeat in that constituency and get more votes. I challenge the Opposition and I challenge any politician to have guts and to have the courage of his convictions and to get up in public and tell them that the Government has to face up, if the Government are true Barbadians, to dealing with the issue even if it means asking all of us to tighten our belts, and that means all of us.

I anticipate that the Minister in his budgetary proposals in due course will deal with agriculture, revitalising it as well as putting taxation where taxation is due, and I believe that when we are out of the morass of economic confusion in the world as we will get out, things will improve. We have got out before. This country has been challenged many times. We are strong patriots, we are strong nationalists. We have been challenged many

times and in the 300 years of our history we have risen to that challenge on very many occasions, and with patriots like you and myself following in the great tradition of the patriots that have gone before, we have always been prepared to stand up and speak out in the interest of Barbados as a whole rather than on any narrow, sectarian or political partisan interest at the time. That is the whole point.

Now this Government need have no fear. It should stick to the task. I believe that there is a case for penalising some people who are misusing proper agricultural land. There must be a discretion on how it is exercised, but part of the greatest tragedy that hit agriculture in this country was the period between 1970 and 1976 when there was a mass dissection of good agricultural land for building purposes on the flimsiest of excuses. I really do not want to become obnoxious, but I do not believe that the Democratic Labour Party should raise its voices on issues such as this. I believe that there are good people in the Democratic Labour Party including some of the new members who are as much ashamed of the history of the cutting up of good agricultural land during that period of the Democratic Labour Party rule as those of us on this side are ashamed. Who can look with any satisfaction at what has happened to Blowers? Look at Cane Garden, very good agricultural land, lost forever on the greed of a few people and the stupid policies of misguided people at the time. Who can feel happy about that?

When I drive in the countryside and I see the waste, I realise that it is lost forever to those generations of young Barbadians who are coming after us. We have prevented that. I had some hand in implementing the policy at the time in the Town and Country Planning Department, and if I had the opportunity again, if it ever happened again, I tell the members on the front bench that I am coming right back on the front bench to deal with it again in no uncertain terms. For this reason I think the Government should not be afraid of this measure. The Government is doing a good job in agriculture. They have a far way to go. They have had some setbacks, but any battle that is worth fighting, you must not be a coward, you must stand up when the going is tough, take tight decisions, keep your head, don't lose your cool, don't lose your confidence and you are sure to come out on top.

Mr. KING: Mr. Speaker, my Hon. and Learned friend, the hon. member for Christ Church West said in his statements that emotion will not help in dealing with this matter and then proceeded to deliver a highly emotional statement on the whole problem. Now I do not quite understand what is the purpose of this whole Bill.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, there is certainly a difference between speaking in a loud voice and speaking in pejorative terms.

Mr. KING: Mr. Speaker, I think we all understand the point which was made. The hon. member for Christ Church West talked about resuscitating the sugar industry in this Island, and he talked about bringing idle land back into production for agriculture, and I venture to make this prediction now, Mr. Speaker, that this measure which is being introduced in this Honourable House today will have none of the effects which hon. members on the other side are articulating as their point of view now, because it seems to me as the debate went on that what the Government was concerned largely about was the fact that some years ago under the Democratic Labour Party administration as they put it, plantation lands were cut up into four and six-acre lots and sold to persons who may put large houses on them, some may have used them for little farming, but largely to have beautiful and expensive grounds and lawns and things of that sort.

I predict, Mr. Speaker, that none of these measures is going to have any effect on those persons who bought land at the time, because the same people who bought four and six acre-lots are people who can afford to pay the levy which Government is putting on them now, and they are people who if they have no interest in agriculture will take no steps whatsoever in re-introducing agriculture into their land.

6.35 p.m.

So that the fact that the penalty is being imposed upon the people of that kind is not going to have the effect which the Bill intends.

Now in my view, Mr. Speaker, the provision which is being made now is like other measures which the Government has introduced, a sectional tax on the community. A sectional tax is what I call it and if Government wants to impose a tax on those persons who in years gone by had bought 4 and 6 acre lots and have turned them into expensive house owning grounds and taken them out of agriculture, put the tax on them. If the tax is desired, let them pay the tax but I am saying that the measure which is proposed now will have no effect whatsoever in achieving the objectives which the Government intends.

Now my colleague on this side, the hon. member for St. Michael South, made the point that Government should set the example that they have lots of land themselves which were idle and not as productive as they ought to be. I myself have no statistics on the quantum of land which Government owns and the effect and the use which is put to most of them but it seems to me that obviously Government has to set the example.

I know in times past there was a lot of land owned by the Agricultural Development Corporation. We do not hear too much of that Institution these days — which has not been as effectively used as it could be and we

would expect that by example Government would encourage people to use their lands in the most effective way possible and we have heard comments about land going out of use because of the state of the finances of the land-owners and it would seem to me that penalties where persons are required to pay for lands which are marginally productive and which are economically unsatisfactory in a situation of that sort, what Government could do if it really wants to ensure that agriculture is being given the attention which it should be given, should be perhaps to take the land from the persons on a lease basis and farm the land themselves.

If there are obvious cases where land is not being used, land which should be for agriculture and it is not being used for agriculture, it would seem to me that it might be a better strategy for Government to consider leasing the land from persons who are not using them and putting them back into agriculture. Perhaps The River Plantation case in St. Philip might be a case in point. (ASIDES). You are not touching it?

The persons would have use of it but the reasons why the lands have gone out of production might be because there were economically useless so that from that point of view the Government should first of all examine the situation carefully to see what in essence is the real status of the land because we know that the cost of agriculture is going up daily and we really want to ensure that we are not putting an unusual burden on people by putting penalties on them in respect of a property irrespective of who ever farms it which would be unproductive and financially unrewarding.

Obviously, in those cases where people have deliberately left good land to be idle, I am in favour of some action being taken to encourage putting those lands back into production so I am concerned about the case of those persons whose lands have gone out of production from the simple position that to farm that land would be totally uneconomical for them and I am saying that in a situation of that kind, if Government wants to impose a tax on people who have bought land of 4 and 6 acre lots, and they are not using them for agriculture now but are using them for the purpose of having beautiful surroundings, if it is a tax they want, then we should have the situation where a tax is instituted to people who have those lands and not a general tax which can involve lots of small people into the community who have lots maybe of 3, 4 and 5 acres and whose lands may not be producing as Government expects and in circumstances where those people who can least afford it will have to bear the pressures and problems which this tax will impose. Thank you, Sir.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I have to reply, Sir. I propose to reply, Sir. There are a number of misconceptions and a number of twistings of the real

provisions of this Bill and of course a number of valuable suggestions have been made on this side and one or two from the other side.

I think the first point that we should disabuse our minds of is this. This does not apply to all agricultural land. The Section sets out three conditions before there can be a levy. The first thing is that it only applies where there is three-quarters of a hectare or more and I think the hon. member for St. Philip North will tell us that that is somewhere over the traditional acre and a half. A hectare, I understand, is 2.2 and I make it somewhere in the vicinity of a little over an acre and a half so all land in Barbados underneath an acre and a half cannot be affected by this Bill.

Now the hon. members on the other side have always been preaching in this country that 90% of the land is in the hands of a very small group of people and 10% of the balance of the land is in the hands of those 12,000 agriculturists. Now obviously 90% of the people whom the hon. members on the other side are giving the public the impression that this Bill will effect cannot be affected at all by virtue of the pre-qualification which is established before this Bill comes into operation, so what are we talking about?

The second point, Sir, that we have to draw to the hon. members' attention is this that it is only the acre and a half which is valued at \$2,000 per hectare or more. Now, the hon. member, for St. Philip North will tell you, he used to be Commissioner of Valuations, that lands in St. Lucy particularly on the coast, in St. Philip, in Christ Church and in all of those areas do not reach that valuation because already they have been valued because of the marginal nature of those lands for agriculture to be exclusive of the provisions of this Bill. That is the *de facto* position.

Now you see the hon. members on the other side are tying themselves up because the hon. members will tell you that the land in St. Lucy down at Pie Corner is valued at more than that. He said it is valued at more than that. Now how many people in Pie Corner own more than one and a half acres because the whole point is that on the one hand land owners in Barbados challenge the Commissioner of Valuations when they value their land for land tax purposes as being too high but when they come for land acquisition purposes they change their minds and say the land is of potential. You cannot have your cake and eat it. Obviously you cannot argue one thing when you are talking of the one point and argue something different when you are talking of the other point so that is another pre-condition. That is another condition which will prevent the vast majority of small land owners in Barbados from being attached to this.

We go further. There is another point and that is that before the 1st January, 1968 it was actually used as agricultural land and the reason for that was very simple.

6.45 p.m.

The Town Planning Amendment that we had, the major Planning Bill stated that the use of land was settled at that time for all subsequent planning purposes. So, we have another condition, 1968 it must have been in agriculture and it is no longer used as agriculture or that it is not in use which would preclude it from being that. So, if you put houses on it, you cut it up, if you do things like that with it, that precludes it from being in agriculture, so it cannot apply again.

Now, Sir, the basic position is that the Honourable Members on the Other Side are being unfair for this reason. They know that their conscience hurts them when they drive around Barbados and they see people who have bought land since 1968, particularly since 1971, particularly since 1971 under the Administration of Joyland, under the Administration of Simpson, under the Administration of Cozier, under the Administration of Wilkie, under all of those Administrations in which land in this country — (ASIDES) You do not know about them? Sir, we all know, Frere Pilgrim, Rowans, Neils, Cane Garden, Belle, Blowers, thousands of acres of land.

Now, let me say this, Sir. The Government says, by this Bill, put the land into cultivation, or if you do not put it into cultivation, pay a penalty by way of land tax. If you put it into cultivation, we will give you back the cost of putting it into cultivation. That is what the Bill says. We will give you back the cost. Section 9(c) sets that out. And now, with the other Bill and the suggestion of the Honourable Member for Christ Church West, we will incorporate into this Bill so that people can read them as a whole. It goes further and this is one of the incentives which the Government is systematically introducing, that in respect of all agricultural land the Honourable Minister has power now to give a waiver of taxation because it is the intention of the Government in respect of agricultural land that where people make the best use that can be made of it to relieve them of some proportion of the land tax. So, the Bill has in incentives too. This Bill does not interfere with the average land owner in Barbados. It interferes with those people who in the words of the Rt. Hon. Leader of the Opposition — he does not stay in here, Sir, because I remember vividly the words that he uses on these occasions — he said that there is a class in Barbados who have baronial ideas about houses and they are the people who bought up the land up in — remember him making the speech — there is a new class now who want baronies, they want baronial estates like Frere Pilgrim and all of that, but they must pay.

I will tell you otherwise too, Mr. Speaker, the existing Income Tax Act has acted as a spur to that kind of activity until we amended that Law and there should be another amendment too. If we are going to exempt agricultural profits from any kind of taxation, agricultural losses cannot be offset against any other income. So that, we are doing the exercise, Sir, we are going through the exercise because it may well be, when we put the computer upon the actual figures that there are more agricultural losses being charged off against particularly professional incomes in Barbados than there are agricultural profits. We are doing the exercise too, we are doing the exercise, so we may be arguing about nothing, we may well be arguing about nothing but, we must also not forget that under the Income Tax Laws in Barbados that agriculture is the only industry that is a basic industry. That it is entitled to a 40% capital, initial allowance, in addition to depreciation allowance every year. Do not forget that too. So, built into the taxation laws in Barbados, there are a lot of allowances which upon close examination may well prove that in truth and in fact when we are talking about taxation and profits from agriculture that we are not getting all of these profits that people think we are getting. I know there are a lot of duty free schemes in relation to fertilizer.

We have to go to CARICOM and ask for permission every two years to be allowed to waive the duty on fertilizer coming into Barbados, we have been doing it. There are a number of other things in relation to that, more packages, a greater package will come. This is one in the series of packages, so do not let us run away with this idea.

Now, I have a very different idea on a number of the points that have been raised, Sir. I strongly believe, Sir, that there is in this community a group of young people who are coming up who are interested in working in agriculture, but, they are interested in working in agriculture on their own account. They are not working for anybody else. But, one of the dilemmas we have in this society is that the people who want to work the land cannot get access to the land and people who have the land do not want to work the land and that is one of the problems and we have to grasp that nettle.

Now, I am in favour — and I would be very glad if the Opposition can tell us that they will support us — to have a statutory lease scheme in respect of all of these people in the four acre lots and if they do not work it, take off the house spot part, have a statutory lease to the B.A.D.C. in respect of all the rest, consolidate the area and lease it back to some of these new type of farmers that we are having. I am interested in that. Let the A.D.C. be landlord.

The other problem that we have here is that there is an exaggerated view as to the value of agricultural

land because the value of agricultural land is no greater than the amount of capital that you put in equipment to work it because hand labour work is not in vogue today. You have to drive tractors, you have to drive other machinery with sprays, you have to drive other machines. And, an interesting, sociological fact is taking place here under the eyes of a lot of people and they are not seeing it. Who are driving the tractors? Who are driving the big trucks in Barbados today? Who are driving them? You will see it is a lot of young boys who have gone to school some of them have GCEs and so forth, but they recognise that this equipment is a very expensive equipment and to drive one of them, you have to be paid commensurate with if you are driving a boat that costs a lot of money, an aeroplane that costs a lot of money and many of them are driving air conditioned Massey Fergusson or Koff tractors and cane cutting machines working for six and seven hundred dollars a week on a certain shift. This is happening before our eyes and of course, the Government is in tune with all of this. That is why we have the Skills Training Agricultural Scheme in existence in Christ Church. You see, there is method in our madness. You see, you do not see. Your problem is — we are far ahead of where you are seeing. That is why, Sir, we have established the Skills Training Scheme. For what though? For people who will be using the implements in the future.

I resist all the time, Sir, any suggestion of help from my own constituents about bringing in people from the other islands to work in agriculture in Barbados out of crop season because I believe that you are luring these people to come here to work in an industry when you yourself know, in a couple of years' time those very same people are going to move from working in agriculture and go and work in the construction industry and other industries. Let us settle it once and for all. We need an agricultural farming course for the new type of farmers we will have in the future.
6.55 p.m.

The Community College should have an agricultural course making use of the Pine with their animal husbandry and all the land at ADC estates at Graeme Hall for practicals. We want a full time two year course comparable to what you get at the Eastern Caribbean Farm Institute, comparable to what you get at Farmingdale in the United States, comparable to what you get at the Jamaican School of Agriculture, but when those people graduate the Government must have laws whereby there is available land of a sufficient economic unit for them to be their own full time farmers. That is the type of agriculture we will have in the future.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Hon. Minister be much longer?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I am now moving, Sir. Agriculture is such an important debate I feel I should come back after dinner.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

On Resumption:—

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I am shortly going to conclude, and I want to say that the point made by the hon. member for Christ Church West Central is a point which the Government has taken into consideration. It reinforces a point that I have been making and which I spoke of earlier, that the dilemma that we face here in Barbados at the present moment is that we have an attitudinal problem in relation to work in agriculture, but at the same time we have to recognise that there is a group of people who genuinely would like to make a career in agriculture but not as traditional workers for other people in agriculture full time, they want to be their own farmers and they want to make use of the improved education that they are exposed to, so that any Government has to devise a policy to ensure that there is land available for people who want to work land under conditions which would allow them to feel that they are contributing to society in a similar manner to which their compères at school who have gone into other occupations are doing.

The Rural Integration Development Scheme and the Springhall Land Lease Scheme are attempts to try and work out what is a feasible economic unit. As hon. members are aware, traditionally it was thought that four acres were an economic unit. I believe that the evidence is now clear that four acres is not a sufficient area of land for an agricultural unit that is going to grow traditional crops. It may be all right for pig or poultry production, for small livestock production, but four acres would be useless in relation to dairy farming or beef farming, but in respect of poultry or pig production it may be a sufficiently large unit. We have modified the Springhall Land Lease Scheme to provide a mix of various types of acreage. I believe the minimum acreage is probably four, but then there are eight, there are twenty three for dairy farming and cane farming.

I am convinced in my own mind that the Rural Integration Development Scheme together with the Springhall Scheme should give us a sufficient evidentiary base to determine what kind of unit is economic in the future. I think we should look at agriculture in the context of how many people, given the experience of other highly industrialised countries, are likely to be involved in

agriculture in the next 20 years. The optimum number of people who are employed as a percentage of the labour force in the highly industrialised countries is somewhere between three and five percent. Now we have reached a stage in Barbados where at the peak of agricultural employment we are somewhere in full time employment in the vicinity of 7,000 people in a labour force somewhere in the vicinity of about 104,000, so that we are in a situation where we have reached the point where as many people are now employed in agriculture as one can reasonably expect would be employed at the optimum condition and that is why there is a shortage of agricultural labour. That is precisely why there is a shortage, because we have reached the stage where we are about five to six percent of the working population employed in agriculture, so we do not have any problem about displacement of people.

8.10 p.m.

What we have a problem in and which is arising is that the number of people who are going out because of age is less than the number of people coming in. That is our problem now. That is precisely the problem we are reaching where more are leaving than those who are coming in, so we have to tailor our agrarian or our land use or land availability policy to ensure that the people who want to come in can get access to the land. We have to ensure that the capital is available to the people who want to work the land, that the machinery is available, and the most worthwhile suggestion, I think, has come from the hon. member for Christ Church West Central on this point because it coincides with the sort of thoughts that we have been having on this side, and that is, how can we ensure that there is available land of the size that would attract these people on conditions that will make it economical. That is the dilemma, because even although we have plantations up for sale, the capital cost of the plantation is far greater than the 20 or 25 year old people can handle, nothing to do with the equipment that is necessary. That is what we have to settle on now.

I firmly believe that there is still a role for the people who are part-time farmers. I have seen myself in the course of my work in the ACP that in a country like Germany they have a very large percentage of their people who are part-time farmers. They have four or five cows, but they are people who are living in areas where construction or indeed tourism is a very important part of their working life, and these farmers farm land in the period of time when they are not working in their normal type of activity. They are part-time farmers but the State has a policy to ensure that in that period of time when there is no work in their normal occupation, they have part-time work on their land. They are part of the farming community, but they are not regarded as the backbone of the German farming community; they are regarded as being a supplement to the existing farming community.

One of the problems with our Ministry of Agriculture is that a tremendous amount of time and effort has been devoted to tailoring policies to deal with those 12,000 part-time farmers of whom some 4,000 to 5,000 are in fact the backbone of the agricultural labour in Barbados, and that is the problem. We need a shift in attitude in relation to that. Let us have our gardeners, but do not tailor the whole policy of the Ministry on the fact that you have this large number of people. We need a hard core of full time farmers for places like the Springhall land lease scheme and things like the Gibbons Cooperative in Christ Church. Poultry farming has been an outstanding success both under the Democratic Labour and under the Barbados Labour Party. Barbados is about 98% self-sufficient in poultry production and in pork production. We now have to do the same with milk.

Our problem with milk production in Barbados is a very simple problem, and it is that the farmers believe that the community owes them an artificial standard of living. The research that has been done over the course of the last twenty years is only being utilised by three or four milk producers. There are still others who feel that milk production in a country like Barbados has to be carried on by the use of total imports of raw materials for feeding. Those days are over. It would surprise hon. members on the other side to know that there are at least four farmers in Barbados who can demonstrate that given the utilisation of sugar cane, river tamarind and other grasses that have been developed here, it is possible to cut down on the supplements which require a lot of foreign exchange and still sell milk at the price that is being offered at present. So that the row that you hear being broadcast in the newspapers by the spokesman of the dairy farmers is a row really and truly between the inefficient farmers and the Government. We do not feel that the community should pay for their inefficiency. We can demonstrate that there are farmers, some with university degrees who make use of the research that has gone on, who are using these things, and make no bones about it, the Government will challenge them to demonstrate to us that if they use the research that has been going on for ten years here in Barbados and they can prove to us that using these feed inputs they are losing money, we will give them a price rise. But until they can do that, we say that we have other information. The Ministry of Agriculture has the information and there are farmers who are using it. You know that farmers are people who are very difficult to change.

I am not in favour of deluding people into believing that Barbados can be a society in which we can farm upon the basis of imported labour. We may need some imported labour just as the United States use our labour at peak time, just as it is known that agriculture in California could not do without Mexican labour at peak time. In Florida they cannot do without West Indian

labour at peak time. In Canada at peak time when it is optimum picking, they need that. All over Europe as students many of us had to go and work in agriculture in the 1950s whether it was picking strawberries or blackberries because there is a peak time of demand. All these things happen. I picked strawberries many times on the Norfolk Broads at £1 a day, so that is the position.

I agree with the hon. member for St. Michael West. All his talk about slavery and all that is a lot of outdated stuff. You will never have 20,000 people employed in agriculture again in Barbados in my life time or in the foreseeable future. The maximum will be 5,000 to 6,000, but the interesting thing that we should not forget is that in all genuine farming communities, people help one another. We have to learn how to share machinery. We have to learn how one farmer helps another farmer. We have to learn how there are people who become agricultural workers but they are an intimate part of the agricultural community, and although they might not own land they are so skilled as operatives that their standard of living is the equivalent of people who are working in construction and that kind of thing. I believe that the modern new mechanical harvesting machines cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$3,000 to \$5,000. I hear the new air-conditioned ones cost about \$5,000. Now what is the difference between that and a Cessna plane? What is the difference between that and a very large B9 on a construction site?

8.20 p.m.

Now if they earn \$500 a week for driving that and looking after it, there is no reason why people who drive that in the Agricultural Industry should not earn the same. That is what we have to get across. We have to train people for that and this question of spraying, that is one of the most technical jobs of all, Sir, because people have been paying very little attention to that in Barbados.

It has a very serious environmental consequence so that far from penalising the small people, this Bill is an attempt by us to ensure — the last attempt — it is really the last attempt. If this fails, we only have one alternative, Sir, and that is that we have to come down here with a Bill giving some Government Agency like the Irish had to do.....

Mr. SPEAKER: So we must now wind up.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir, we are winding up right now. We must now do like the Irish did, give the people the last opportunity. If after this Bill they do not do it I think the Government will have to come down here with an option to lease the land that is unused so that we can get security of tenure and hand it over to farmers who really want to do it. That is the end and if you call that revolutionary, if you call that communism the Government has faced all of those issues. I want to

know what will be the position of the Opposition when that Bill comes down, Sir. *(Applause)*.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, Sir, that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, on closer examination of Clause 2, I think the draftsmen have made a serious oversight. When you look at Clause 2, Mr. Chairman, it appears to me that it is aimed primarily at the 4 and 6 acre lots as the former Minister of Agriculture said but look at what has been going through my mind, Mr. Chairman.

Let us take a large plantation, Mr. Chairman. What happens to those fields that are greater than two hectares that are not in the course of normal crop rotation and out of agriculture? There is no provision inside here to penalise the plantation owner for that section in that peculiar situation and as a matter of fact this section will hardly catch any plantation at all for the simple reason that the present situation of sugar and the cost of plantations on the market there are very few plantations now that will carry a value of more than \$9 or \$10 per acre which would mean that it is technically possible for every plantation in this country to go out of agriculture and this Clause will not catch them or penalise them.

I think this is a very serious oversight on the drafters that you are leaving out an escape Clause in this Act that will make it possible for about 80% of the arable land in Barbados to go out of Agriculture and the Government will not have any recourse by way of penalties or otherwise to have anything to do about it.

I think I would like to hear the Minister's views on this because this is a very serious situation that the Clause is specifically drafted to rope in and penalise only those few people who have the 4 and 6 acre lots and plantations can go almost free in not putting their land into agriculture and this is something we must take a very serious look at since we have just seen River going completely out of agriculture and it is quite likely that a few other marginal plantations which might have had a bad sugar crop would be contemplating this type of action

and even this provision would not make it possible for even a penalty to be levied against them and I really want to invite the views of the Government on what procedure would be taken and what would happen in cases like these.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, obviously when the Act was drafted the announcement of a decision in respect of what would happen could not have been contemplated but the position is that we have made a check down at River Plantation and River may be going out of sugar cane cultivation but not out of agricultural cultivation. There is a fine distinction between the two because, as I understand it, the utilisation of land in that P.6 soil — I think there is a thing called P.6 soil which is very boggy is one which has been the subject of a lot of research, not only by the owners but by the Ministry of Agriculture because it is not only River. There is a little belt that goes into a place called Thicketts and some other place. When the rain falls the water does not go down and when there is no rain nothing grows so that even when you get a lot of rain you get a lot of flooding and when there is no rain you get nothing so they are looking for an alternative crop for the utilisation of that.

Apparently there are one or two crops that can be grown so that this suggestion that it is going out of cultivation altogether is one which is, according to all of the information that has come to us, not a fact. Apparently it is a fact that sugar cane has been proven to be uneconomical but that does not mean that corn is uneconomic.

8.30 p.m.

As to sugar cane, apparently, it is a fact that sugar cane has been proved to be uneconomic, but that does not mean that corn is uneconomic, that does not mean that cassava is uneconomic, that does not show that nuts is uneconomic — there are a lot of other things — that does not mean that pigs cannot be grown, that does not mean that pangola grass cannot be grown, there are a lot of other types of things, a lot of other things.

Now, as to this Clause, Sir, we feel that the advice from the Commissioner of Valuations and the advice from others has been that the site value of \$2 000 per hectare and before 1968 — that is a condition, do not let us forget that, that this only deals with the situation where there was a bit of land which before 1968 was in fact in agriculture. After 1968 and it was in agriculture, it is not covered by this at all. We are not dealing with that situation at all. We are not dealing with land that is now in cultivation and subsequently goes out of cultivation. We hope that Section — the other Bill which will now become part of this that with the incentives that we will give with the new Town Planning policy.

It is quite possible that River with one thousand acres could be — if you could find a crop — converted into pig farming or something like that. I understand that the most successful pig farms that we have in Barbados are at Sandford, some of the most. As a matter of fact, they tell me that people at the Ministry of Agriculture that bankers are good pig farmers up there. That is what they tell me that it is ideally suited for pigs and chickens, they tell me it is wind swept. These are things that they tell us, that it is wind swept, no disease, reasonably good drainage, not any question of disease and things like that. They tell me that there is one man up there who has one hundred breeding sows. Well, if it is good for that, that is agriculture too. All I want him to do is to try to grow the feed and we would not have to import the feed.

We have done a complete survey of our agricultural potential for export. We can export carrots from Barbados, we can export onions in a short period of time, provided we learn to keep them, provided we learn to dry them, provided we control blights. But, how can I compete, how can Barbados compete in pigs' production, when in other countries in the Caribbean, particularly Trinidad which is our nearest neighbour, natural market, when they have a subsidy of feed to the extent of 75% of the cost of feed? How can I compete with that? This Government cannot afford to give a pig farmer a subsidy of 75% of pigs' feed, of feed cost. That is the problem we are dealing with.

Luckily for us, the tourist industry and our local purchasing power has expanded, where more and more people are using ham. We even have a turkey industry that has developed lately and other than the very big birds which the big hotels use, the medium sized birds, we dropped last year significantly, the importation of turkeys. Here is another area where we can demonstrate that Barbados can produce them on reasonably competitive conditions. The Licensing Authorities in this country come before the Licensing Committee and we say that we will not give permits to come in from abroad unless the price abroad is so competitive that our producer — we give our producer a 10% — 15% margin, that is the level that we give. So, we say alright, if you can prove to us that you can produce within 15% of the others, then we have the consumers' interest. This is what we are trying to do.

So that, Mr. Chairman, this is intended to catch land which was in agriculture before 1968. Now, if you run into problems with relation to the future because of the present difficulties with the sugar industry, I am sure that we will have to come down with a scheme. But, let the hon. member be assured, River will not be cut up in to two acre lots, they are not going into house spots. They may have some rab land that will go into house spots, that is a different

matter, but we have had no applications, certainly I do not know of anybody who has seen an application in respect of it and I have seen in the newspapers about this. I believe there are difficulties with cane. We have tried cotton, all kinds of things, but, our aim is to ensure that the land is put to the best use. That is really the reply to that. This Bill was never intended to deal with that, except that the next Bill which will now become part of this Bill, the rebate of tax, together with other things, we would hope to help.

I would like to see and I saw it myself, the Honourable Minister who was then Minister of Agriculture went with us, there is a scope for small agricultural units in Barbados for what is called green house farming. We had three or four experiments here, three or four. We have used one, there is one at Black Bess, there is one in St. George. I have seen in Sicily myself, the Honourable Minister saw some of it too, when he was Minister of Agriculture where you use not necessarily hydroponics, you use the same soil, but you control the weather from the point of view of when you get heavy rains, they do not knock off the blossoms, you do not have the birds picking the tomatoes, or the monkeys in our case picking the carrots. There may be scope for close planting and that sort of stuff under a plastic house. It is difficult to convince a Barbadian that a guy can come up with the same plastic that you cover a concrete base in a house with over two acres. When I tell people that, they tell me, that is not true, but I have seen it with my own two eyes, where they have a thick plastic material, the same one that you damp proof of course of a house over two acres covering that just to prevent the rodents and various things coming to interfere with it. Now, we can come to that.

We do not have a petro chemical industry like there is in existence in Sicily, but, there is a petro chemical industry developing in Trinidad. When that price of plastic that intermediate plastic, damp proof plastic is available at reasonable prices in rolls — I saw it myself in Oistin when they were building the land reclamation block in Oistin, I saw some of it imported here in big rolls, 50 ft. rolls and you can cover two acres in relation to that. So, this is what we have to look at and that is intensive farming, real intensive farming. A man and his wife can work on that and make a very good living. They told me in Sicily that out of a hectare that they could earn US\$4 000 from growing tomatoes, squash and things like that. Now, that is BDS\$8 000. Now, I feel that some people would regard that as reasonable, but we have to get to this.

But, my problem and our problem on this side is that this kind of experimentation is not regarded as normal and standard research activity in the Ministry of Agriculture. We have to convince them of that. So that, this Bill is not intended to deal with the situation that I am dealing with. I am glad that the Honourable Member raises it because if that becomes a problem, we will have

to deal with that, but we are hoping that the inducement that we give will deal with that problem.
8.40 p.m.

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

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that there be a new Clause 3 in the following terms:

"Section 24 is amended by inserting therein immediately after section 24 the following as section 24A:

"The Minister may in respect of any year by Order prescribe for the payment of a rebate of tax to owners of agricultural land of such amount and at such rate as may be specified in the Order."

The object of this, Sir, is to prevent another amendment to the Land Tax Act to deal with this. We put it all in one Bill.

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

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

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I should explain. I want to insert a new section 3, and the new section 3, to avoid any doubt, would read:

"The Land Tax Act is amended by inserting therein immediately after section 24 the following as section 24A:"

Do you have that clear now? You are putting in a new section 3, so we are consolidating the two things.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, the correct phraseology there is already in the Bill, what the Minister originally said:

"Section 24 is amended by inserting therein immediately after section 24 the following as section 24A:

The Minister may in respect of any year by Order prescribe for the payment of a rebate of tax to owners of agricultural land of such amount and at such rate as may be specified in the Order."

The reason why we do not reinsert "The Land Tax Act is amended" is because that is already in section 2 of the Bill and therefore it would be unnecessary to put it. That is the correct drafting style, Sir, as I say it from here, Leader of the Opposition, as I am at the moment.

The question that the new Clause 3 be added to the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The question that Clause 3 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

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

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

8. THE LAND TAX (AMENDMENT) (NO. 2) ACT, 1981

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be withdrawn from the Order Paper as the provisions of this Bill have been dealt with in the previous Bill which has just been passed and form part of that Bill, so there is no need for this Bill.

I beg to ask the leave of the House to withdraw this Bill, Sir.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that.
8.50 p.m.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, all the hon. member needs to do is to seek leave of the House according to Standing Order No. 55. I heard a motion being moved and I was merely pointing out that it is really not, as I understand it, necessary for a motion to be moved, because Standing Order No. 55 on "Withdrawal of Bills" states that a Bill may be withdrawn by leave of the House, or of the Committee of the whole House as the case may be, either (a) before the commencement of Public Business; or (b) when any stage of the Bill is reached in the Order of Business, if before the Question is fully put, the mover so requests.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of this Honourable House that this Bill be withdrawn?

The Bill is by leave withdrawn.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT DASH VALLEY, ST. MICHAEL

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 4 stands in the name of the Hon. Minister of Housing and Lands to move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Dash Valley, St. Michael.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Attorney General, the hon. member for St. George

South has been in the forefront of trying to provide available land for recreational facilities for use by his constituents and in particular those residents living around that valley, Hanson Hill, South District, Mapp Hill and Lower Burnie. I too share a common interest in that the area of land this Resolution deals with is situated adjacent to my constituency, and therefore it would be used by my constituents as well. However the main purpose of this acquisition is to provide the residents of South District and Dash Valley with the necessary recreational facilities because they are in desperate need of such facilities. The Minister has therefore been able to identify this piece of land which belongs to Hanson Plantation. It lies on the western end of the reservoir in Mapp Hill opposite where the bus concessionaire, Mr. Trotman was. It is part of a larger area of 30 acres or so, but it was released and the Town Planner had no objection to the release. The Ministry of Agriculture has agreed that this land should be released for the purpose of providing recreational facilities for the residents in that area.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this Resolution is straightforward because it is yet another measure which will go a long way towards providing adequate recreational facilities not only for the Christ Church residents, but also for the people of St. George.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I sat here and I was really wondering if I was hearing correctly. The Minister said that this land was agricultural land. This House has just spent a considerable amount of time and the Government has been putting forward very strongly how its policy has been to keep land in agriculture, and lo and behold the very first action after the enunciation of that particular policy has been a measure by the Minister responsible for Lands to acquire an area of land, take it out of agriculture, and apply it for recreational purposes. I am not quarrelling with it. I want to know how you reconcile it. I want to know how this is reconciled with the previous positions taken. You were very strong that you should not take land out of agriculture, that people who have two-acre lots or four-acre lots or six-acre lots and they raise geese on these six-acre lots or they bale hay or whatever it may be will not be penalised. Up in Frere Pilgrim I understand that some of the people bale hay. I believe up to today one of them may have had 74 bales of hay or something like that, so they will not be penalised. But here we come immediately after talking about keeping land in agriculture and penalising persons if certain types of land either in terms of size or the value of the land is taken out of agriculture, and the very first measure introduced by my friend, the Minister, is one to take land out of

agriculture. I wonder if the Minister would reconcile these two positions for us because it does appear on the surface of it to be somewhat conflicting.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am very surprised at the point made by the hon. member. The land at Dash Valley is next to the Dash Valley tenantry. If the hon. member knows Roberts Tenantry, Dash Valley, St. George, the land is underneath the reservoir on the right hand side going down underneath Hanson Hill where it is completely surrounded by a village, a typical old plantation tenantry. Now is it the policy of the Democratic Labour Party that the people who have for all these years lived around there are not to get amenities? I know that is your policy, and that is why the Democratic Labour Party voted against the Tenantry Bill. While we are bringing in legislation to enhance the standard of living of people in those areas, hon. members on the other side are opposing anything at all that deals with it on spurious grounds or otherwise.

Mr. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation, there has been no vote or anything like this particular measure in this House and I have not opposed anything. I have asked the Minister to reconcile the two positions and I am waiting for the reconciliation by the Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no point of elucidation.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Obviously the Minister seems to have misunderstood the point I have made. He said I am opposed to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: You have certainly missed what elucidation is about on this occasion.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: There is no elucidation in this. The hon. member completely misunderstands simple English. Our quarrel is that you converted agricultural land to use for nothing. That is the point.
9.00 p.m.

Every society has to make planning decisions as to the best use of land. Now it is obvious that you have to have land for improvement of roadways. You have to have land for Housing. You have to have land for industry. What we object to is the sub-division of land for.....

Mr. SPEAKER: This is the moment of interruption. Is this matter controversial? *(Pause)*. The hon. member may proceed.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: What we object to is the sub-division of land for an alleged purpose when in truth and in fact that is not the purpose for which it would be used. Does the hon. member feel that we are not going to create recreational facilities for the very people? This is an incidental use of agriculture because the people there

for years have worked in agriculture and because we feel that you will only have people to work in there if they could have a comparable standard of living to the other people who live in other areas. Do you mean you want to deprive them of this. You mean you are trying to deprive the people now from having a good playing field so that they can have their own cricket team and feel good? That is what it is.

Even in agriculture you have to have housing for workers. You have to have repair shops for the new machines so some land has to go for the purpose of incidentals. It is not a conflict. It is not a conflict at all. It is the utilisation of the land for what is reasonable expenditure to the higher use of land for better agriculture. That is how we look at it.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to enquire from the Minister what progress is being made on the Government's proposal for acquiring some land at Blades Hill in St. Philip for a playing pasture which was surveyed and the tenants who were working this land were stopped from working it for agricultural purposes. As a result, they had stopped working these lands and then they were informed by the estate owners that they could go back working the land again since they had no further indication from Government that they would be going through the acquisition.

This stoppage has caused them to lose a considerable amount of labour that has been put into these crops and I want the assurance from the Minister that the pledge made to the people of Blades Hill by a member of his party still stands and that this parcel of land will soon be acquired for the purpose of a playing field for the people of Blades Hill. I would really like the Minister to give me this assurance so that I can convey it to the people of Blades Hill who feel very taken back by the fact that no further action has been taken by this acquisition for a long time.

Hon. DeL. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, first let me respond to the hon. member for St. Philip North. It is this Government's policy to provide wherever possible facilities for the youth and the people of this country. I cannot give him an update on the particular area that he has mentioned but I can give him the assurance that I will investigate the matter and where possible I will try to facilitate the youth there.

I think that the Resolution which was passed here last week is testimony of the Government's policy in relation to the youth in this country. We will not discriminate. It is not part of my policy or this Government's policy to discriminate against the youth of a constituency whether they are from this side or that side.

My answer to the hon. member for St. Michael South. I am sure that he is fully aware that this is a Government that takes into consideration the youth and their plight. We understand that you have to give the youth something or allow them to use their talents. If you do not do that you are creating social problems and that is why we feel proud in taking some of the land, though it might be agricultural land, and putting it into the hands of the youth so that they will be able to exercise themselves and hence eliminate the social problems that may arise if they did not have these facilities.

I want you to understand that this Government thinks ahead. It is not a matter of contradicting one's policy in agriculture as against recreational facilities. We want to arrive at an environment so that the people will feel that they not only have houses but they have recreational facilities which will relate to their environment. This is what we feel on this side is proper and adequate planning.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 9.

LEGAL PROFESSION (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Item No. 9 was called – to move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Legal Profession Act.

Hon. DeL. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is now history that this Government passed the Tenancies Freehold and Purchase Act last year, a revolutionary Act, which aims at creating land ownership. It is the policy of this Government to put into the hands of Barbadians, especially those who have worked and almost slaved on the plantations and on the tenancies for years, the opportunity to own those lands.

We feel too that in pursuing a policy like this that we can bring about more and more social stability to the country because we feel that people who have a vested interest and who own land in the country have an added vested interest and hence social stability is maintained.

This amendment is one of the amendments that we felt should be made in order to facilitate the fees. As a matter of fact, the Legal Profession suggested that the Act should be amended in respect of the provisions in order to reflect certain standard fees, the lowest fees which may be charged for doing the Conveyances. It is not really contradictory. I think it is self-explanatory according to the amended Bill.

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

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this relates to fees charged in conveyancing matters, conveyancing their fees payable by the purchaser and their fees payable by the vendor. I assume, Sir, that the fees that have been set here, this is only an assumption, are the fees to be payable by the purchaser. In this matter, Sir, I may not be right but this is an assumption on my part.

I can see no justification for so severely limiting the Legal Profession and charging such a fee to the vendors who are indeed substantial owners of land. That is why, Sir, I am assuming that this matter relates purely and this is a facility to be extended to the vendor who is a tenant and not to the landlord.

I am also assuming that this is not an all-embracing fee and that the \$60 or whatever it may be might not be one fee for the total transaction. This is another assumption I am making. Of course, I must warn the Government, though, Sir, that in making these kinds of selective laws for a selective group of people does not always make for the best law. I say nothing more than just that, Sir.
9.10 p.m.

I would be glad, if the Honourable Minister could give me some assurances on the points, Sir, that I have just raised.

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I think we must cross swords. The greatest piece of social legislation that was introduced into this Honourable House is to give plantation tenants the option to purchase and to give people in urban tenancies the option to purchase. People have not highlighted the urban tenancies option to purchase. We have found the problem that although we had to amend the constitution, despite the opposition of the Democratic Labour Party to fix a valuation in respect of both sets of land:

- (1) In relation to plantation land, we fixed a specific amount per hectare.
- (2) In respect of urban land, it was divided into two categories of urban land:
 - (i) where the landlord had put in the services in which we said that he could get open market value;
 - (ii) but, if the Government had put in the services, water, light and roads, we felt that the cost of the light, water and roads should be discounted from the urban market value.

So that, this was a very fair attempt to provide a reasonable basis of compensation. But, we ran into two problems one is surveying problems and the Surveyors Association and the Government worked out a fee in respect of each lot.

But, we cannot get the lawyers to be interested in it. That is a fact. The lawyers are not interested in doing the conveyances because the money is too small. Now, what are we to do? Are we to allow a select group of people who have introduced into conveyancing a special mumbo jumbo of language, despite the fact that we passed new legislation to help them to cut out a lot of the unnecessary mumbo jumbo. Are we to allow them to hold up a whole scheme that will benefit so many people. If they want to tangle with the Government on this, if the lawyers want to tangle with the Government on this in respect of these lots, Mr. Speaker, we are perfectly prepared to amend the Land Law Bill and say that one lawyer can work for vendor, purchaser, mortgagee and everything, or better still, Sir, we will say, that we will allow the Government lawyers to do it in over time at a specific fee and pay them the extra.

Everybody, every profession in the community has got to have some kind of concept of social service. This is our community and people should not be expected to hold up a whole scheme on the grounds that they are insisting on their traditional rights and that is the fundamental point. I mean they can write me up tomorrow morning in the paper, I was never a conveyancer, it does not matter to me. I advised on bad conveyances, that was my function. But, the truth of the matter is that we are trying to get these conveyances across to the people at reasonable prices. You cannot ask a man to pay \$300 or \$500 for a conveyance and then, the lawyers say they want \$1 000 for doing it as a minimum fee. It cannot work, I mean, it just does not make sense.

The surveyors have co-operated with us and we cannot get that response from this Body. I know it is nuisance work, I know that there is no money in it, the same time that you spend to investigate the title for a \$300 conveyance, they would spend to investigate the title for a \$1 million conveyance. That is the whole problem. The question the Honourable Member asks is very simple. We will prescribe the fee for the vendor and the purchaser. That is what we are trying to do. To amend the Law so as to ensure that it is a reasonable fee on both sides, having regard to the value of the land. It cannot be the traditional percentage. The Government is even trying to establish a fund to ensure — what we envisage is that a person would not have to do one conveyance. We are trying to envisage where you would collect a standard form. If we could get a standard form that would work. That is our problem. A statutory form of conveyance. We passed it — that is all — (ASIDES)

that the normal scale or price should not apply to this. We are trying our best. You mean you voted against the Bill and you want to sabotage this, too?

I really feel, Sir, that it ought to be a matter of pride of all political parties. I would have thought Sir that all the lawyers in the Democratic Labour Party all the lawyers in the Barbados Labour Party would say that we would volunteer to form a corporation that we will do all of these conveyances so that you would get the whole thing done within the next five year period of time and then, it would not be a political issue because nobody would be able to get on the platform, because you would be able to get on the platform and say, "I worked for it too, so, there are not any kudos in this". So, do not let us try and see that — the lawyers now are saying that we are depriving them of fees.

The Bill is trying to set out a new provision to deal with the normal law; the Law Society fixes the scale fees but we are saying that in this, the Honourable Minister can fix the fees or the Attorney General. It is the Minister, after consultation with the Judicial Advisory Council. The lawyers had better not give any trouble on this, Mr. Speaker, Sir because we will hound them down. We will really hound them down on this. We do everything possible to try and get these. All we want to see is the conveyances rolled. We want the people to get title to their land. The surveyors are helping us but the lawyers really do not want to help us, the conveyancing lawyers do not want to help us and we have to bring teeth into the legislation.

If trouble arises in relation to this, we will use our brain to circumvent them, bring back in tamarind tree lawyers to do these conveyances, pass a Law saying that no questions of title could ever arise in relation to this at all. Now, you presume to have a statutory title, if they humbug us more, we will let the Registrar give a conveyance on all of the land and put in the usual clause that the Registrar's conveyance bars all right including the Crown. Look, we can use our legal brains to circumvent them if they give us trouble because we want the conveyances to flow.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question.....

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to take this opportunity to enquire from the Honourable member for Christ Church East Central, who I notice, this topic is very close to his heart, what has happened to the land registry that so much work had gone into by the drafting section?
9.20 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, it seems a pity that this particular bit of legislation, the administrative machinery for it has

not been introduced in Barbados up to now. I understand that a Registrar of Titles was appointed, and more recently I understand that he was removed from that particular post and sent back to the Magistracy or something like that. I sincerely hope that this does not mean the Government has abandoned the idea of the introduction of a legal registry of titles to introduce a legal cadastre in this country. Unfortunately this is not the type of legislation that is appealing to the voters, since they do not see it like a new road or a new housing area, but those people who deal in the land and its transactions would realise that it has tremendous importance to the future development of Barbados.

Too much time and money are wasted on conveyancing in this country, and some day somebody is going to do a cost analysis of what it costs this country from the time an agreement is entered into until the time the development can be completed because of the legal problems encountered by the present system. The laws have been drafted, a lot of studies have been done on the implementation of this system, reports are available and I know the member for Christ Church East Central is just as interested in this particular topic as I am, and I would like to have some update on it. The idea of its being costly does not arise since there are procedures for the gradual introduction of this system which will be no more costly than the present system.

I have suggested before that what the Government can do is to have an agreement with the present conveyancing lawyers for all future conveyances to have a check, and they would have a legal obligation to the Government who in turn would have a legal obligation for the securing of tenure against any faults to the owners of the lands, and by doing this we would not only be making use of any conveyancing lawyers in any Registry, but we would be making use of all the conveyances taking place in private practice from day to day.

The surveying end of it is well in hand. Presently the surveyors have to have their plots registered by the Lands and Surveys Department, the twin systems have been set down, therefore the compilation of the cadastre either systematically or sporadically is no problem, and I cannot see the legal end of it causing any problem either, since as I said it can be introduced gradually without any big cost, and I cannot understand for the life of me why the administrative part of this particular legislation is continually being pushed off and off. It is far too important for the continued orderly development of Barbados. A legal cadastre in Barbados could serve so many purposes it is unbelievable, and we would stop having this duplication of effort by Lands and Surveys, Town Planning, the Agriculture people, the Valuation Department, everybody making their own maps, duplicating scarce human resources that we could use if we

had this system introduced, and I can only hope that the member who has this dear, interesting topic will find it possible to put some speed into the implementation of the system so we can have this land registry system set up in Barbados. Thank you.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with the hon. member. I am a strong fan of land registration. I practised in the Virgin Islands when they introduced their land registration, but we are dealing with a very difficult — you talk about Tory, Conservative, try and deal with conveyances in Barbados.

The Act has been passed, the property identification angle is reasonably in hand, but when we introduced the modern system of conveyancing and the shortening of the deeds, the lawyers felt that that was such a great transition from the pre-1925 thing that they had to take time to absorb that, and that we were trying to hustle them into parallel with the introduction to that, something new in land registration, and all kinds of objections have been raised about the impossibility of working it, and all about the cost of working it. But, Sir, I am firmly convinced that we need a Commissioner of Titles now who will get ahead with the question of the cadastral end of it, and identify it and do the preliminary investigations of titles, and I would like to see them start with the tenancies freehold things, because they are modern. The Housing Authority wants all the Housing Authority titles, all the land acquisition titles, and gradually we will introduce it. It is not dead by any means, it was tied up with the question of space for deeds. The new Supreme Court building, the new Land Registry building, all kinds of things this was tied up with.

I am convinced, Sir, that within this administration that we will get a long way with it. We still need now some seminars, now that the lawyers have absorbed the impact of the new land law, we need some seminars now to educate them, but this piece of legislation will facilitate them in the transfers in the future. Lurking in the back of their heads is the fact that they will lose some fees, and I believe the number of lawyers who are actually practising — when I say lawyers in this respect I am talking about conveyancing — under the old system are very few now, and the new recruits that we get out of the law schools will become more familiar with this system.

I think that a Commissioner of Titles who will then be converted into a Registrar, as happened in the Virgin Islands and other territories, is necessary. At first they had a Commissioner who worked with the Surveyor and they blocked off the area into segments, they investigated the titles and they put them on the preliminary register. They advertised for objections and things like that. So that we hope that within this term of office

that more work will be done to get this thing going. That is all, Sir, the Government has not abandoned it in any way, it is just a question of letting them have a little time to absorb the impact of the land law, but it is not abandoned.

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. S. CRAIG, 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.
9.30 p.m.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On motion of Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW 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 separate motions of Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, 13th October, 1981, at 12 o'clock noon.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to second that.

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