
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 29th September, 1981.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock.

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); 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. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Education); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. V. L. Johnson, M.A., (Minister of Labour and Social Security); Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, (Minister of Housing and Lands); Mr. L. L. SISNETT; Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE; Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, (Minister of Transport and Works); Mr. L. A. WEEKES; Mr. M. A. KING; 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.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE entered the Chamber and took his seat.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, 22nd September, 1981.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move Sir, that the Minutes for the 22nd September, 1981 be taken as read.

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

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to lay:

The Civil Establishment (Payment of Passages) Order, 1981.

The Hire-Purchase Credit-Sale Agreements (Control) (Amendment) Order, 1981.

The Offshore Banking (Licence Fees) (Amendment) Regulations, 1981.

The Hotel Aids (Casuarina Beach Hotel) Notice, 1981.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

A Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (Payment of Passages) Order, 1981.

Mr. TAITT entered the Chamber and took his seat.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: I now observe the Honourable Member for St. Michael West. His questions respecting the establishment of a Casino at an hotel.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To ask of the Honourable Minister responsible for Finance and Planning:

(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 this 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?

Mr. SPEAKER: Let the Honourable Member proceed.

Mr. B. M. TAITT:

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

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Item Number One.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1981 - 82 NO. 3

HEAD 81 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND NATIONAL INSURANCE

Subhead 8 - Bridgetown Sewerage Project.

Item Number One was called - To move the House into Committee of Supply for certain money resolutions:

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. ST. JOHN, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Item No. 1(a) was called - to move the passing of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$4,953,000 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, I am having extreme difficulty taking my place in this Honourable House. I have all kinds of wires which seem to be

in the process of causing me pain. I do not really understand, Mr. Chairman. I think on a point of privilege that, if arrangements are made for broadcasting, those arrangements should take into account the comfort of Honourable Members in this Honourable House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: In the first place, the complaint should not be made to you, Mr. Chairman, it should be made to the Speaker of the House. That is the first one. No. 2: arrangements were made with the Speaker of the Honourable House to have the electronic media in here for the purpose of assisting the Honourable Member to be on television on which we know he is so capable of looking good even if he is talking nonsense. And talking about the wires behind him, all he has to do is just come up with the chair. What is this big complaint about wires behind him? Nobody is going to execute you, there is nothing to worry about. Come a little further up and be finished with that.

You want the debate. We are televising it for you so that you can look good, though you may talk nonsense. Come up. You are going to talk today. The correct person to appeal to is the Speaker not the Chairman and, furthermore, there is nothing before the Honourable House when you got up on a Point of Order. The Clerk was letting the Committee know of the resolution. On what point of order is he addressing the House?
12.30 p.m.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, with the greatest respect, the Rules of this Hon. House say that on a matter of privilege relating to the House an hon. member can rise at any time. Furthermore, Sir, I resent the hon. member's tirade concerning what is to happen to me during the course of this day. I am nothing to do with what arrangements have been made, I am saying that if those arrangements have been made they have to be made adequately, correctly and properly, and the hon. member is in my view out of order to start casting aspersions on an hon. member who raises a legitimate question. I have no objections to moving a wire, Sir, but it is almost impossible to fix the wire properly without damaging the equipment.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will convey to His Honour the Speaker the problems of which you complain.

1. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1981-82, No.3 PART II - CAPITAL - HEAD 81 - MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND NATIONAL INSURANCE

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this supplementary, as I understand it, is being sought to cover the cost of completion of the Bridgetown Sewerage Project. I am made to understand that, in respect of the item - Structures - the River Road pumping station

incurred additional cost on account of delays encountered in respect of the location of that pumping station.

What in effect occurred was the site originally selected by the consultant engineers proved to be quite unsuited for the location of the pumping station, and in fact on the north wall, if my memory serves me correctly, on the north wall of the foundation at the original site we went down to a depth of some 70 feet, and there were collapses occurring, and the decision was taken then having further consulted the engineers that we should change the location. It turned out that a much more suitable location was virtually next door to the original site, and on this account certain delays in time and cost have been incurred.

Additional engineering services have also been incurred, Mr. Chairman, in respect of the fact that there has been an overall time overrun on this project. The overall time overrun, you may recall, occurred in 1976 when the foundation for the treatment plant had to be entirely redesigned. Since that time we have not really incurred any time overruns. The River Road pumping station delays have not in any way delayed the overall project, but as a segment within the project it has incurred additional time and expense on its own.

The supplementary is also going, Mr. Chairman, to increased costs incurred on account of the extension of the original sewer system so that we can hook into the housing development now under construction at the old St. Cecelia Barracks site on Passage Road. That is a complex of some considerable size and we decided prior to the start of construction that it would make good economic sense to run the sewerage system from the corner of Reed Street, which is where the original system would have stopped, right down Baxters Road hooking at the same time all of those many business premises on Baxters Road and go down to Passage Road and hook the housing project in.

We all know that the City of Bridgetown is sited on a very high water table and with a project of the size designed for at St. Cecelia we would certainly have run into serious sewerage disposal problems, and that was agreed with the Bank, and part of this supplementary is expected to cover the cost, Mr. Chairman, of that extension. We also had an extension — I am being reminded by the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister — the original sewerage system stopped at Jemmotts Lane. The Ministries of Health and Education would have been hooked into it, but the decision was also taken to have an extension going up to the Government Headquarters on Bay Street and up Beckles Road to hook in the Geriatric Hospital there, those massive structures, and that is part of the extension.

We would like, Mr. Chairman, at that time to go up to the Garrison and hook in the Holiday Inn, the

Barbados Hilton and other hotels within that catchment area, but the additional expense would have been prohibitive at that time. The fact is that the hotel strip, as we know it, is going to be part and parcel of the new system which is now being studied and surveyed for along the south coast, so that the south coast system will come right down to the Esplanade and you will have eventually one continuous sewerage system running from Bridgetown right up to Oistin and beyond when the south coast system is put in place. In due course, after the south coast system of course we are planning to have a west coast system.

We are seeing tremendous development in the industrial and the hotel sector in particular along the coastline, Mr. Chairman. We all know that along these coastlines — and I have said this very recently in this Hon. House — we have a very high water table and so we run into very serious sewerage disposal problems. Most of the hotels, the bigger, the larger hotels have what can be described as small packaged treatment plants, but they are not at all efficient. They malfunction a great deal of the time and they cannot really cope with the problem. It turns out then that we are still throwing a lot of raw sewerage into the coastal waters which we fish and where obviously our visiting tourists are expected to swim and resort to marine frolicking and what not.

The assurance that I can give this Hon. House, Mr. Chairman, is that this supplementary is expected to close the matter. It is not envisaged that we will, barring some act of God, it is not envisaged that we will come back to this Hon. House for any further supplementary. This supplementary is expected to close the project, and the final completion date is now December 31 of this year, 1981.

12.40 p.m.

I am sure that this Honourable House and members of the public who have daily resort to Bridgetown will be relieved to know that by the end of the year, and in fact we are hoping that before Christmas in effect, the Bridgetown sewage project will have been completed. It will make Bridgetown a healthier and a cleaner place in which to live and to do business. The repaving of the roads Mr. Chairman, I hope in the long run will be achieved, and I am sure the Minister of Transport and Works will be pleased to note that the resurfacing and repaving of the roads which have been cut for the laying of the sewers should enhance the road repair programme for the city of Bridgetown.

Mr. Chairman, with those few remarks, I beg to move that the Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution on this sewage project will bring much attention from us on this side principally for two reasons. One is that we were the ones who conceived the idea of introducing a modern and more scientific method of sewage disposal in Barbados, even though we had great difficulty in convincing some others that this was not a politically motivated idea designed to disrupt residents within the city area who may or may not be of our own political persuasion. Nonetheless the Government has seen the wisdom of implementing the project and from the introduction by the Minister, I am pleased with some of her remarks, because it is expressly designed for improving the health standards in Barbados and at the same time it improves some of the unemployment that did exist.

This Resolution calls for nearly a fifty percent increase in supplementary vote, and in these days of rising costs, — my figures may not be correct, but the original vote was \$9 million odd and this supplementary is \$4.5 million — it appears that there is some substantial increase. We are concerned by the increase because today building is a very expensive business as is almost any other exercise, and what I want to recall is that this project started some time in 1979, some three years after the government was changed, so it appears that although plans were well ready to be implemented, there was some three year delay in getting the project off the ground. My own feeling of the obvious result of that three year delay is that time can be converted into money. We know that from day to day costs go up very high. I certainly would agree that you cannot escape rising costs but at the same time we should try to keep our expenses down as much as we possibly can.

I think this is an opportune moment too for the Minister to confirm her own projections when she was Minister of Health. I believe it was that she projected that some time in April the Sewage plant itself would have been completed and that the construction of the whole project could finally be completed between August and September. This is September now and we are still asking for more money which in my view would be an increased cost on the project.

Mr. Chairman, the Resolution also speaks in terms of revised costs for the pumping station at River Road. I think one of the concerns here most likely would be that if contractors are employed to do a job some provision should be made that where the matter goes wrong the taxpayers should not be called upon to pay that additional cost, and I feel that some provision should have been made whereby these additional costs should have been borne by those who made the fault.

Mr. Chairman, we are happy that the project will be finished by Christmas time. I am very happy to hear this because it would also improve other areas. Sewage

disposal in Barbados has been taken very lightly to my mind. In many of the housing areas there are complaints of bad sewage systems, and I do hope that as the Minister says that they have found time to extend the system to other areas in the country that sooner or later we might be able to extend this wonderful project in order to help control some of the same problems.

Mr. Chairman, out of this also comes another problem. If you have a limited system you are going to control dumping of sewage in the sea coast, but we have people who are in private business in this matter. I hope that the sewage project itself might be able to take in those areas that are now covered by the private system, and that they might be allowed in some way to get their sewage properly disposed of. Already one complaint is being made — I am not told who the person is — that people are dumping internally in the Island, and I believe that the health authorities should make a check to see if they are not dumping their sewage on the sea coast where else they are dumping it because they are in the business and they must be dumping it somewhere as they cannot dump it in the sea. This is of particular concern to all of us because health is a very important factor, and in a system like that where people can dump anywhere, it can bring untold disease to this country. We have enough problems with our tourist industry already and I do not think we want to encourage any more.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, I hope that we will be able to get better public conveniences, because one of the reasons why we have had bad public conveniences in the City was because the problem of sewage disposal there created obnoxious smells and people could not use them. I feel that this project which I wholeheartedly agree with, and I welcome some of the ideas mentioned by the Minister, should eventually go to them with less expense and burden on the taxpayers of this country.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am very enthused by the enlightening thoughtful statements just made by my colleague the hon. member for St. Michael North West, and I therefore do not have much to add to the debate, except to raise question with the Hon. Minister who introduced this supplementary, who was the substantive Minister when the Head was passed. I recall, Sir, very vividly that the hon. member when she reported to this House under pressure from the Opposition about the movement of the pumping station site at River Road, the hon. member indicated at that time that it was not the intention of the Government to pay any additional monies for the cost of the sewage project arising out of the collapse of the pumping station at the first site.

I recall making the point then that the Government had been advised not to put the site on the first spot and that for some reason best known to themselves they had proceeded against that advice and subsequently it collapsed.

12.50 p.m.

Now I should like to hear from the Minister, if the information is available, what precisely was the nature of the negotiations between the contractors, the sub-contractors and whomever and the Government which has led to the Government's acceptance of liability for increased costs.

It would seem to me that the last time we asked this question, if I recall correctly, was during the annual Estimates and the hon. Minister said at that time that the matter was *sub judice* and that she did not consider it a proper matter for her discussion at that time in this Honourable House.

Since then, of course, she has ceded or has had ceded from her responsibility for Health but she is introducing this Resolution and I think it is the first time since the Estimates that we have had any hon. member on that side speaking to this matter and it is for those reasons I feel that members of this Honourable House are owed the obligations to explain all the factors concerning the increase in cost of the pumping station at the River Road site.

After all, Mr. Chairman, while we accept the necessity for and the efficacy of having a sewage disposal system of a modern kind and while we recognize that those Barbadian engineers who have been involved in the project have apparently acquitted themselves in an explanatory manner we still feel that the country has a right to know where costs have increased in the millions. We therefore are expecting the Minister to give us in some detail the reasons for the Government's acceptance of this new liability.

Mr. Chairman, I should also like the Minister to indicate that by adding, I think I heard her say two additional units or two additional neighbourhoods into the sewage system, we should like to know the proper engineering assessments have been made and that we will not have the spectre of a system being handed over to the Government at the end of the contract period or indeed being told that the project has been completed and then within a few months thereafter we have the kind of sewage problem which all of us in Barbados hope we will never get.

I believe it is important that the population be advised every step along the way as to what are the facts regarding the Sewage Project. I do not believe it is a particularly partisan project and for those reasons the Barbadian citizen and more particularly those who live in the urban and suburban areas have a vital and vested interest in the details of this project so I look forward to the Minister's explanation along the terms I have indicated, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Chairman, if I may speak briefly, not in reply to anything the hon. members have said. That is a matter for the Minister.

Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Government on the proposals which the Government is taking for expanding the sewage scheme particularly to the South and West coasts of this Island. I believe that this is a very necessary part of the development of the country and it is unrealistic in this day and age to expect that with the heavy development which has occurred on those coast lines that we can rely on the natural filter which this Island has from the coral formation of the country to do a complete job of dealing with the disposal of sewage in our Island.

In fact, the fact that we have survived without any major epidemic for over 300 years is perhaps more due to chance than to any planning and it is for that reason that I was happy to see over the last few days and I believe in today's Press, as well an advertisement asking for prequalification of consultants to advise on a feasibility study for the expansion of the sewage scheme to the South and West coasts of Barbados.

I represent, Mr. Chairman, a constituency that is very much affected by such a project and indeed the South Coast along the Hastings line extending right up to Oistins and beyond is perhaps one of the most densely populated areas of Barbados. Everyone would know that the density of our population is to be found in the Bridgetown/St. Michael area and in the Christ Church area, particularly the suburban areas of Dayrells' Road, Deighton Road, the Bay Land, Chelsea, Hastings, Marine Gardens, Blue Waters, Worthing, Rockley, Rockley Tenantry Road, Golf Club Road, Amity Lodge and those areas and we suffer in those areas, at present, from not having the sort of facility that is at present being constructed within the City and St. Michael.

We also have in those areas, perhaps one of the heaviest investments in tourist plant. The majority of the investment on the South Coast is locally owned and indeed has been locally owned from the beginning of tourism in this Island. A lot of the initial tourism, before tourism became popular occurred on the very South coast and occurred by small entrepreneurs in their Guest Houses who had to make temporary arrangements for the disposal of sewage and they have contributed tremendously to the economic wellbeing of the Island without at times getting the sort of public services that they should have had as a part of their national contribution.

I hope that the project will be implemented quickly and that priority will be given to the South Coast development.

Now, Sir, I see in the Other Place that it has been said that we are losing marine life on our coastline because of pollution. I think it would be wise to talk about the nature of the pollution. The majority of the

pollution that has caused damage to marine life is not particularly the raw sewage but a lot of it has been oil on that South coast particularly and the reef barrier of the coastline off the South coast, has, in some areas, been destroyed; we believe off Worthing Beach although not off the Silver Sands Beach and it is mostly because of the discharge by some ships passing our coastline.

I believe that this will not be cured simply by the sewage scheme in those areas. It has to be cured by policing of the South coast to prevent vessels in their wanton acts discharging oil on this area. That is one of the reasons why I find that the Opposition should all welcome an upgraded Coast Guard Service in this country and expenditure on the Defence Force, particularly the Coast Guard Arm.

The existing Coast Guard vessels have proved very incompetent in providing adequate and proper defence far less surveillance in these areas and it was very obvious to me when I held the Ministry and having access to the papers that we had to do something very substantial if we were serious about preserving marine life and also preserving our coastline, a very important economic asset in spending money on the Coast Guard service and on the Defence Force.

I believe that politicians in this country have got into the stage of trying to woo, the electorate by pretending that the services being provided by Government cost the public nothing. There is too much fear of telling the public the truth and I am horrified by seeing more and more people pretending that you can go on to put in additional costs without the public recognising that there is some consequential cost which the public must bear as well.

1.00 p.m.

It is nonsense to pretend that you either do not need a proper Coast Guard service or that the country has not got to bear the cost of that Coast Guard service. Nonsense to pretend this and that is why, Sir, whenever it comes to defending the Defence Force on these areas, I have the courage of my conviction. When I campaigned, I let my constituents know that there is a cost and it is a cost that must be borne by the community as a whole.

Likewise, Sir, let us face the fact that we cannot upgrade the sewage service in this island on the south coast and the west coast unless we pay for it. Now, I do not know of any Government, Democratic Labour Party or Barbados Labour Party who grow dollars out of merely being a political party. All of the money that goes for services in this island come either from taxation or by way of investment when the Government has got into productive enterprises. That is a fact. People must acknowledge this. You may, in some instances, not do it

by way of a direct tax on a lower sector of the economy or you may discriminate in some of the taxation measures. But, regardless of whether you give it by way of subsidy or by taxation, eventually, the 240 000 people or those of us who pay taxes, probably not the children, must meet the bill and any projection of a future sewerage service will involve additional costs because the people who are going to benefit from the connections must recognise that they will have to pay for upgraded sanitary conditions and they must pay some money for it.

What the Government has to do is to structure the payment area in such a way that those people who genuinely cannot bear the cost get some relief, but those who can bear a reasonable cost have to pay a reasonable cost and, unless we begin to be candid with the public of Barbados, we are going to get a country that believes that everything is free — which it is not — because we are anxious to win a Government. We cannot afford, in a small island with limited resources, to pretend — in this day and age of tremendous international economic crises and recession with the Dow Jones shares falling all around us and people losing fortunes — we cannot afford to pretend in small Barbados that this country can escape any of these effects and get things done free. I know that God smiled on the face of Barbados, Sir — I can make this speech many times, Sir, in many forms, Sir, — God has smiled many times on Barbados, but we must not take that smile to the extent that we believe that we are the only blessed people in the world. (ASIDES: The resolution.) I am on the resolution, Sir, I am talking about the cost of the sewerage scheme.

The Honourable Minister wants to know. That is why, when my friends talk about an additional cost, obviously, if you conceived of a project several years ago, even though you have allowed for an inflationary overrun of 10%, it is unrealistic when most of the components of that project come from outside to expect that that cost overrun will not be higher, even though the project may have started late and even if it had started on time, my own view is that you had to have a higher contingency and the contingency in the Sewerage Project was not adequate. (ASIDES) This is a fact, Sir, I read the files.

It does not matter if my friend is opposed to it or not. My friend did say that there would be some cost overruns, but he was concerned about the level of the cost overruns and I am saying — he made a very good speech, I have congratulated him on his first speech and I congratulate him on his second speech — but, I am saying that in the context of the world inflationary spiral, where we are importers of many of the components going into projects that it is very necessary to take into account the cost overruns and to recognise that we have to avoid projects and to revise projects

such as we have had, Sir. And it is on — Sir, the Honourable Leader of the Honourable House is so very pleased to hear me making a speech Sir, that he thinks it is related to the Budgetary measures and he wants me to reserve the speech for later — at the time when I deal with my friend from St. Michael West and my friend from St. Philip North, Sir, there are other arguments — I just want to spur them on to reply, Sir, there will be other arguments on that other point, Sir.

But, on the matter of the expansion of the sewerage scheme which cannot come sooner, Sir, and as a representative of the south coast, particularly of the Christ Church area, I am asking the Honourable Minister to get behind the consultants — I am sure she will get the money from the international financial institutions, particularly, the Inter-American Development Bank — and make sure that these projects are going on rather hastily, I hope that she will give the greater priority to the south coast which I think is suffering more than even the west coast, although they are both suffering very badly in that regard, Sir.

It is my pleasure, therefore, to state that, on a matter of principle, and not merely belonging to the political party, I will vote for this resolution.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is... The Honourable Minister may wind up.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would just like to deal briefly, by way of reply, to each of the Honourable Members.

The Honourable Member for St. Michael North West is putting me in a position to say something, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that I said on the platform some months ago and I did not want to have to repeat it in here, but I feel constrained to do it, today. We keep on hearing about how it was their idea and their scheme and their plan and all this kind of thing. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you cannot pump sewage into an idea, you know what I mean, like you cannot land an aeroplane on a plan. In June, I repeatedly had to say for the Honourable Members on that Side, that to continue to remind Barbadians that it was their idea and this was their plan and this was their programme is not any help to them. It is help to us.

They go on and on — you see, they are at it again, Mr. Chairman, Sir — they go on and on harping upon the fact that this is such a dynamic Government that we not only completed the plan to be found in our Manifesto of 1976, but we completed their 1971 and 1976 Manifesto plans too and if you do not look sharp, we are going to complete your 1981 Manifesto plans when we also will be completing our 1981 Manifesto plans.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is a well-known history to the whole concept, the whole idea of the sewerage of Bridgetown and greater Bridgetown. It originates in the history of Ligon. Ligon himself, the English historian, made the point hundreds of years ago, that Bridgetown was very much in need of sewerage even at that time. Sewerage is not new, the Romans did it. The Barbados Labour Party, in its development Plan 1960-65, spoke about the sewerage of Bridgetown. Studies were done in the year that I was born, Mr. Chairman, Sir, 1944, studies were done. I am older than I look, Mr. Chairman, Sir, but I am proud of it. Studies were done which dictated that the city of Bridgetown would have to be seweraged sooner or later. It turned out to be later rather than sooner. Just as soon as we were going to follow up our development plan, we lost the Government and for fifteen years nothing was done about the sewerage of Bridgetown.

Now, Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is important, especially when members of the press are present, that we get our figures right. I do not think that it is fair for Honourable Members, no matter how new they may be to this Honourable Chamber, to misquote figures.
1.10 p.m.

The Press does that without any help, and for us to give them help in that direction will only add insult to injury. It is not true by any stretch of the imagination to say that there has been a 50% increase on the original cost of the Bridgetown Sewerage Project. The original cost of the Bridgetown Sewerage Project was \$39.8 million and we are today talking about an increase of \$4.9 million. By no stretch of the imagination, by no kind of mathematics, new or old, can that approximate to anything like a 50% cost overrun, and that is important. That is so.

Mr. WEEKES: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation. I just want to explain to the Minister that I was quoting the supplementary vote as against the original vote and not the total cost of the project. I said the original vote as approved in the Estimates — this is what I was referring to — was \$9.255 million and the supplementary vote calls for \$4.5 million, which in my view was a 50% difference.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, this is equally misleading. What the hon. member says he is saying that there is a 50% increase on the amount voted in this financial year, but some of the money being requested now for this supplementary goes not only to costs incurred in this financial year, but costs incurred in financial years before 1981 — 82, so again it is misleading to suggest

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: and I am not giving way on any bogus points, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. The rules say that no hon. member should mislead this Hon. House. The hon. member by attempting to relate the \$4.5 million to some figure in the past is suggesting that it is not 50% of what was allocated for this year's Estimates, and therefore trying to obfuscate the mismanagement which led to the bad planning, which led to their having asked for \$9 million when in fact they needed \$13 million. I do not know why she is trying to mislead this Hon. House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Absolute rubbish, Mr. Chairman. This is the kind of stuff which misleads the Press and the public. It is true that we are asking for 50% more than what was granted in this year's Estimates, but I have said already in my speech of introduction that the \$4.9 million goes to costs incurred well before. These are third form, school boy points, you should be ashamed to make that kind of stupid point in here.

Mr. Chairman, it would be misleading to give the impression that the \$4.9 million is in respect of costs incurred in this financial year. It is not. The delays encountered on account of the River Road pumping station were incurred last financial year and the financial year before that. The extensions were incurred two financial years ago. In fact, Mr. Chairman, this Bridgetown Sewerage Project has incurred the smallest time and cost overrun of all of this Government's projects over the past five years. (Mr. TAITT: So what? In the land of the blind a one-eyed man is king). So what? Do not let me call to remembrance now a crematorium which was to be built at Warrens, do not let me call to remembrance all the millions that went down into foundation, and do not let me talk about other project overruns before 1976. Do not let me harp back to that, I do not want to harp back to that.

Mr. Chairman, also in answer to some of the points made, we heard about a three year delay. Now, I do not know, I do not claim to be so good at arithmetic, but I cannot for the life of me understand where at any point in the sewerage project for Bridgetown any three year delay might have been incurred. We took office in 1976 and the sewerage project started in 1977. It is well known that it is a four year project. We have had a time overrun of less than six months. I will not be misquoted. Last year I said that the treatment plant, which is only one component of the entire system, would be completed by April this year, and it was so completed in April this year. The entire project was to have been completed in September, it is now going to be completed in December. It is a fact that unseasonal rains have slowed down the

sewerage, even though we planned our programme to do the deepest drilling during the dry season we were to some extent defeated in that on account of unseasonal rains, and there were one or two usual reasons to be found in the business for the kind of delay that we have incurred, but a three month time overrun, Mr. Chairman, is nothing compared to the kind of time overruns we see on other projects which shall be nameless.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I am coming to another point which was made by the hon. member for St. Michael North West, and it has to do with the current method for disposal of sewerage. For many years, and until the plant itself goes into operation, sewerage in Barbados has been disposed of in Bridgetown at Cowell Street after 6 o'clock in the evening and before 6 o'clock in the morning. During the past two years I have opened a similar outlet at St. Lucy to cover the northern parishes, and most of the people in the private sector do in fact use the Cowell Street disposal unit, and some use the St. Lucy disposal unit, but the fact is this. Even when the Bridgetown Sewerage Project is completed, and even when the south coast and west coast sewerage projects are completed, there will still be a considerable number of businesses and houses outside of the project, the schemes, even the expanded schemes, which will still have to dispose. They will no longer be disposing at Cowell Street or at St. Lucy, all of the sewerage will now be carted to the treatment plant at Emmerton, and it is designed to facilitate that kind of movement.

I do not think that it is fair, as the hon. member has suggested, to say that the Government pays little or scant attention to the business of sewerage. That might have been true of the previous Government, but not of this Government, Mr. Chairman. The previous Government through its Housing Corporation built several housing projects paying little or no attention to the disposal of sewerage. The hon. member for St. Michael North West knows well (ASIDES). Must I be interrupted in this fashion, Mr. Chairman? (ASIDES). You built the Farm, the Democratic Labour Party built the Farm Housing Scheme, Mr. Chairman, and the hon. member for St. Michael North West in whose constituency it now falls, I know from my certain knowledge, approached on a daily basis by his constituents both day and night, because in fact little or no attention was paid to the matter of sewerage disposal and the capacity of the septic tanks provided at Deacons Farm was grossly inadequate, they are still grossly inadequate, and until Deacons Farm can be hooked into the west coast sewerage system, that problem is not going to be properly repaired.

There are some business places, Mr. Chairman, on the south and the west coasts where the septic tanks have to be pumped no less than four times a day.
1.20 p.m.

At Deacons Farm the Housing Corporation is pumping two and three times a day, and that is only one housing area, Mr. Chairman. There are other housing developments planned and constructed by the Democratic Labour Party under the hon. member where sewage disposal presented a problem within three months of people taking up residence. This Barbados Labour Party Government came back to power in 1976 to execute the Bridgetown Sewage Project and before it leaves power will execute the south and the west coast sewage projects. The West Coast has to come after the south. It has to.

Now in respect of matters raised by the hon. member for St. Michael West in respect of the River Road pumping station, we hear talk about mismanagement. Now with respect to the engineering consultants, I have said what I had to say about them in this Honourable Chamber before, and I am not afraid to say it again, they were incompetent and that is why the foundation at Emmerton had to be re-designed by my directions in 1976, and that is what accounted for the time delay in 1976. At the River Road pumping station site, a similar problem occurred and the consultants employed by the Democratic Labour Party misdirected the Barbados Government. So it is intended by this Government that we shall litigate. A settlement in my personal view appears unachievable and I know from my own personal experience that the matter is now with the Attorney General's Chambers, and it is my belief, Mr. Chairman, that this matter will go to litigation. The bulk of the cost for this overrun must in fact fall to the consulting engineers. The fact is that costs have to be paid now but the Government will be reimbursed and will recoup a substantial percentage of the overrun incurred at the River Road pumping site.

In respect of the matter raised by the hon. member for Christ Church West, Mr. Chairman, I wish to make one point and it has to do with hooking into the sewage system by individuals and in particular by old age pensioners. Now there is going to be a cost involved with business houses there ought not to be a problem; it will be a legitimate expense that they can deal with it, but the domestic installations where families and homes are going to be hooked into the system will work some hardship I believe particularly on the old age pensioners, and I know this because I have been with my constituents on this matter to a large extent, but I know that a proposal has been made that a very soft loan fund be made available for families to make soft loans to accommodate their hooking into the system. Some families who now have dry pits, Mr. Chairman, will have to go to a waterborne system, and that will involve some expense. In case of old age pensioners, my proposal to Government was that installation and hooking into the sewage system should be made free of cost because it would be well beyond their means to do so on their own account. I just wanted to make that point.

Mr. Chairman, I do not think I wish to say anything further on the points raised by hon. members.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1981-82 No. 4

Head 25 - Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs was called.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, the object of making provision in this Resolution for the sum of \$10,000 is to meet the subsidy payments to farmers in respect of tillage services carried out in their services by private contractors. Hon. members are aware that in the budgetary proposals in the 1981 Budget the Government announced that it was their intention to enlarge the availability of tillage service to a wider section of the farming community for the purpose of the subsidy scheme where the area has now been defined is up to ten hectares which I understand in non metric terms as 27.4 acres. This is considerably larger than the area hitherto regarded as a small farming area in Barbados but in recognition of the need to update our conception of a small farmer, Government has decided that the area should be enlarged.

We are well aware of the fact that the Government services through the Ministry of Agriculture are totally inadequate to cater to the demands of the farmers at the particular time when the services are needed, and as we all know there is a well established pattern of need which, if we are to increase our non sugar agriculture in particular, has to be catered to. We all know that immediately after the normal reaping time for canes in the month of June and even during the earlier part of the year, if we are to plant yams and things of that kind in the month of May, cultivation has to take place as early as possible on these lands which are to be devoted in the particular year to the planting of food crops.

Now a large number of discussions took place between Government, the Sugar Factories Limited, the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation and the Ministry of Agriculture together with a few private contractors. It is obvious that we would not be able to implement the totality of the number of farmers that the scheme is intended to help in this year. There is just now enough tractor equipment available for this to be done. We have tried and I believe the previous Government had tried to encourage the formation of cooperatives in the agricultural industry in Barbados particularly among small holders in Barbados.

1.30 p.m.

I believe there are a few small holders, co-operatives who actually own tractors, I think, in certain areas of St. Philip. There used to be a very thriving one in Ellerton in St. George, I believe. The Government has been giving tax-free entry, relief of duty on equipment. There are mechanisms to ensure that genuine co-operative organizations who provide these kinds of services would get financial help to buy agricultural equipment.

Notwithstanding these inducements Government still finds that its own tractor service is overlaid with work and unless we can have a comprehensive attack on this matter by making use not only of Government services but also of any excess capacity which is in existence in the sugar industry as well as among private contractors, we will not be able to place the small farmers in the same position of the larger farmers in relation to their being able to get their lands ploughed at an optimum time.

Contrary to popular belief, there are still a large number of smaller estates in Barbados that are between 25 acres or in metric terms between 10 hectares and an acreage of 70 or even as much as 100 acres. Many of them now have to depend on tractors of larger holdings within their immediate agricultural facility to get their land ploughed.

It is for that reason that we feel that this is a role that the Sugar Factories Ltd or a branch of the Sugar Producers' Federation should play its part. BADC in its area is also playing its part.

I know that hon. members will ask about the Government's Tractor Scheme. As far as I am concerned, I have had nothing but the bitterest complaints from my own constituents in Christ Church about that. I have never tried in any way to pretend that it is satisfactory. As far as I am concerned, all of them want sending home and a new bunch want bringing in to do the job. That is the position. This is a complaint that has been going along. When I read the files when I acted as Minister of Agriculture on many occasions during the course of the last five years and as far as I am concerned, the Ministry of Agriculture cannot carry out a proper tractor cultivation scheme. (*Asides*) I agree with the hon. member. It is a terrible legacy I received from the hon. member's Government, a terrible legacy.

The basic position is, Sir, that this is a commercial activity and it is not a 8.00 a.m. — 4.00 p.m. job because if the rain is falling between a certain period of time in the private sector in order to get a job finished they go out and pay by the acre to get a job done with a light on. I am sure hon. members on the other side must have gone through the country side at night and seen people with big lights hooked on to the tractors ploughing. I am sure that on weekends once the weather

conditions are favourable that you will see in the private sector tractors being used when the conditions are adequate from the point of view of weather.

Once you come to Government, you have a 40 hour week which is 8.00 a.m. — 4.00 p.m. and a Monday to Friday and everything has to revolve around the conception that 40 hour in time only relates to Monday to Friday. All the rest is overtime. We cannot really be serious about these things. We have to accept these limitations and decide in our minds that this is a totally inadequate scheme.

As a matter of fact these complaints come from all over the parishes. We have tried our best in relation to this in that we have found out a few things but I will leave that to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture but I am not really trying to justify the unjustifiable. The Government itself decided that the delivery was unsatisfactory and we have hit on a device and a scheme that we will subsidize on a certain level the operations. This money is to provide the subsidy.

The Ministry of Agriculture itself in respect of those that it has done will only be charging the net rate, that is, the commercial rate less the subsidy because we cannot pay ourselves subsidy so our charges will be the net rate. There will be no disadvantages if you get a private contractor doing it because they charge the full commercial rate. We know what it costs us and we will pay the difference. In respect of the Ministry of Agriculture if their equipment is used, they will pay the difference plus the subsidy so it is an attempt to remove any disadvantage that they had.

All of us are interested in seeing cultivation take place in the optimum period of time and it can only take place in the optimum period of time if all of the cultivators had reasonable access to the same advantageous type of cultivation and this is the objective of this Resolution.

I accordingly, Sir, beg to move that this Head now stand part.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, first of all I would like to make a few comments concerning the speech the Hon. Minister just made. The Hon. Minister said that this subsidy is now for persons, I think he mentioned 10 hectares or 25 acres and under.

In the Financial Statement of the Hon. Prime Minister he said that the subsidy was being paid to 5 hectares and under so I would like to know when it was increased

because we on this side did not know that it was increased at all. The first time we heard about it is today.

The next comment I would want to make on the Minister's Statement is that he suggested that the problem with the tractor scheme is that the persons who work with the tractor scheme are not carrying out their job in a very good manner and his solution is, and I would think that I am quoting him "fire them".

Now, the Hon. Prime Minister in his Budgetary proposals gave as his reason for the bad operation of the tractor scheme that the Government Tractor Scheme was overburdened so I would like to know how you can relate these two statements. One Hon. Minister is saying that it is because of bad work and the Hon. Prime Minister is saying that it is because the tractor scheme is overburdened so I would like the Hon. Minister to explain that in due course.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to say a few words about the small farmers.
1.40 p.m.

The small farmer can offer very little security and he implies high costs for the people who lend money to the agricultural sector. The small farmer has little access to modern inputs and if he can obtain them, he has to obtain them at very high cost. The small farmer seldom benefits directly from higher food prices and from any expanding markets because most of the produce of the small farmer is mortgaged to the people who lend him money even before he has reaped his crop. The small farmer's principal resource is his own and his family's labour. The small farmer must continually work harder only to survive. Against this background, Mr. Chairman, take into consideration what happens to the large farmer producer and you will see that the large farmer producer gets credit very, very easily, he has an unlimited amount of land, prices relative to the large farmer are low and there are a lot of incentives to produce. When you realise, Mr. Chairman, that there is a concentration in Barbados, as far as processing and marketing, in the hands of a few financial groups, you would realise that there is a great difference between the large farmer and the small farmer.

Against this background, Mr. Chairman, we on this side believe that there is need for group action. We believe that all small farmers, all, should get together in some form of co-operative. Mr. Chairman, we realise that for a co-operative to operate there are lots of pre-conditions and they necessitate a lot of hard work. There must be effective co-operative action, there must be capable management, adequate capital and efficient administration. As can be seen, Mr. Chairman, none of these things that I have just mentioned can be adequately

performed and carried out by the small farmers of Barbados and that is why we are saying that the Government has got to take an initiative and the Government's support is needed in this area. We, on this Side, will support all efforts by Government which encourage small farmers to organise themselves democratically, to realise realistically, their situation and their problems, to educate themselves and to act collectively in their own long term interest.

We support small farmer co-operatives, but, we oppose, Mr. Chairman, the idea that has been mooted about recently, that the small farmer should join with the large farmer in some sort of co-operation or some sort of co-operative. We oppose this, Mr. Chairman, because, as someone said in another place, whenever you see the lion lying down with the lamb, the lamb ends up in the lion's stomach. So, we cannot support the view that small farmers should join with large farmers in any sort of organisation. We believe that the small farmers have a very important part to play in Barbados. We believe that the small farmer provides food for consumption more so than the large farmer who, as far as he is concerned is looking mainly for profit. Small farmer's enterprise takes him into multiple crop agriculture, yams, eddoes, potatoes and that is why we believe that the small farmer is a very important person in this country. (ASIDES).

When you -- I am getting specifically, now, to this subsidy that is proposed by the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister -- when you take into consideration, Mr. Chairman, the cost of seed, the cost of fertiliser and so forth and then, you tell the small farmer that he should pay to get his land tilled and then you will pay him 10, probably 11 months after, this seems to us like putting the small farmer in a large amount of difficulty. This seems to me to be telling the small farmer that you have to sell the piece of land you have because you have to mortgage everything you have at banks because there are very few small farmers in Barbados who can pay for seeds and fertiliser and pay the price of tilling his land instantly or immediately.

We believe that what should be done is for the Government to reactivate the small farmer tractor scheme (APPLAUSE) and till the land for the farmer because we are saying this, we can only come to the conclusion that a suggestion which tells the small farmer to pay for the tillage immediately is destined to put him out of business. This is our view on this Side (ASIDES).

What has happened before, Mr. Chairman, is this, what has happened before is this, the small farmer went and paid a small fee and got his land tilled at the time he wanted it tilled and then he paid the balance of the money after. We believe that that was a fair deal for the small farmer and we will always believe that that is what

should be done. We cannot agree with any scheme that tells the small farmer that he has to search in his pocket for \$200, \$300, \$400 to pay anyone to till his land at the time he wants it tilled when we have a small farmer tractor scheme there which should be working efficiently. I am very glad to hear the Honourable Minister who just sat down, the Deputy Prime Minister say that he has been hearing complaints in his constituency and admitted that there have been complaints all over Barbados. So, I believe that the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister is of the opinion that the scheme whereby you till the person's land and allow them to pay after is a better scheme than telling them to pay now and plough later. I believe that the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister believes in this.

Another thing which I would want to know from the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister is if this measure has any connection with the ADC pilot scheme that was recently put forward by the present Government in their view for rationalising the sugar industry because if this subsidy scheme has any connection with this ADC pilot scheme, there are a lot more questions we have to ask which means there are a lot more answers we need to have. We would like to know this.

What I am saying, Mr. Chairman, is that there has been a virtual collapse of the extension service in Barbados, there has been a virtual collapse of the tractor cultivation scheme in Barbados resulting in small farmers being unable to get their lands tilled when they want to and we are saying that this is unfair to the small farmer. We on this Side call on this Government to completely restructure and expand the tractor cultivation services under a more flexible system which will respond quickly to the requests of small farmers.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (APPLAUSE)
1.50 p.m.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I have had a lot of experience in agriculture, and I have been fortunate to be Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs. What I am going to say here today is going to surprise a lot of people. The hon. member started off to deal with agriculture, like what is happening throughout the Third World Countries today, and the basic problem with agriculture in these Third World Countries lies in the fact that economists who have only gone to schools or universities and in Barbados, Trinidad, all over the Third World Countries have been recruited into the Ministries of Finance and Planning, have been the death knell of agriculture in Third World Countries. I am telling you that. That is the problem, Mr. Speaker.

I have sat in the Ministry of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, and the problem you meet, and it is not this administration only, the previous administration too, because let me take you back to basic facts. We talk

about the ploughing scheme in the Ministry of Agriculture. The hon. member says bring back the small farmer ploughing scheme. I do not think he understands, I do not believe he knows, so I forgive him, because he is not aware of the problems which existed in that scheme, and it stems from the point that everybody wants a lot of money in the shortest possible time, not bothering how it comes or where it comes from. We ran that scheme in the Ministry of Agriculture. It was overburdened for the basic reason that the price for cultivation by the Ministry's tractors was always much lower than in the commercial sector, and therefore what you term small farmers — I would say farmers generally — booked their names to have the tractor to plough their lands rather than going out to commercial enterprises, and there were only one or two of them, to have this work done.

We have had instances where the tractor drivers would make sure that the vehicles were inoperative from Monday to Thursday or Friday morning, collect the tractors on a Friday evening, do their own work on Friday night, Saturday or Sunday, plough for the Ministry on Monday, and end up in the workshop on Tuesday again. If you doubt me, ask Mr. David Simmons, the gentleman who sits in the Other Place. I can send you in St. George and I can call names of small farmers who have had one part of their job done, to come back next time, and we only knew when the complaints came in the Ministry that we had ploughed the land to come back and rotate but never came back, and when we checked the books that name was nowhere on the books at all, and you had all kinds of excuses. The famous excuse was 'I ploughed the wrong man's land and when I found out I had to go and do the right one, which was next door.' This is only part.

But I go further back, Mr. Chairman. I think what we need in Barbados, since both political parties recognise that agriculture is a major part of our development and we need it, the Government must decide to treat agriculture as it has treated tourism and it has treated industry. It is time that we have duty free concessions on the major agricultural implements that are needed in Barbados. The same way you can invite people from abroad to come to Barbados to put up a hotel, a tourist plant, or put up an industrial building, or bring in machinery, and give them a tax free concession for ten years and all such like, it is about time that it is given to agriculture. I have suffered under it, because I have applied to the Government. When I was Minister I applied to the Ministry of Finance that we should allow certain things like surround netting, plastics, etc. to come in duty free. If you are talking about increasing agricultural production, we have a problem. You hear from everybody in Barbados that you cannot get people to weed.

You have a problem with volatile sprays, and therefore the farmer out there is crying out, "I need proper netting to give me better shade, I need some sort of plastic to keep down the weeds, etc." When the suggestion went from my Ministry to the Ministry of Finance and Planning, the economic experts who had only just come out of the university said that you do not use plastic to keep down weeds, so you cannot get duty free concessions, and the poor Minister down in the Ministry of Agriculture is being saddled with this kind of decision, the farmers outside believe that the Ministry of Agriculture is not working in his interests, not knowing that it is the theoretical agricultural economists who sit down in the Ministry of Finance and Planning that have kept down agriculture in this country over the past 15 to 20 years, and that is my honest view.

I go further. We talk about agricultural problems. Check any one of the agricultural stations in Barbados today and you will find ploughs, you will find tractors, you will find all kinds of agricultural implements that are sitting down keeping the place looking untidy. Now, when I went into the Ministry of Agriculture on my first tour of duty I discovered all these things. I said let us clean up the place to begin with, let us make the place look like we are in for business, let us do something. Let us have an auction sale and sell them out, but do you know what you find, Mr. Chairman? They all belong to the Ministry of Finance and Planning, because from the time they are boarded they do not belong to your Ministry any more, they fall back into the hands of the Ministry of Finance and Planning. Ask the Leader of the Opposition. I have seen him at Graeme Hall early a morning. Go up there and you will find tractors and ploughs up there 20 years old rusting to pieces, that have been boarded, rather than selling them out cheaply and let somebody get them repaired and put them out there in the fields. But you cannot get it through to the Ministry of Finance and Planning, in this administration nor the one gone past.

The trouble is that you have too many economists up there. You cannot get it through. (ASIDES). It sounds like a joke. I believe the whole concept started from about 1962 that everything has got to be processed by an economist who went to school in nowhere. I do not mind what you all say, I can talk as I like from behind here now. There is a Bajan called Atlee Brathwaite who has now left Barbados and is somewhere out in Africa, because he was thoroughly fed up, because no two economists ever see eye to eye, that is one thing I can tell you. No two economists ever see eye to eye, and he worked in the Ministry of Agriculture and after a time the poor fellow said he could not get through any longer.

We have to look at a complete restructuring of the Ministry of Agriculture. I think we have to decide how

much money we are going to give to the Ministry of Agriculture, let them spend it the way they see fit, and let them run through. (ASIDE). That does not sound good to you, but that is my view. Why allocate money to them and then tell them they cannot do what they want? Why? You have also, Mr. Chairman, to start pruning the dead wood, and you have to be serious. That is going to cause little problems, because you have to be able to restructure Government and I do not know how you are going to do it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It will take a little time too. It is now 2 o'clock.

Mr. BOLDEN: I will finish in five minutes, Mr. Chairman.
2.00 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, you have a big problem. The hon. member talked about a collapse of the extensions service. It started to collapse about 1964 from the time we changed the name from Peasant Agricultural Instructor to Extension Officer. I believe the hon. member may remember they reduced them down to five. In the Ministry of Agriculture today, there is a division. One set says you must not look at small farmers, there is nothing called small farmers. The other set said to leave the large farmers to themselves, they will get through. That is why I say you need a complete examination of the Ministry and I put forward a paper to the Government that we needed to examine the whole Ministry of Agriculture if you really wanted to get agriculture moving in Barbados.

I will give you an example. When I was there we sat down and planned to increase the production of onions in this country, and we thought that the best way to do it would be to call the small farmers, the people who live in Rouens and Neils who now have two and three acre plots that are beautiful housespots and lawns and invite them into it, but Mr. Chairman, you have a situation where although the Minister decides something his message does not reach the people out there because there are people in the Ministry of Agriculture who believe that it is going to cause them too much work, and unless whichever administration it is sits down and decides to look at the Ministry of Agriculture, examine it and find out who is willing to work and who is willing to sit down and only do research all the time, we will be in this position.

When we look at research, in the Ministry of Agriculture, you have about five agricultural stations which when added together with the exclusion of Graeme Hall cannot in any way make up 20 acres. You decide to have an outreach programme where we do our research on the lands of the farmers, bring the farmers into it, they know what is going in, you gain their confidence

and therefore you can be assured that the product you are asking them to produce is one which they can manage, one which they can deal with and one for which they have a market. But that also caused a big disruption. "Oh, no", they said, "we want to do our own little research in our own little backyards on Government lands and tell the farmers what to do."

You cannot tell any farmer in Barbados what to do because the Government has not got enough lands to dictate the pace of agriculture. The only thing you can do is to help grow sugar cane when you talk about a Government policy in Agriculture. (*Asides*).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please!

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, where small farmers are concerned in this country I know that there was a policy that the small farmer could look at and be satisfied that he is regarded as part and parcel of the agricultural community in this country, Barbados would have no need for or very little need to worry about its agricultural production, but as I said, they suffer with being disadvantaged by persons who apply theoretical knowledge to agriculture rather than practical knowledge, and I am going to offend somebody else too. You know, Mr. Chairman, or you have heard about a fund provided by USAID for small farmers in the Caribbean. The fund started off at an 8% interest rate, plus 4% for on-lending to a national institution and a further 4% for on-lending to a farmer. Now I got into trouble because I told Mr. Habib that as long as I was Minister of Agriculture in Barbados I would tell the small farmer not to touch it, they were asking to wipe him out completely, because do you know what we call a small farmer in Barbados? The fellow with a half acre or an acre of land. If he goes and borrows money at 12% interest and puts in any crop at all with the unseasonable weather over which he has no control and down comes the rain and washes it out, he is out with the money, he is out with the land, he has to start from scratch again. He had nothing to begin with, he borrowed money at 12% interest, and now he is washed out. Who will lend him money at another 12% interest?

Go and look at the Agricultural Credit Bank's section that is left, Mr. Chairman, and you will find that there are people owing that still for as many as twenty years and cannot pay it off. When the Opposition speaks, they must remember history. When part of the Scotland District, Mellowes Hill, Melvins Hill and Joes River, was cut up by the Mackie Symmonds Bank when the Barbados Labour Party Government had a D-4 tractor in that area for ploughing, etc. that tractor was withdrawn and the land practically turned into rab land because nobody would go down there to work the land. You needed implements. The people ran into

debt, and one has got to consider carefully what we need when it comes to the small farmer and agriculture in this country.

If we want to bring the small farmer into the true agricultural life of the community, we have to look at them from an entirely different basis. The economic standards that apply to large farmers cannot apply, Mr. Chairman, to small farmers in this country. You can never tell how many small farmers are growing what at any given time. You can never tell what your market is going to produce, and the only way Government can get into there and control the market or regulate it is to make an incentive that is so attractive to the small farmer that he will comply with the terms and conditions, and then you will know what is happening. My recommendation is that Government should treat agriculture as of now, if you want to depend on it, as one of the industries that should merit duty free concessions on the majority of products they use as of today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I must report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

On Resumption

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. It is now Question Time. I am advised that there are no replies to questions ready so we will go into Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No.1. The hon. member for St. Philip North.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Resolution that we are debating as tabled by the hon. member for St. Michael South Central reads as follows in the first two paragraphs concerning the Budget:—

"Whereas the economy of Barbados is in a crisis situation, and

Whereas the various measures announced by the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning on Tuesday, September 8, 1981 constitute a heavy burden on the entire commu-

nity, particularly the lower income groups and their children....."

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the debate so far seems to stem primarily on whether or not the economy of Barbados is in a crisis or in difficulty as was said by the hon. member for St. Thomas and the hon. member for Christ Church East.

The hon. member for St. Joseph has said that the economy is in a crisis and I am saying that it is in a crisis as well and, Mr. Speaker, I contend that if you refer to the statement by the Hon. Minister of Finance on page 2, the second paragraph reads as follows:—

"The proposals which I will shortly announce are based on the conviction that the highest measure of economic management is always to be found in the steps taken to *avert* an economic crisis, rather than steps taken to try to manage after the crisis has fully developed to an acute stage."

Mr. Speaker, that paragraph seems to suggest that the hon. member for St. Thomas' concern was whether or not the crisis was at an acute stage or at an early stage.

The hon. member for Christ Church East said that one of the pointers to look for in an economy that is in an acute stage is whether or not the Government embarks on heavy domestic borrowing and it is now a statement of fact that in this Chamber last Tuesday the Minister of Finance, the hon. member for St. Thomas, brought to this Chamber a Resolution which, among other things, sought to enable his Ministry to raise some one hundred million dollars by way of Treasury Bills on the domestic market and if you remember, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister of Finance had said that this is one of the measures that he hoped he would not have to refer to since it would mean that Government would then be having to compete with private enterprise for scarce resource on the market and I am contending, Mr. Speaker, that the economy is in a crisis.

Mr. Speaker, let me say from the outset that to say that the economy of Barbados is in a crisis saddens me, Mr. Speaker, and I can speak for all of my colleagues that it saddens us because we are all Barbadians. I am a Barbadian, my parents are Barbadians and all my children are Barbadians and it gives me no particular pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to have to add to this debate today.

Unlike the Opposition in the Budget debate of 1976 when they took particular pleasure when the then Leader of the Opposition made the statement that the unemployment rate in Barbados was 28%, we on this side take no such pleasure.

Mr. Speaker, what is the economy of Barbados and we need to take a quick look to understand what has been happening. The economy of Barbados, Mr. Speaker, can be divided broadly speaking into three sectors — the agriculture sector, the tourism sector and the manufacturing sector. Since it is my contention, Mr. Speaker, that the construction sector cannot be so regarded as the three above, then those first three sectors, Mr. Speaker, are generators of foreign exchange while the fourth, the construction industry, is a user of foreign exchange.

We have heard, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Prime Minister, the member for St. Thomas say that the reasons for the difficulties are mainly (1) a falling of the sugar crop this year due to the late start of the crop and unseasonal rains which as a result meant that there was some shortfall of \$43 million in revenue.

Secondly, the tourist industry has declined and if my memory serves me right, it has declined to some stage of 5% of the last one.

Mr. Speaker, the manufacturing industry has not performed as well as last year and that is also 5% below. The only sector, Mr. Speaker, that seems to be performing is the construction sector and I will refer to that later.

The contention of the Minister of Finance is that all of these measures were completely beyond his control and as such the Government and the Minister of Finance could take no blame for the state of the economy as it is, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that in previous years when the weather was good, when the tourists were coming, when manufacturing was up because Jamaica was going through a hard time that the present Government took the claims for that and they put it down to efficient management. Mr. Speaker, the test of management is not in good times. The test of management is when you are going through difficult periods and I am saying that this is the first time within modern times and the first occasion that this present Barbados Labour Party administration has had to manage the economy properly.

In 1973, Mr. Speaker, we had the situation where the price of oil went up four times and as a result the economy of Barbados had two difficult years in 1974 and 1975. By 1976, Mr. Speaker, the economy was coming out of that slow, sluggish growth and by 1977, Mr. Speaker, the economy was once again buoyant and by some fortune, Mr. Speaker, the present Barbados Labour Party administration inherited the buoyancy of that economy and they were also fortunate that the weather up North sent the tourists down and the good weather we had in the sugar industry caused us to have a bumper crop.

Mr. Speaker, if you refer to the Central Bank's Reports all the time, you will see that the Central Bank was signalling warnings earlier in the year about the state of the economy, in particular, the international economy. The Central Bank signalled warnings that the American economy was in recession, that of Canada, the United Kingdom and Germany and that obviously since our foreign exchange earner, that of tourism, is so closely connected to our economy it was obvious that we would expect the effect of the recessionary trends in North America would interfere with our economy at some time.

Mr. Speaker, it is my contention that the Minister of Finance did not take heed of those warnings because at that particular time, Mr. Speaker, it was particularly important that you should manage the economy of Barbados very skillfully.

Mr. Speaker, public financing, as everyone knows, there are two areas of expenditure, the recurrent or inescapable expenditure that goes towards payment of Civil Servants and your Capital Works expenditure, Mr. Speaker. Having been signalled by the Central Bank that there are possible recessionary trends up North which would reach us, it is my contention, Mr. Speaker, that in particular, importance should have been paid to the management of the economy as far as capital works are concerned but what do we see, Mr. Speaker?
3.00 p.m.

We saw, Mr. Speaker, that, between the months of January 1981 and June 1981, Capital Expenditure was some \$63.7 million more than it was in January 1980 to June 1981. And particularly, Mr. Speaker, we saw in the month of March 1981 that the Capital Expenditure for that month alone was something like \$42,807,981 or some 30% of the total Capital Expenditure for the year of \$138 824 049. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am saying that this extreme heavy Capital Expenditure at that particular time is largely responsible for the situation that developed in the economy and if you went back, Mr. Speaker, and have a more detailed look at the expenditure, you will see that in every single month between January and June of that year the expenditure and capital was double that of 1980.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am contending that that is an area of mismanagement because in the situation where there was going to be a shortage of funds available to the Government, you should have spent and watched your capital expenditure a lot more closely than you did.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the tourist industry is concerned, we have heard a lot about the tourist industry. We have even had some statements being issued by the newly elected Chairman of the Board on Tourism, which, in my opinion, can do nothing but worsen the situation on the beaches of Barbados and can only cause us pain.

Crime, Mr. Speaker, concerns all of us, not crime against visitors only, but crime against everybody, Mr. Speaker, and I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that one has to be very careful in a community because the people follow the leadership. If you have a leadership, Mr. Speaker, that is going through a moral crisis, where dummery is encouraged, Mr. Speaker, where there has been growth in the drug situation in Barbados, Mr. Speaker, where there is constant talk of casinos, Mr. Speaker, you can only expect that that would permeate from the top to the bottom and the masses out there would pick up the signals from their leaders and you would have a moral decay. Mr. Speaker, I am saying that it is unfortunate that, to add to that moral decay in Barbados, we now have an economic crisis.

Mr. Speaker, we saw that one of the reasons for the situation in the tourist industry, no doubt, is an increase of the rates by 30% and this is largely due, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that the hotel industry, at one time when the Light and Power were seeking increase in rates, some 48% to the consumers, they did not see fit to add any dissent because, in the way of big business, they thought they could ride it out, but it resulted in a 30% increase, Mr. Speaker, in the rates which obviously meant that the rates became outside the reaches of a lot of people.

As far as the agriculture industry is concerned, non-sugar agriculture has not been performing. We have heard earlier some of the reasons why non sugar agriculture has not been performing. Let us have a look at the construction industry. It is my contention that the construction industry cannot be regarded in the same light as the other three industries since it is a user of foreign exchange and is not an earner of foreign exchange. It is not true to say that the construction industry can do well in an ailing economy because, if the other foreign exchange earners are not performing well, it is very obvious that there is going to be a shortfall in foreign exchange and, as a result, the construction industry would suffer. It is this area that I want to have a closer look at because it is my contention that, in a situation where there is already some slowing off in public sector construction, it is very obvious that you need to keep the employment situation in private sector construction. I am particularly interested in the housing section for this specific reason, Mr. Speaker. The housing stock of Barbados is now estimated to be some 70 000 houses. Of this amount, some 14 000 houses are what we classify as wall houses, so it would mean that we have some 56 000 wooden houses in Barbados and most of them, Mr. Speaker, are at the stage where they would need replacing. Therefore, it is very necessary for the improvement of the housing stock of Barbados to continue at full speed and where we have a situation, where it is obviously going to be competition for scarce resource, my contention is that that scarce resource, particularly when it is foreign exchange money we need, must be channelled into the

area where it does the most social good and, in my contention, you must have a very close look at the proposals as they affect housing.

What are the proposals put forward by the Rt. Hon. Minister of Finance. They vary wide and far from the mini buses, which I am not particularly interested in, to increases in bus fares — which I must say something about — to the increase in bank rates and the restrictions on banks, regardless of the personal loan category. Let me have a look at the situation with bus fares because I think that anyone would be insensitive if they would suggest that the measures introduced as far as bus fares are concerned are not putting a hardship on many, many households. I can only agree with my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South, that this is a fact. Let us look at what has happened. There is a lorry driver who earns \$8 153.60 a year. That lorry driver, before the bus fare imposition, was paying 90 cents a morning and 90 cents an afternoon, and for 49 weeks a year, Mr. Speaker, he was paying \$441. Now, I have no big quarrel with increase, as far as, the working population is concerned, Mr. Speaker, since I well acknowledge that you have to pay for some of the social services.

But, let us see what has happened to the school children, Mr. Speaker. Before the imposition, Mr. Speaker, my lorry driver, Mr. Speaker, has four children at school, three of them, fortunately for him, only need one bus and one needs an exchange and he paid before \$166 during the school year for the children and his total outlay on transport for himself and his children was \$607.50. Mr. Speaker, since this imposition, we have a one per cent levy on transport, \$81.53. He now has to pay \$588 for himself because his bus fare has gone up to \$2.40 a day. I was not talking so much about that, Mr. Speaker, but let us see what is happening to his children. His children must now pay \$666 to get to school, Mr. Speaker, giving him a total outlay per year of \$1 335.53 and the mini budget imposition, Mr. Speaker, has cost him now \$728.03 and for anyone to say that this is not an imposition, he could only be very insensitive to the needs of the poor people of this country, Mr. Speaker. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that that needs to be examined very carefully. If nothing else in this mini budget must be examined, it is the imposition placed on the children of this country because the children today are the men of tomorrow and we cannot encourage the situation where everything is available for them to go ahead and be educated and then discourage them because the parents cannot meet the heavy demands on the bus fares. And then to say that they can approach the Social Welfare Department, if this is posing a problem, Mr. Speaker, is beyond me.

When you look at that, some 16.4% of that man's total income is going towards providing bus fare for

himself and his children and no one can tell me that it is not an imposition to have nearly 1/6 of a man's income going towards public transport. I am saying that we are calling for the removal of the imposition on school children of this country.

Let us have a look at the possible effect on the mini budget measures on housing and I invite the Honourable Minister of Housing to have a careful look as well.

3.10 p.m.

We all agree, if there is one thing in common with both sides of this House, that we need to improve the housing stock in this country, and we need to put the situation where our people are properly housed, because the housing biologists will tell you that a man that is properly housed is more likely to be a peaceful citizen than one who is not properly housed. The housing biologists will tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the result of that housing is a terrific imposition on the welfare services and the health services of a country, since the bill to offset, they say, is much higher in the end, so I am saying that it is for the good of everyone of us in this country that we should improve the housing stock.

I have heard the Minister of Housing say that we need some 1700 houses a year to replace the situation. When I look through the last Economic Report, the Economic Report of 1980, I see that as far as public sector housing is concerned that some 280 houses were built in 1980, so that means that even if we had a performance in the private sector we are far away from the situation that we have. But let us see what has been happening to housing in the private sector.

In the private sector housing is mainly financed by long term mortgages either by the banks, the trust companies or insurance companies. To be more specific, in 1980 the Barbados Mortgage Finance Corporation put out some \$33.3 million in housing, the commercial banks \$39 million, the insurance companies \$40 million and the trust companies \$57.8 million, a total of \$170.1 million that went into the housing sector of this country.

Let us look at the measures. The first measure is the raising of the interest rates for mortgages from 10% to 12%. This means that that increase of 2% on a modest mortgage of \$60,000 for 20 years is an additional \$81 per month, and this has terrific implications, because the additional \$81 per month would disqualify a lot of the people from qualifying for mortgages, since the institutions usually accept as a rule of thumb your ability to service the mortgage, being some 25 to 30% of your gross annual salary, so if you have to, Mr. Speaker, I am saying that you are disqualifying a lot of people. Because bridging finance is taken as personal loans, even if mortgages are available very little bridging finance has

been available, therefore it means that you cannot build any houses, because the banks obviously since they have to put another 5% into the Central Bank, since they have to reduce the personal loan portfolio by 10%, since the Government is now competing on the market for money, and it is my contention that the present issue of Treasury Bills would attract interest of no less than 10%, it is almost impossible for trust companies, with such a small spread between 10% and 12% for mortgages, to make it possible for them to be in the market, so it is my contention that the trust companies will be freezing their mortgage portfolio very shortly, and if even the portfolio was not frozen the unavailability of bridging finance would cause the private sector housing to grind to a halt. It is my contention therefore that if you want to continue employment and take up where public sector housing has left off, that specific instructions will have to be issued by the Central Bank to the commercial banks that bridging finance would have to be raised for the personal loans, because looking at it practically, if you are going to raise scarce foreign reserves, they should be used in an area that is going to generate employment, you should not use scarce foreign reserves to buy cars and stereos and generating little employment in preference to housing, and in an area where the private sector housing is grinding to a halt, this Government must protect the private sector housing to continue employment for my people, or there will be mass unemployment in this country.

If you are looking to the situation where the manufacturing industry must take up that slack, I am saying that this Government must well look at the position of the 14% overdraft situation in the manufacturing industry and encourage them wherever possible.

Mr. Speaker, this Resolution gives me no pleasure at all. I would have preferred to be here praising the opposition side for the buoyancy of the economy, since like any one of you I would have been sharing in that buoyancy, Mr. Speaker, and I can only hope that the other side gives some credit to us on this side in this contention. The measure as introduced I calculate will affect the housing sector by no less than an 11% increase in housing, and the time is now right for the Government to have another look at the tax structure, including the consumption tax, as far as housing is concerned, otherwise you will soon not be able to house anybody. In 1976 an individual could qualify for a mortgage, in 1981 it is now taking a man and his wife, and if these measures continue in 1983 it will take his wife, his children, his family, his grandmother to qualify for a mortgage.

Mr. Speaker, I am saying that the housing situation has to be looked at. This situation as far as the mini budget is concerned has brought hardship in two areas, with the school children of this country that I am asking for some assistance by removing that imposition, and I

am beseeching the Minister of Housing to give serious consideration to the effect of this mini budget on the housing sector, because it is this sector that we are depending on to continue the employment in this area.

One other thing, Mr. Speaker. As I said, I sincerely hope that the climate in this country will improve to such a stage.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has one minute in which to wind up his debate.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I sincerely hope that the climate in this country will improve to the stage where all of us on this side will not have to contribute very much longer to a debate of this kind. The goodwill of Barbados, Mr. Speaker, means the goodwill of all of us. We are all in this boat together, Mr. Speaker, and I can only invite the other side to take the nation into its confidence, to take the Opposition into its confidence and let us sit down together and find the solutions to a sick economy which could only result in sick people in this nation of ours. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, we never had it so good. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that this was the rallying cry of the Barbados Labour Party Government. They told the people of Barbados they never had it so good, and yet as this debate has progressed we had the very strange pleasure, or horror, of hearing the hon. member for St. Thomas indicating that they in fact had been issuing warnings to the people of Barbados.
3.20 p.m.

We have the hon. members on that side seeking to give the impression that they cannot understand why the people of Barbados are shocked, surprised and hurt at the draconian measures which this administration within weeks of coming to power a second time after giving people the impression that all is well in the garden, has been able to impose such measures.

Mr. Speaker, long before the Mini-Budget came to this Honourable Chamber, the Government had embarked on its programme of draconian measures. You will recall, Sir, that the price of gasoline was increased to a fantastic amount while the Director of the Light and Power Company was indicating that the reason why electricity rates would come down was because there was a glut of oil on the market. It has always been interesting to me that at the time when it was being said across the world and in Barbados that there was glut on the oil market, the Government found it necessary to increase the price of gasoline to a fantastic figure. But, Sir, there are

some people in Barbados who believe that having held back price increases before the election, the flood gates of price increases were open significantly, completely immediately after the election, and I am stating, Sir, that what has been described as the Mini Budget is only the tip of the iceberg. It is only a matter of time, Sir, before other measures come tumbling down to pressure and crush the already oppressed people of this community.

Now they seek to suggest that they were warning people. Mr. Speaker, I should like to lay that to rest. I am looking, Sir, at the House of Assembly Debates, Second Session 1976-81. I recall when the Hon. Prime Minister, the Minister responsible for Finance introduced the Estimates in this Honourable House at page 5031, he had this to say: "We therefore have a picture, Sir, where satisfactory economic activity during the Current Financial Year has enabled the Government to meet the legitimate demands of public services, as well as the general service of the country without excessive recourse to money creation, or unreasonable amounts of borrowing." He went on a little further to say "The overall Fiscal Deficit of just over \$95 million is not an unreasonable percentage of the estimated GDP during the financial year." And again as he completed that speech at page 5036 he said to this Honourable House: ".....members may see the lines along which we are approaching the task of taking Barbados into another five years of prosperity, economic expansion and social welfare, under the Barbados Labour Party."

The Opposition got up and tried to draw to the attention of the Hon. Minister of Finance that he was misleading this country into believing that there is a great euphoric state arising out of great management of the economy, but the hon. member who now sits at the head of the Government temporarily, the hon. member for Christ Church East Central I believe it was, got up and in scathing terms attacked this Opposition, attacked the hon. member who had spoken and at page 5043, Sir, we have the words, those famous words, and I quote; the speaker is the Hon. H. B. St. John, and it says "Never have the Barbados public had it so good. There has been more money in the pockets of people in Barbados in the course of the last four years, and in particular in the course of the last year than ever in the history of Barbados." That is what he said.

There is a Proverb in Barbados that "what sweetens goat mouth....." and it continues. The burn of the tail has come and we are at the stage where the Government is seeking to recede.

Mr. Speaker, the economy of Barbados is a small open economy. Because it is a small open economy, there are certain disadvantages. These disadvantages stem primarily from the fact that we are open to influences

from outside of Barbados; but because it is a small economy, it also has certain advantages, and among those advantages is the capacity to manage the economy effectively. When the history of this country is written the pattern established by the minister of finance in the Democratic Labour Party Government, the Rt. hon. member for St. John will go down as a model of prudent, financial management for a small developing open economy, and it would have been in the interest of this country if hon. members on that side had paid some attention to the steps taken and the recommendations made even from this side on how to deal with the economy.

We have three basic sectors, Sir: the agricultural sector, the tourism sector including manufacturing industry or the industrial sector including tourism, and we need to control the inflation of the present system in the country. That is what any prudent manager of a Barbados economy would need to do, provide effective management in the agricultural sector, provide effective and productive management in the tourism and manufacturing sector, and hold inflation to reasonable levels. I state categorically without fear of contradiction that from the time the Barbados Labour Party Government has come to power on September 2, 1976, until now the inflation rate in Barbados has gone only upward. The record is there, Sir, and one does not need to quote it. But let us look at what we have had instead. We have had rhetoric, Mr. Speaker. We have had the most effective rhetoric that has been seen in the history of Government in this country. For some three or four years now, Mr. Speaker, I have watched with horror as the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has confused a significant sector of this community with his rhetoric. Spoken sometimes in full confidence and in almost Talmudic fashion, pronounces, and the people of Barbados have been led to listen rather than to read.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the hon. member really means what he is saying when he makes reference to immunic fashion.

Mr. TAITT: I said "Talmudic" fashion. That is what I said. During that time for example one heard from the Hon. Minister of Finance that we had real growth, but on examination we have found that such growth has been spearheaded by the so-called distributive sector. Now, Mr. Speaker, if you shift the burden of taxation from direct taxation to indirect taxation, if you make the population that is dependent almost entirely for its food, its shelter and its housing for some 80% of its salary, then, Sir, the distributive sector is bound to be the spearheading sector in such an economy because the people with the rising prices have to spend it as fast as they get it, and the more they get the more they have to spend because the rise continues almost unchangeably, and certainly under the Barbados Labour Party unchanged.

But what, Mr. Speaker, was the Central Bank saying? The Minister of Finance in its Economic Report was giving us one kind of information. In the 1978 Report for example, at page VIII, it says "The Government's fiscal performance in the financial year 1978 - 79 was exceptionally good. The record of current account surplus of over \$34 million being achieved, this went towards the financing of capital projects." In 1979 at page VI, here is what the Economic Report put out under the aegis of the Minister of Finance is saying: "The Government fiscal performance in the financial year 1979 - 80 continued to be good".

3.30 p.m.

A current account surplus of \$27 million was achieved. In 1980, Sir, the refrain continued. At page 6 it says, "The Government's fiscal performance in the Financial Year 1980/81 continued to be good." Almost like a sad refrain but here is what the Central Bank was saying, Sir. The report of the Central Bank 1980 on Page 4, Sir:-

"By the end of March, it was clear that the increase in tourist earnings would fall well short of the 1979 rate. Whereas in 1979 foreign exchange reserves over the first quarter had risen by over \$60 million, the increase in 1980 was less than \$9 million. Meanwhile the value of retained imports was 50% higher than in the first quarter of 1979."

Mr. Speaker, the signs were there. The Central Bank was sending the information to the Ministry of Finance but the Ministry of Finance with its publication was telling us that the performance was exceptionally good.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, we have come to disregard a number of the statements and points made in these reports ever since 1976 because, Sir, these reports are the only place where you can find a Government Statistical Statement for the same period giving completely different figures and arriving at the same 12.8% unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, time does not afford me to go through in detail but there can be found, anyone who compares the economic statistics in the Economic Report 1979 and 1980 will find entirely disparate figures coming up with the same 12.8% unemployment in a particular year. You will find further that in these reports the amount of employed persons which they have indicated differs significantly from the number and amount which has been supplied even now by the hon. members on that side, and more particularly, the Minister responsible for Finance and Planning.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at the sectors, we look at agriculture, we have to go swiftly, Sir, but earlier today, Sir, we had a clear acceptance finally from the Government side that they have mismanaged the agri-

cultural sector and if there is any need for evidence of this, Sir, one has only to turn to the Central Bank's Reports.

In 1977, the Central Bank Report on Agriculture at Page 10 of its Annual Report "The cotton crop was a disaster". I am quoting, Sir. "Onion production rose, but weak marketing arrangements and limited storage capacity led to increased storage."

It goes on further. "The output of milk and poultry products remained depressed. The quantity of fish caught this year declined sharply." This is 1977, Sir.

In 1979, Sir, the Central Bank Report on Agriculture at Page 11, Sir, "Inadequate marketing arrangements for livestock and unfavourable weather conditions led to an overall decline of 4.5% in the output of non-sugar agriculture during 1979."

It goes on further, Sir, "Onion production declined by 26.6%" and still further "and inadequate drying facilities for curing onions" and still further, Sir, "The early enthusiasm for cotton as a viable alternative to sugar in the low rainfall areas seems to have disappeared after 1975 when production reached a peak of 161,000 kgs. Since then output has fallen steadily and by 1979 only 17,146 kgs. of clean lint were produced. The area planted has also been declining (by 19.5% in 1979 alone) although prices are on the increase."

In that same report on that same page it says "Pork production fell by almost half (48%) as a result of marketing problems." This is only the tip of the iceberg, Sir, and all of this time that Government was preaching to the people of Barbados that they are enjoying a magnificent managing of the economy.

Mr. Speaker, when one examines the tourism sector in some detail, one finds that what is going on now is remarkable. Everyone in Barbados, apparently, is seeking to blame the fall in tourism on crime. Now, Mr. Speaker, it would be a brave man who would stand up anywhere at all in Barbados, least of all in this Honourable House, and suggest that there is not an increase in crime in Barbados.

Finally it has been agreed that the questions asked by the hon. member for St. John on this side about the increase in crime were valid questions and that the answers given at the time did not have the proper basis for the statement. Mr. Speaker, everybody in Barbados has agreed that crime has increased and I believe the hon. member for Christ Church West will finally agree but that is a matter for him.

What is important, Sir, is that an attempt is being made to divert attention from the real cause in the

break-down in the tourist sector in this community by trying to pin it down as usual on the little people, the criminals all those people who they describe as per the new Chairman of the Tourist Board, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, the only discerning policy of the Barbados Labour Party in tourism that one can speak to is that they have changed the Chairman of the Board of Tourism every two years but you know what the real problem is, Mr. Speaker? I charge them with having run down the tourist plant in this country by poor management, by political interference and by political patronage. The tourist plant of Barbados has reached a stage where the Managers have no respect, either regionally, locally or internationally in the industry.

Mr. Speaker, cast your mind back to the days when the Democratic Labour Party seeking to bring the manufacturing sector and the tourism sector up to a level of productivity that would be commensurate with the growth of development necessary in the community in this country. They went for people, and I am not calling his name disparagingly, Sir, they went for the Frank Odles. They went for the Monti Williamses, Sir. They did not seek to find out their political allegiance, Sir. What was important was their competence which they indicated through their public service over the years that they were capable to carry out the job and under them the IDC and the Tourist Board flourished.

I charge today, Mr. Speaker, that the Tourist Board and the IDC have the lowest morale in any Department in either part of Barbados with the possible exception of the Cabinet, Sir, where I do not have enough time today to deal with that but another time and another place, Sir.

In the tourism sector, Sir, political patronage is evident at the office in Toronto. It is evident in Germany. It is evident in New York. Where else in the world can a Prime Minister designate personally who is to work in the lower levels in a Tourism Office?

In Washington, Sir, they took political patronage to its highest level. They even had a man appointed where there was no post and if the hon. member wishes to, he can get up and tell us where they found the money from to pay the man that was appointed for the rest of that particular year.

Mr. Speaker, those kinds of things cause people who work in these Departments to have what I call, low morale.
3.40 p.m.

But, more important, Mr. Speaker, Barbados as a tourist destination has become non-competitive with the other destinations around the region. As a destination,

Mr. Speaker, I would give you some idea of the comparisons and some of the reasons why the tourist sector is so depressed. Mr. Speaker, from New York, you can go to Aruba for eight days and seven nights including air fare for US\$402.50 to US\$459. The air fare to Barbados alone is US\$476 from New York, Philadelphia. Mr. Speaker, if you look at Jamaica, for US\$299, you can get eight days or seven nights in Jamaica. It includes the round trip fare on Air Florida departing every Sunday — transfers, round trip by airport, hotels, *et cetera*. Again, Sir, the fare to Barbados US\$476. When you look, Sir, at Mexico, you can go mid week, round trip fare from New York for as little as US\$235 to Mexico City, US\$235 to Guadalajara, US\$275 to Acapulco, to Barbados, we have US\$476.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is more. When they arrive in Barbados, they have some additional problems. Recently, as recently as last year, I believe, the industry imposed a surcharge for energy. It was not organised, some hotels charged \$3 per person, some hotels charged \$3 per room, some charged \$5 per person and some charged \$5 per room. Mr. Speaker, there is chaos, confusion, dissatisfaction among the tourists who come here because they are not certain how much it would cost them to have a holiday in Barbados. And, then, when they come to Barbados, they get the additional social problems which have been visited upon us by the lack of planning by the Government. When you hear them talk about they have increased the Police Force and they have increased this other department or the next department, when you ask them what are the forward plans for the industry, you find that, included in those forward plans, apparently — and I say apparently — is the gimmicks.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados' tourism cannot function and flourish if we introduce gambling casinos into this country. We cannot flourish because we are literally too small to absorb the kind of sociological reaction which comes from those areas where gambling casinos have been established and if one reads what has happened in Antigua and if one pays special attention to certain aspects of life in those small territories where gambling — with the possible exception of Puerto Rico — where gambling is the norm in the tourist industry, it does not take long for one to discover that the population itself suffers the effects of such attitude. I know that the Hotel Association is against it, from what I understand. I know that every Honourable Member on this Side is against it and the Government of the Democratic Labour Party categorically rejected any such concept. We wish the Government over there to indicate to the people of this country that gambling in casinos will have no part in the tourism development of this country and, to that end, no attempt should be made to let people pass off their gambling as forms of charity.

Mr. Speaker, when we look at some of the expenditures this Government has engaged in while the

productive sectors were languishing as I pointed out, we begin to understand why we have come to this crisis situation. This Government, Mr. Speaker, has indicated and advertised that it is building a fantastic structure for the Central Bank. The tenders have come in, Mr. Speaker. Do you know what the lowest tender is? I am told on reliable information that it is \$78 million. In a time when the people of Barbados cannot get housing, can this country afford to consider such luxury expenditures as a building for \$78 million? We have other examples of luxurious concepts which emanate from the press of the Honourable gentleman and lady on that side, Sir.

If you look at the change that has come about in the numbering of Government vehicles and everywhere you turn in this country, you see large quantities of Government vehicles, when you look at the cost of those vehicles, you begin to understand some of the concepts they have. But, there is more, Sir. When this Government came into power, we had a place for the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister to live. This Government felt that the Prime Minister's residence was not good enough, so, we have expended in excess of \$3 million on a place called Ilaro Court. I draw those examples, Mr. Speaker, not to dwell on them specifically, but, to show the difference in concept of the way that Government runs the affairs of this country and the way we would run the affairs of this country.

And in spite of that kind of concept, they turn to the people of Barbados and they say, "we want you to pay a levy, we want you to tighten your belt, we want you to fasten your seat belt, to practise wage restraint." Mr. Speaker, how can you ask the people of Barbados to practise wage restraint in the same way that President Reagan or Mrs. Thatcher are asking their respective countries to practise wage restraint? What nonsense is it? What economic nonsense is it? Perhaps, it is voodoo economics, Mr. Speaker. What nonsense is it for them to come in here or anywhere in Barbados and use the rhetoric of Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Reagan to discuss the economy of Barbados? They are manufacturing economies, they produce a substantial part of what they consume. In Barbados, we import 78% or more of what we consume and, therefore, to talk in terms of lowering wages to 5% improvement and 7% improvement while inflation is running at 12% and 15% is to do nothing more than to fly in the face of the people.

Mr. Speaker, you once said in here, Sir, that, "a hungry man is an angry man" and, more recently, another important Barbadian said that, "an angry man is an unreasonable man and an unreasonable man is a difficult man, and a difficult man is a hard man to deal with". When the Honourable Member for St. Michael East says that he sat down with the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and agreed to put an imposition on

the school children of this country in the terms that he has done, I wonder if he does not recognise that he is helping to create hungry men, women and children. He does not recognise that the pressures which are falling on the ordinary people of this country have reached such levels in such a short time that there is great despair, there is great consternation and there is great difficulty for the people outside.

3.50 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that we are on the verge, as a community, of falling into the hands of the International Monetary Fund. The IMF is just outside the doors, as it were.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member has two minutes in which to wind up his debate.

Mr. TAITT: I am indebted to Your Honour. Hon. members on that side must know, certainly the Minister of Finance must know, that the IMF is just waiting outside the door, and it is just possible that these measures that have been taken were taken to indicate to the international agencies that they are prepared to take the kind of step which they recommend, because the international agencies will not be happy that Barbados can boast, as they have been boasting over the last five years, of having the highest quality of life while asking them for money to pay for social services, and so, Mr. Speaker, they have embarked on a policy which three years from now, we have three years of it to come, and it will see a continued diminution of the quality of life of the people of this country. It will see more gimmicks such as offshore banking, more gimmicks such as gambling in the casinos, more gimmicks, but it will not see a change in the quality of life of the people of Barbados other than downward, and that is why this Resolution which we have offered provides the Government with the opportunity to back off a little bit.

We are saying to the Government, yes, you handle the Government, but you are also responsible to the people of this country, and we are saying to you, take another look at the measures, reduce the amounts you have put on the bus fares, or take some other steps so that the people of Barbados can truly believe that this is their country, that they have a stake in it, that they are part of this land. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: It seems very timely for me to warn each and every person sitting in the Visitors' Gallery. Each and every one is here on sufferance, you form no part of the proceedings of this Hon. House. I appreciate each and everyone of you there, have your feelings, you have your likes and your dislikes. Please, let us remain good friends. Keep your feelings to yourselves when you are in the Visitors' Gallery at this House. This is a warn-

ing, it might be a final warning for some of you. No cheering, no clapping, no jeering. I am just inviting you, come in, observe what is going on. If you do not like it, you are free to leave without interrupting our proceedings, but on no account, the clapping and cheering, it is for members, it is their House and when they are to be brought to Order the Chair will take care of that situation. Please do not let me have to waste the time of this House to have to utter any such warning to the Visitors' Gallery ever again. You are all welcome here, but I warn you.

The hon. member for Christ Church East Central.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I have had the privilege today of listening to two hon. members from the other side express their support on the Resolution which has been brought by the hon. member for St. Michael South Central. I do not propose to deal at length with the speech of the hon. member for St. Philip North, in my humble opinion it was merely a repetition of some of the speeches which have been made previously by hon. members on the other side. There is one point, however, that I will deal with, and it is the question of the measures which the Government has introduced in what is now known as the mini budget to deal with the question of housing.

The hon. member speaks of the adjustment in the interest rates in mortgage money in Barbados, and the hon. member says that this will add to an increase in the cost of the mortgage repayment as well as the hon. member says that as a result of these measures there will be a drying up of mortgage money available in Barbados. The first thing the hon. member, if he were willing to give the public the benefit of objective advice in this respect, as the hon. member claims to be an expert in this area of activity in his private life, could have done would be to analyse the situation of these mortgage rates in Barbados in relation to mortgage rates in other parts of the world.

The hon. member would recognise that even with the increase in mortgage rates in Barbados that our rates are considerably below the prevailing rates in the United States, which are somewhere between 18 and 20%, in Canada somewhere between 20 and 22%, and in the United Kingdom somewhere between 15 and 17%.

The second point the hon. member should have spoken about in relation to the mortgage rates and interest rates generally, is that interest rates have to take into account the impact on savings, and schemes must be designed to encourage more savings, particularly in a country like Barbados. Now, whether the hon. member likes it or not, the position is that where you have interest rates paid to savings, whether on deposit or on time, which are far below the amount which savers

recognise as being fair and just, you cannot persuade them to save, and there is a relationship between the cost of savings to the banks, trust companies and other financial institutions and the lending rates.

The Central Bank in Barbados as well as the Ministry of Finance made a very careful study of this position, and with control in the spreads between the savings rates which have also been increased, and the lending rate, the Government agreed to a modest increase in the level of the mortgage rates and other lending rates in Barbados. But we have also given relief particularly in the mortgage rates, because we have increased the amount of allowable interest which can be charged against taxation in respect of this coming year of income. 4.00 p.m.

The hon. member, if he wanted to be honest in his presentation, would also have mentioned that fact also, but of course, it is the aim of that side never to project facts honestly. This leads me into a convenient point to deal with the hon. member who just spoke. The hon. member talked for a considerable period of time and it is fairly difficult to understand clearly what point the hon. member was trying to put across. The hon. member is seeking to deny that over the course of the last five years in Barbados the per capita income, the gross national product, all these things had been doubled. The hon. member is seeking to deny the fact that all independent observers of the Barbadian scene and, Mr. Speaker, the majority of Barbadians by their votes accepted the fact that under the Barbados Labour Party management the people of Barbados received a substantial increase in their living standards over the course of the last five years.

We, Mr. Speaker, have always in the course of our administration attempted to tell the public of Barbados when things were good that they were good, and when things are not so good that measures have to be taken in order to ensure that the economy of Barbados is so managed that the integrity of the value of our money is protected, that we have enough foreign exchange to be able to pay for our vital imports. We ask the people of Barbados when things are not so good to share the burden with us. When things are good, we, Mr. Speaker, insist that the people of Barbados share in the benefits with us.

Mr. Speaker, I find it strange that the hon. member did not in the course of his speech, indeed none of the hon. members who have spoken so far has not put forward any constructive alternate suggestions to deal with the problems which the Government outlined as their reasons for having to introduce these additional measures. Let us take the case of transport. The Government pointed out very carefully that there was a level of subsidy which we have agreed the taxpayers in Barbados

can afford to pay for bus fares and the cost of transport in Barbados. That level had reached the stage where it was somewhere in the vicinity of \$10 million to \$12 million. We pointed out that as a result of the increase in the cost of fuel from 1979 until now as a result of the renegotiation of the new wage agreement that additional costs had to be paid for by the Transport Authority out of the revenue that it received. Now unless corrective action was taken at least to partially recover these two increased items of cost, then the level of subsidy that would have to come from other aspects of revenue would be increased greatly.

Now hon. members on the other side have not said what would the Democratic Labour Party do to cover the increased cost of the new wage agreement and the increased cost of fuel. We have not heard a word from the Democratic Labour Party. Are the Democratic Labour Party members on the other side saying that there should never have been a wage increase? Are you saying that the price of fuel has not in fact risen? Mr. Speaker, we have also pointed out that we have an additional problem in that the Transport Authority is in need of an additional number of units to cater for the large number of people who are using the transport system in Barbados. This increase has been due in no small measure to the fact that a considerably greater number of people are in fact working in 1980 and 1981 than were working in 1976. Those are facts. No member on the other side can convince the public of Barbados that more people are not working or were not working in 1980 and are not now working than in 1976. You just cannot convince the public of Barbados of that. There is too much visible evidence of the increase in economic activity; there is too much statistical evidence of the increase in economic activity for hon. members on the other side to seek to suggest that when we make these claims that they are not accurate.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a very important point because it goes to the root of some of the causes or the reasons and the reasons for the measures which the Government introduced. Now we also have the hon. member in his usual sarcastic style suggesting that this Government is responsible for the decline in tourism and industrial development because of what he calls political patronage. First of all, Mr. Speaker, it is totally untrue to say that there has been a decline in tourism activity in Barbados over the course of the last five years. It is also untrue to say that there has been a decline in manufacturing activity over the course of the last five years. It is also untrue to say that non-sugar agriculture has declined over the last five years. All of that is totally untrue. Chicken production has doubled; pork production has doubled. There has been an increase in fish production.

Mr. Speaker, I would like the hon. member to know, and I think the public should know because the

hon. member should not be allowed to get away with making sweeping personal statements about the management of the Industrial Development Corporation or the management of the Tourist Board over the television in Barbados. The Tourist Board Manager in Toronto is Mr. Stan Carter who has been there since 1969. The Tourist Board Manager in London is the one we came and found there. The Industrial Development Corporation Manager is Mr. Rawle Chase whom I know the last hon. member hates. He personally hates him. The hon. member does not tell the House that he came and found Mr. Rawle Chase there. Mr. Rawle Chase is the General Manager of the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation and I cannot allow an officer who has made such a distinguished contribution to the industrial development of Barbados to be abused indirectly in here by the hon. member particularly when the hon. member was a person who, when he was working with the Industrial Development Corporation did not have a good personal relationship with that same person.

Mr. Speaker, there has been all over the Caribbean a decline in tourist arrivals in the course of this year. The international recession has been to a very large extent responsible for this decline. The rise in air fares has been a contributory factor and the rise in air fares has been largely attributable to the fact that between 1979 and the end of 1980 the cost of fuel to fuel aeroplanes has risen by at least 80 per cent. The world airline industry, Mr. Speaker, is reeling under the blows of the cost of increased fuel. Pan American Airlines is so broke that it has had to sell its headquarters and its shares and interest in the Inter-Continental Hotels. British Airways suffered a loss of some £140 million over the course of the last financial year.

4.10 p.m.

It is estimated, Mr. Speaker, that the World Airline Industry will lose \$2 billion according to the latest predictions of IATA and small countries like Barbados, like the Bahamas, Bermuda and others, we have to fight consistently to ensure that when there are increases in fares that the increases in fares are done on a basis which is fair and which does not make us incompetent in relation to other destinations with whom we compete.

We have not been as successful but we have held our own here in the Caribbean in this fight and in this struggle. The North Atlantic with routes going between London, Paris and Continental Europe and the United States are operating at uneconomical fares and we have been telling them that we cannot be expected to absorb an unreasonable proportion of the increased cost in this area so as to be able to subsidize the cross-Atlantic travel.

So that, Mr. Speaker, the hon. member when he reads out the cost of going from New York to Jamaica, the cost of going from New York to Aruba is not making

any point. The hon. member is only displaying a lack of understanding and of ignorance of the airline cost because a fundamental point the hon. member should be making is what is the cost per kilometre to travel between those points, how many kilometres there are. What is the cost per kilometre to travel on the Barbados to New York route. How many kilometres there are and then he would be able to arrive at a like comparison with another like comparison.

The hon. member talks as though tourist spending in Barbados is down this year. The tourist spending in Barbados so far right up to the ending of July is not down. The tourist spending is not down. What has happened is that the rate of the increase over last year has not been as great as that which occurred last year over the year before and the year before over the year before then. In short, the increase in tourist spending has not risen as much as hitherto what was taking place in previous years. Therefore, when the hon. member reads out the point that between January to March this year our foreign exchange earnings were not increasing by the same numbers this year as previously, that can easily be explained.

Now we have been pointing out and certainly all of the speeches that I have made in relation to tourism in Barbados I have tried all the time to prevent a situation of panic from developing because I do not believe that there is any need, any justification for panic. My own view is and I have explained very clearly to the Hotel Association and to others that this is a time for sober reflection on the quality and standards of our plant and it is time for us to have a general review in the light of the prospects for the immediate years ahead of us.

This Government, Mr. Speaker, is so conscious of the value in the tourist industry per dollar spent that we were the ones who activated the sections in the Board of Tourism Act which have been there since 1958 and which have never been used in the past in relation to classification, standards and things of that kind. We have those things in operation in Barbados now. We are continuing discussions constantly. Constantly we are having discussions.

I would never deny, Mr. Speaker, that the question of the rate of crime in Barbados in Tourism is not an important matter. I have just said so. I am also conscious that all crime is a matter of concern of all Barbadians. I have always said that. I have said so publicly and I refuse to budge from that position but I say this. The Government is doing something about it. The Government is trying to encourage healthy attitudes. The Government is trying to improve our law enforcement and our investigative techniques.

I say this that the Democratic Labour Party in fifteen years from 1959 the Commission of Police has

been asking them for improvements in their resources and the Democratic Labour Party denied them one cent for improvement in their resources. These are facts that should be brought home so that if the hon. member wants to introduce in this debate a style of misrepresentation, there will be answers and counter-points will be put across so that the public would be able to see who are the real misrepresenters of fact.

Now, Sir, in respect of the hon. member for St. Philip North's point that he is in favour of the measures in relation to foreign exchange; of course, the hon. member would see the light in that respect but he has not praised the Government for the stand it has taken now in the hire purchase control recommendations. The hon. member is actually advocating the measures which the Government had adopted as part of its programme but because he is on the other side he must criticise us on this side.

The hon. member says that we should use our scarce foreign reserves to give people a home rather than allowing them to buy stereo sets, motor cars and video tapes. But, Mr. Speaker, those are precisely the measures the Government had adopted. We have adopted new regulations to ensure that the foreign reserves we have will be channelled to the productive sector including the housing sector but we say that tourism, manufacturing and agriculture must get the first claim on our foreign exchange resources so that they will have the necessary inputs.

Thereafter construction is important, very important thereafter because construction although it is a user of foreign exchange, it is a great employer of labour and on the one hand the hon. member is saying that we should not spend too much on capital account and on the other hand he is saying that construction is a great employer of labour and we should not allow construction to decline too greatly so that the hon. member has got himself into a state of great contradiction because what we have said is that our capital development programme now will run at a rate of some \$160 million a year for this year.

All the Government is saying is that the construction industry has much work on the ground at the present moment that given the tendency for cost escalation to arise, that we should reduce the amount of capital projects that we have started and that we would complete the ongoing ones and that is why, Mr. Speaker, the Government can say that we are rescheduling some of our projects because if we went ahead with all of the projects that every Ministry wants to start under the Budget at the present moment the cost of them would be somewhere over \$200 million.

What is the point of doing that when the evidence is steering you straight in the face that there is a limit to the amount of construction that can be carried on in Barbados without inflationary conditions prevailing in the totality of the industry?

Now as far as the Central Bank Building is concerned,
4.20 p.m.

The Central Bank building is not being financed out of any Government revenue. So that, the Honourable Member must carry on his argument with the Governor of the Central Bank. I have my own views on it. My own views are, it would be madness to build any building for \$80 million in Barbados and those are my own views and I will tell the Governor my views when I meet him, if it ever comes before me. So that, Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no point in the Honourable Member trying to give the impression that the finance which would be used to build the Central Bank is finance which could be used to house the people of Barbados. The Honourable Member should not try to mislead the Honourable House in that respect. No suggestion has been made here or has ever been made here that the Government's taxes and the Government revenue would be used to pay for building the Central Bank building.

Sir, there are a number of other points that the Honourable Member has made and it is fairly obvious to us, on this Side, that this resolution has been brought for the sole purpose of allowing the Other Side to get access to the public media so that they would appear...

Mr. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has two minutes in which to wind up his debate.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: ...just after the recent election to the public as being useful and as being the people whom the public should have accepted at election time.

There is one clear message for the Honourable Members on the Other Side. The people have spoken, they have elected their Government which brought them good government and improvement in the standard of living over the course of the last five years. When we came into power, we had to take measures to prevent a crisis from arising in Barbados. The Barbadian economy was able to respond to the measures that we took. As the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has said, "the proper management of an economy is when you take measures to avert a crisis". These measures have been taken...

Mr. SPEAKER: I now take this measure, the Honourable Member will take his seat.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is... Is there any other Honourable Member who wants to make a contribution to this debate?

The question is that this resolution do now pass. Honourable Members in favour will please say aye, those opposed will please say, no. Methinks the ayes have it. (ASIDE: Divide) A division has been called for. Let the bell be rung.

The bell was rung. (ASIDES).

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

The question was put and was resolved in the negative, the House dividing as follows:

The following Honourable Members voted no:

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, Hon. V. JOHNSON, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. C. L. BOLDEN, Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Mr. A. TRUSS, Mr. L. L. SISNETT and Mr. ODLE. (11 noes)

The following Honourable Members voted aye:

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. W.O. FRANKLIN, Mr. K. SIMMONS, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. M. A. KING, Mr. L. WEEKES. (8 ayes).

SUSPENSION

Mr. SPEAKER: This Sitting now stands suspended for 15 minutes to give the technicians time to remove their equipment.
4.30 p.m.

On Resumption:—

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it now reverts.

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The hon. member for St. Joseph was winding up his speech. Will he please do that in about five minutes?

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I was dealing with the problems of agriculture, particularly with the ploughing scheme, when the House took recess at five minutes after two. There is one other point with which I would like to deal, arising out of the speech of the hon. member for St. Philip South.

The hon. member suggested that there should be some co-operative association to which young small farmers should be attached. He did not quite agree with small farmers becoming involved in any association which catered for the large farmers. Here again we have a problem. We have a problem that must be aired in this country. We have had many farming co-operatives formed in Barbados and we have had nearly every one of them collapsing. There was in St. Philip, the East Point/Marley Vale Farmers Co-operative, I think it was called. Money disappeared out of that and it collapsed. I had to re-finance it out of Government funds, which means in effect that the taxpayers of Barbados have had to provide money where a small bunch of farmers got together, having had the benefits of concessions, etc., have utilised money in a form other than the way the money should have been utilised and then called upon the taxpayers again to refinance a scheme.

There was one in St. Lucy where, because of a dispute between the President and the Secretary, the tractor was placed outside somebody's door and it literally rusted out. There was one in St. George, a farmers' co-operative, in which two deep freezers were left in the market in a booth, nobody having control over them. But, over and above that, I come to the point of co-operatives in Barbados, and I am saying this now.

There is a man in Barbados being financed by the ILO out of Trinidad who needs to be put out of Barbados, a man called Oleson. I am very serious about what I am saying today, because when I was in the Ministry of Agriculture I recognised the problems with co-operatives in this country. Government has laid down too many controls over co-operatives when in truth and in fact co-operatives are institutions that should be run by the people who form them. Under the present legislation you hold a meeting and you cannot audit your books unless you have the authority of the Registrar of Co-operatives. You cannot hold a meeting unless an officer is there. What co-operatives are suffering from is a lack of technical skills, and the Government cannot provide them. You have one Registrar of Co-operatives and about three persons. You have a part-time Accountant who does the sugar industry books, the export sugar fund books, and he does the auditing of co-operatives books on a part-time basis. My suggestion was that you have a unit. Government would give it a block grant. Let the people go and set up their own businesses like small companies. Then they could employ a full time auditor, full time Accountants and so on and get co-operatives moving.

Now, I raised the matter at a CARICOM meeting in St. Lucia. Mr. Oleson came to Barbados and told co-operatives in this country that they must do nothing, they must talk for a year. At the same time he put into ILO Headquarters for a salary that gives him a higher salary than the Prime Minister of this country, and he is

instrumental in holding down the co-operative movement in this country. I said last week, and I repeat it again, unless Third World Countries like Barbados say to international lending agencies that we have enough qualified people in our countries who can provide the consultancy services, who have lived with us, who have worked with us, who know the aspirations of our people and who are prepared to give us what we want and stop giving us aid tied with strings to send your rejects into the Caribbean and into the countries that have twelve months of summer, who walk around living like lords and keeping the people down.

If the hon. member for St. Philip South wants to find out why farming co-operatives are not working, this goes back to 1975 when the BAS took a woman called Miss Glenora Slimmon as their Director, and Miss Slimmon had every member of the BAS eating out of the palm of her hand like a suckling calf. They could not make a decision unless they went to Miss Slimmon, but when Miss Slimmon and the group fell out and she went back to Canada, she sat down and boasted that they still could do nothing, they had to call her and ask her what to do. Miss Slimmon told me in the Ministry of Agriculture in the presence of officers of the BAS that farmers all over the world have brought Governments down to their knees, and that is the sort of co-operatives that we have in Barbados. That is why I say there is an urgent need for a cleaning up if we are to get anywhere in agriculture in this country. Agricultural co-operatives have worked all over the world, but you have to get the people who are involved in it dealing with it, you cannot have the Slimmons, you cannot have the Olesons coming from abroad enjoying luxury lives in Barbados at the expense of Barbadian farmers.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, I feel I could go on for another two minutes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will have an opportunity later on, but someone else must have a chance. Is there any other hon. member who wishes to make a contribution?

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, my contribution will not be a very long one. I am sorry the Minister of Agriculture is not in his place, but I am sure someone will take this matter to him. It concerns River Plantation in St. Philip. As you have heard, that plantation has just closed its doors and some 65 people working at this plantation are now unemployed. At this crucial stage of our agricultural history I think the Government needs to take this matter into its hands immediately and take the initiative in conjunction with the Co-operatives section of the Ministry and whatever other Government machinery is available to see if these lands cannot be continued either on a type of land lease situation that you are working in St. Lucy, or more particularly, to have a look at the possibility of forming a co-operative among the existing members.

These workers are not particularly interested in severance, Mr. Chairman, they are interested in continued employment, and I say that there is a distinct possibility that, if Government takes the initiative, some of the money which should be going out towards the payment of severance to these workers can be used in conjunction with whatever other facilities can be made available to pay the workers, to purchase this plantation and continue working it. There is a reasonably good crop on the plantation at the moment, and it would be a sorry thing if we allow 575 acres of arable land to go into rab at this time of the history of agriculture in Barbados.

I sincerely hope someone from the Government would take the necessary initiative, because the machinery that would be needed would be available only to the Government to try and rescue the situation at River Plantation in St. Philip and save the jobs of these people.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, this particular Resolution, this supplementary, is a very important one because it is the first time in this Session that we are getting an opportunity to deal with agriculture and it is perhaps very important too that the particular supplementary is in relation to the mechanical cultivation scheme.

I think on both sides of this House we are all agreed that agriculture is, or should be, the most important sector of this economy, but we certainly regret that in recent times this particular sector, and the mechanical cultivation aspect of it in particular, has not been given the type of resources and inputs in order to enable agriculture to make the type of contribution to the development of this country and also to assist in reducing the cost of foodstuffs in this country and reducing the level of imports.
5.00 p.m.

All of us will want to get some assurance that there will be a revival in agriculture. That is what the Democratic Labour Party is interested in, and indeed in this regard it was a bit refreshing to hear the voice of the hon. member for St. Joseph speaking again on agriculture. I believe he has made the most significant speeches on agriculture from the Opposition benches. When he was over here, on this side of the Chamber, it was refreshing to hear his views, his analysis and his proposals for the development and regeneration of agriculture. He was listened to with great respect, on both sides of the House. There were all types of proposals, all types of recommendations for the development of agriculture in this country. Alas, in 1976 the Barbados Labour Party won the Government and acting on the words and rhetoric of the hon. member for St. Joseph he became not a shadow, he became the substance; he became flesh and was incarnate as the Good Book would

say. He became Minister of Agriculture and we are now trying to recover from his tenure of office as Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I am glad that he has recaptured his voice again. Today he is getting back his old fire again. Of course he does not have responsibility for the portfolio for which we are all grateful. But, Mr. Chairman, to be serious, I believe he has good ideas for the development of agriculture, but I believe he would make a good consultant if not a good Minister, turning out the idea, but leaving others to implement and to administer and to go on; so we look forward to his contribution and we look forward to the proposals that he will make which will support the Opposition as presently constituted in pressing the Government to bring down measures for improving agriculture.

Now on this side we are not satisfied with this present arrangement for the cultivation of lands in this country. We believe that this will create as it is already creating a severe hardship on farmers in this country particularly the small farmers. The mechanical cultivation scheme was a good scheme in principle and indeed in practice, but difficulties in it arose when the equipment and the machinery were allowed to be run down and there was no systematic replacement for the tractors and other types of cultivators in this country. There was a refusal.....

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, the hon. member seems to be practising the trick of leaving statements hanging in the air. He is going very good. He said there was a systematic something to allow the equipment to run down. I asked him by whom. He has to tell the House; he cannot leave the House guessing.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You will have a chance to answer that. That is not a point of order.

Mr. SANDIFORD: I am saying, Mr. Chairman, that there is a requirement now for the Ministry of Agriculture to be provided with an adequate number of tractors and other forms of equipment for cultivation. If they need advice they can get advice on the type of equipment from my friend the Hon. Minister of Labour. He is an agriculturist too; he can get advice from him on the type of equipment that should be provided. He is an agriculturist and he can give them advice on that, but what is required is a number of these tractors with the necessary implements, running from agricultural stations which are revitalised and allowed to play their role in the redevelopment of agriculture. I refuse to believe that it is impossible to organise, manage and administer a scheme which would respond in reasonable time to the demands of the farmers particularly the small farmers for the cultivation of their plots of land.

I refuse to believe that that is beyond the administrative and managerial capabilities of this Government to organise. I heard that certain plots of land were ploughed without the knowledge of the Ministry of Agriculture. I think that some evidence would have come forward. We would have to see some evidence of this, and if it did exist I would need evidence for the establishment that it did.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, is the hon. member now saying that this statement is incorrect, because obviously he was not listening when I spoke, and I called names. I said quite clearly and I will repeat for his benefit that I said that Mr. David Simmons who owns land at Rouens complained to the Ministry of his land being ploughed and the plough not returning to finish the job. We have letters to the effect in the Ministry of Agriculture and we investigated it. If he wants to find evidence let him call David Simmons or go and enquire. He can find out from the Ministry that there are numerous cases in which tractor drivers have gone out on a week-end, ploughed the land and do not get back to do the balance of the cultivation and that is when the noise came to the Ministry.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am not doubting what the hon. member has said. This is the first time he has said that a former member of this Chamber is personally involved in this way. You have just spelt it out; you called his name before. I listen to every word you say.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There is cross talk. Order, please!

Mr. SANDIFORD: This is the first time you have spelt it out, but what I am saying is that even if it did occur, I do not think that it is beyond the capability of the Government and the officials of the Ministry of Agriculture to organise a scheme that would eliminate that type of activity. Why can the plantations operate without that type of activity taking place? It should not be impossible. It is that we do not have the necessary application to the particular problem that we are considering. And then, Mr. Chairman, the solution which the Government is bringing and advancing at this stage is to fire people! I wonder if I heard the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister correctly. He said they should go home. He wants to fire people. 5.10 p.m.

I do not think, Mr. Chairman that if there is a need for the cultivation of plots of land out there that there is any solution that closing down the Agricultural Stations and sending home people constitute any solution to the problem.

When you put the onus for cultivation on plantations or on other persons it means that the small farmer

will always be at the end of the queue. They will be always at the end of the queue. They will be at the end of the queue because they will not be able to exercise the same type of influence and exercise the same type of pressures in order to get priority in the cultivation of their land and we are calling upon the Government to re-establish those agricultural stations which they have closed down. That is a colossal mistake to close them down.

Far from closing them down, we are saying that they should re-organise them, provide the necessary staff for enabling them to give the assistance to the farmers in the different parts of the country and we are calling upon the Government to ensure that the equipment is provided at these Agricultural Stations to assist in meeting the demands for the cultivation of these plots of land by farmers.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two minutes.

Mr. SANDIFORD: This is a necessity. There is no point talking about agriculture anymore. We have got to do something positive about it and I am submitting that the money that we are being called upon to provide through this supplementary is side stepping the main issue and the Government should think again about it, put the Agricultural Stations back into adequate use and get the equipment there so that they can respond.

I see the hon. member for Christ Church West has just come into the front bench. No doubt they cannot respond.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time is up.

Mr. SANDIFORD: My time is up at this stage. They run away from the debate and my time is up but I hope they will respond and pay special attention to the advice coming from this side because they realise now that we are deeply interested in the state of the economy of this country and that they take the necessary steps. If they make any mistakes, they will get the criticisms from over here.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, I must reply to a couple of points that have been made here whether this is the last reply or not. The basic position is that I cannot allow the debate to go ahead on the premise which is false.

The position is, Sir, that I have a memorandum before me written by Lionel H. Smith on the 22/6/78 in reply to queries from the then Minister of Agriculture with respect to the motortractor cultivation scheme and he sets out in the first four paragraphs:—

"A pilot land cultivation scheme was started by the Ministry of Agriculture in 1954 with one tractor at Sayers Court and one at The Home."

This is the Labour Party starting it. Get that fact straight.

"In 1962 the scheme was centralised at Lancaster Factory, the tractor units at Bullens, The Home and Groves Agriculture Stations."

You see they left out the South all together.

"In 1964 Cabinet agreed that the scheme should be extended to include grassland operations."

That is when you started with the idea of pangola grass.

"such as cutting and baling of hay."

You abandoned the small farmer and you went for the racehorse keepers and the dairy men. All right. Listen to this now, Mr. Speaker.

"The supervision of the scheme has, from its inception been a matter of constant concern. One of the early weaknesses of the scheme was the basis for paying operators. In the first instance, the tractor operators were paid a low fixed weekly salary plus 20% of the value of the work performed. The quality of the work suffered as a result since the operators attempted to cultivate as many acres as possible. The low fixed rates also tended to encourage operators to use Government tractors for their own private work."

Now, look at this. When we say in this country, Mr. Chairman, Sir, that we have received a legacy of abusing Government property, a legacy of indifference to work, a legacy of low wages, a bad psychological attitude.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, 1964. I am talking about 1964. Now, you will see the remedial action taken, Sir. This is the remedial action taken.

"During 1976-1977 attempts were made to improve the scheme."

This is the hon. member for St. Joseph who has been wrongly abused in here about his competence as Minister of Agriculture and who has done more to try to eradicate the bad attitudes left by the Democratic Labour Party than anybody else in agriculture but deeply implanted.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. These interruptions must stop.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: So deeply implanted were these engraved bad habits that not even the status of the Hon. Minister was able to eradicate them, not even the status of the Hon. Minister.

"During 1976/77, attempts were made to improve the scheme by —

- (1) reducing the workload for each tractor by increasing the number of tractors, decentralising the scheme in accordance with our concept of carrying the Government to the people" not like yours, carrying the services to the people — "by operating from other agriculture stations such as Jerusalem, Bullens, Groves, Sayers Court, The Home and Haggatts.
- (2) Improving the supervision of the scheme by assigning two agricultural assistants to assist in the scheme.
- (3) Facilitating farmers in payment for the proposed work by permitting money to be collected at the nearest Agricultural Station."

You see, they used to have to walk down in town to pay the money, go back to the station with the receipt and the man at the station would say, "you show me the receipt but I do not know. From down there no orders have been given." 1976-77, this is the introduction.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order. Order, please. I cannot have these interruptions.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I am only reading from a memorandum from one Mr. L. H. Smith —

"reducing the continual turnover of staff providing in-service training programmes for greater tractor operators."

Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is talking in here about de-emphasizing stations.

"It is agreed that a tractor cultivation scheme is an important input to our small farmer cultivation."

To hear the hon. member talk, one would think that all the tractors are gone.

Now, Sir, on the 24 August, 1981, after the great day the new Minister comes in, fired with enthusiasm, mindful all the time of the fact that his constituency

consists of a lot of small farmers too (ASIDES). There are only a few in Lodge Road. That is right, they come to me but you see the thing is that all over Christ Church they come to me. The motor tractor scheme, he asks for a report and the Permanent Secretary writes to him on the 24 August:
5.20 p.m.

"The Motor Tractor Cultivation Scheme owns a total of 18 tractors". When the Democratic Labour Party left the Government of Barbados, they did not have any 18 tractors. (ASIDE: How many did they have?) Two at the most, two. We brought them from two to 18 and I will show you what happened here. During the year 1980-81, fifteen were actually in operation. The two that the Democratic Labour Party left, by that time - we got tractors under a scheme from Korea, we got tractors under part of the British Technical Assistance Scheme, do not talk - (ASIDE: 18) but, 18 is not enough. H says that 18 are not enough and recommendations have been made that the best way of dealing with this question of delivery to the small farmers of tractors services, at the same time - and this is the point we are all missing - if we have to deliver to the small farmers tractor services at the same time as the plantations have them, if you want them to compete, if you want them to have equality and opportunity, you have to have the pre-conditions, equal, you have to deliver the tractors at the time so that they can plant the lands in May, so that they can plant other food crops.

The Ministry of Agriculture recommends that the only way this can be done is to try and increase the number of tractors available and the fastest way to do that is to devise a scheme because they knew they were possibly 10 tractors owned by small people - some were co-operatives too - who were providing this service. But they charged one rate and the Government charged a lower rate, so that there was no incentive for the people to use those schemes because it would cost them more.

So we came up with the idea that the Government would keep its charges as they were but it would investigate an economic rate and the differential would be paid to the operators, so that, whether you used the Government's scheme or whether you used the private scheme, they will still have to pay the same thing. And, the Honourable Members on the Other Side are going to criticise this. Mr. Chairman, there is absolutely nothing that we can do right for the Honourable Members on the Other Side.

I beg to move, Sir, that this resolution stand part. We cannot handle you any more. (ASIDE: Send him home).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On this question of sending home. I said that my constituents and others from Christ Church came to me and they said that they went and paid in money and that they had been trying all the time and I explained what we were trying to do and they said that the best thing to do is to lock them up and send them home. That is what they said and I said that. I said that. (ASIDES)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order, the Reporter will be having difficulties hearing and performing the work.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: So, what is the difficulty with that. What is the difficulty? In my own Ministry, if a person does not work properly, I have absolutely no qualms at all about writing a letter to the Honourable Minister responsible for Establishments to convey to the Public Service Commission my sentiments. A Minister cannot send home anybody. You have to write to the Public Service Commission. If my constituents complain to me that the Government Service which I know the money is put in there for is not being delivered, I feel I am under a bounden duty to ensure that the services are delivered to the public from whom the money has been collected. So, you cannot frighten me with that kind of talk, I have been in politics too long to frighten me. So that, that is the position in relation to that. We want to deliver more services.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is...

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, give me five minutes of this time, Sir.

Mr. Chairman, every time I hear the Honourable Member, and I know that the Honourable Member has capabilities beyond what he displays, there are times when the Honourable Member is lucid and clear and he is not quarrelling and we have come to realise that whenever he is on a sticky wicket the decibels rise and the Honourable Member engages in a technique that would tend to give people the impression that he feels so strongly that he has to speak with great emotion, but, this is a very simple issue.

The Honourable Member for St. Philip South put the issue in correct perspective. He pointed out that the small farmer in Barbados is suffering and he elicited the assistance of the Government. The Honourable Minister got up and said he agrees - in fact he had said so before - he said that he is totally aware that the small farmers are suffering. I do not know if his statement just made is a correction of his earlier statement, but, my recollection is that he said that in the Ministry of Agriculture the solution is that a large number of them want sending

home. Now, I am not in a position to say if that is so or not. What I find remarkable though, is that he could then turn around and read what seemed to me to be the quintessence of a bureaucratic memorandum from administrative officer to political officer pointing out what are the pros and cons. The Honourable Minister asked a question. All of us have served in some form or other in the Government ministries. When the Minister asks a question, he can get an answer depending on whether he wants a long answer or short answer.

The fact is that the Honourable Member for St. Joseph is an expert in the field of agriculture. That cannot be questioned. The Honourable Member has practical experience in this field. The Honourable Member has engaged in duck farming, he has engaged in cattle farming, he has engaged in fish farming and as far as I know, he has had kennels for a couple of puppies, in other words, the Honourable Member can speak on these matters with first hand knowledge. He is not like other Honourable Members in here. I think the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, Sir, qualifies as a small farmer, I think he has about three or four beds of carrots. *(Asides)*

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, if the Honourable Member would just give way, I am on a point of order, Sir. Sir, this debate was going on...Honourable Members have the right to speak...this debate was going on from almost 1 o'clock today until now. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and I get on quite well and I am sounding this now that we have to come back here tomorrow morning to clear the Order Paper, if it is quite alright with you, because the Honourable Member for St. Michael West, the Honourable Member for St. Philip North, the Honourable Member for St. Philip South and the Honourable Member for St. Michael South, I mean, four persons on one little resolution, Sir, are talking a lot of nonsense about tractor schemes and so on, Sir. You are going to have to come back tomorrow morning so that we can get through with our business. You are not going to like it, I know that. *(Asides)*

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: And, you are responsible for the whole death, or whatever it is, in agriculture. Since your cane blade speech in St. Philip, we have not moved in agriculture from then until now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member, please, stop, you are making a speech.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, since the Honourable Member is sounding warnings, Sir, let us sound a warning from this Side, the Honourable Member has been elevated to the role of Honourable Leader of this Honourable House and we expect to follow his good example

in these matters. The Honourable Member cannot, by the imposition of his personal views on a particular resolution, indicate that Honourable Members on this Side are talking "foolishness" on a little resolution about tractor schemes. It might be little in the number of words and this is precisely what the Honourable Member, the expert from St. Joseph was saying, that agriculture is always considered to be a little foolish item.

This Opposition, Sir, has been castigated by that Honourable Member, across the length of Barbados as not having done its job. I well recall hearing those Honourable Members on the political platform talking about how this Opposition would not do its job. So, we come into the Honourable House, again, Sir, and we are doing the job. We take these resolutions, we examine them and we are articulating the position of the vast majority of the people in Barbados as of this day and when we articulate that position, we understand the Government's reluctance to engage us in debate. We saw evidence of their failure to engage us in debate. They ran from debate. The shoe is now on their foot, Sir, let it drop.
5.30 p.m.

We are going to speak on agriculture in all its ramifications, we are going to speak on all the matters that come before this Hon. House in all their ramifications, and we are not going to be intimidated by the blusterings of the Leader of this House.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us get ahead with the Head we are speaking to. While it is my intention to allow free and open debate, if it appears to the Chair at any time that any hon. member seeks to disabuse the privileges of this House, he will have to take action. Now please speak to this Head and let us get on.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, we on this side are very cognisant of the fact that the Chair is fair and impartial in these matters and cannot be intimidated by any hon. member, including me, Sir. *(ASIDE)*. The hon. member does not understand agriculture, or is it that he does not like agriculture, or is it that he is concerned that this Resolution is not worthy of deep discussion? (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: It is worthy of deep discussion but you have not got any depth). That is a good shot, I think that is a good stroke. Even when the hon. member is angry he still remembers, after all these years in this House, to score a political point. That was a good shot, straight back.

Mr. Chairman, to acknowledge the shot does not change the attitude that I have. The fact is that small farmers in this country have been under intense pressure. The fact is that we heard from a former Minister of Agriculture here today that there was wholesale abuse of the Ministry's implements, that there were administrative infelicities. That is what we heard from a former Minister,

and furthermore, for the hon. member for Christ Church East Central to get up here and talk about these marvellous things that happened when the hon. member was Minister of Agriculture, why does he not explain to the public if these wonderful things were happening under that Minister of Agriculture, why did the Prime Minister move him? Why did the Prime Minister, on the advice of the Deputy Prime Minister, move the hon. member from that Ministry and deprive us of his vast and wide experience and expertise in these matters? (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Transport needed his talents).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member wish to continue? You have a short time now.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir, as soon as I recover my composure. The Hon. Minister said that the member has had enough, Sir. The talents of the hon. member will continue to be exercised in this House on agriculture, and we feel that we should put it in perspective. But quite seriously, Mr. Chairman, there are too many small agriculturalists in Barbados who have not been able to get the benefit of the tractor system in Barbados, and the essential point is this. If you make it mandatory for the farmer to pay up front, we are not saying that you should not change the scheme, let me make a recommendation. Let the Government then make soft loans available to the small farmers so that the farmers can pay for the tractor scheme at the competitive rates. (ASIDE).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. TAITT: The point is, Mr. Chairman, you come from a rural constituency, you know that very often a farmer has to cut corners and put together every cent he can raise in order to get his raw material, and if he has the raw material and his land has not been ploughed, he is in a worse condition than if he is not working, and all we are saying is while you are implementing a new scheme, while you are looking at a new scheme, examine ways and means if you must have this scheme to preclude the farmer from having yet another economic difficulty. For those who are not small farmers it may seem like a little Resolution or a foolish Resolution, but to the small farmer it is a serious problem.

Mr. Chairman, if anyone has ever kept pigs and by whatever form he used for marketing he depletes his stock and he attempts to restock his place, in order to find the \$500 or \$1,000 which he needs to restock in a small pig farm, he invariably has to go and borrow the money. If he has to go and borrow the money from the bank, if he is a small farmer the chances are the security which the bank requires from him is not available, because he owes money to other people, his place is usually mortgaged, and generally speaking, the small farmer has a difficult lot. Not only in Barbados, throughout the Caribbean, and we are not making fun when

we raise this issue for the Government's consideration, we really do not appreciate the suggestion that we might be raising it for filibustering purposes. We know from the inputs which are being made to us, as they are made to the hon. member for Christ Church East, that small farmers are crying out and saying find a way to give us some assistance, not in terms of plans, but real assistance.

The Government of the day reduced the rate of tractor rental for precisely that reason, and perhaps instead of bringing up the price to the farmer to make it competitive they might find a way to subsidise those who have the tractors and are using them in a commercial way. It is perhaps possible that if we spend the same amount of money in this Resolution and subsidise those who are in the private sector who are providing this same service, that it would be worth their while to provide the small farmer with a more efficient service. All we are asking is that you examine some ways and means, not merely arising out of budgetary proposals decide that the thing to do is to make it competitive, bringing the capitalist concept of competing in the market place, and this is bound to be efficient. That is a fallacy which some hon. members over there can confirm is now old hat. What you have to do is to provide the service in a way that the people for whom the service is being provided can not only receive it, but can come to feel that it is available and they are receiving it on fair terms. That is all the point I want to make.

The question that Head 25 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Head 37 – Ministry of Communications and Works – \$130,000.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, this supplementary which I have the honour of asking this House to permit is a consequence of the enactment of the Road Traffic Act of 1981. That Act, *inter alia*, provided for special number plates for public service vehicles, and public service vehicles under section 2 of the said Act are defined as vehicles which convey passengers for hire or reward, for a separate fare, or as in the case of motor vehicles, adapted with a capacity for ten or more passengers the same fare. And the kinds of vehicles which therefore fall into the category of public service vehicles are taxis, hired cars, tour coaches and minibuses.

The Ministry of Transport and Works assumes responsibility for the regulation and control of these vehicles as a first step in the direction of establishing controls over the entire transportation system in Barbados in order to ensure that our roads are used in the best way possible and perhaps ultimately by the most appropriate kind of transportation.
5.40 p.m.

There are some approximately 6,000 public service vehicles and the Ministry of Transport has made a decision that licence plates will be issued free of charge to all those persons who already have licences in exchange for their plates, but all new holders of licences will be required to pay for their licence plates. The cost of a licence plate is approximately \$25 and since no provision was made during the current financial year for the cost that will be incurred as a consequence of the implementation of the Road Traffic Act at the beginning of June, it has become necessary to request this sum.

I beg to move that Head 37 — Ministry of Communications and Works, stand part of the Schedule.

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

Mr. KING: Mr. Chairman, this Resolution highlights some of the shoddy planning and inefficient management which has characterised the Ministry of Communications and Works in recent times. Now I sympathise with the sentiment of the Minister for Transport and Works, the hon. member for St. Michael East when he said in this Honourable Chamber some weeks ago that all the problems of the Ministry of Transport and Works could not be effectively dealt with in the two and a half months over which he has been required to preside over what he termed this unfortunate Ministry. So that the Resolution comes at a time when we look at it against the background of what has been happening in the Ministry of Communications and Works.

Now the Hon. Minister said a moment ago that the purpose of the Resolution was to implement the provisions of the Road Traffic Act. This Act was passed in this Honourable Chamber I believe some time in the last session, round about the month of May, I believe, and what has happened is that there seems to have been some mad rush in the last Parliament to get through Parliament as many Bills as possible. I believe the hon. member for Christ Church West perhaps wanted to go on record during his term of office as Attorney General as being the Attorney General who was responsible for having the most legislation passed through Parliament; so that we found that there was a mad rush to get a lot of Bills through Parliament with the result that, as I say, a lot of shoddy planning and ineffective management have gone into the whole concept

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, the hon. member is imputing improper motives to an hon. member of this House as the reason for which legislation was passed in this House. He is saying that the reason why legislation was passed was because I wanted to get it on record that I got a lot more Bills passed than anyone, and as a result this showed that there was improper and shoddy planning of the Government business. The hon. member obviously is bitten not by the Taitt bug but by

the Haynes bug, and he has the runnings. He cannot stop talking today. I am objecting to that. You cannot reflect on what Parliament has done. It has nothing to do with me. It is Parliament who passed the Bills; I did not pass them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I do not believe the hon. member is attempting to reflect on the character of the former Attorney General.

Mr. KING: I certainly had no intention of doing that, Mr. Chairman, and I apologise to him if I did. The point I am making anyhow is that a whole lot of legislation came through this Parliament among which was this Road Traffic Act, and it is obvious that the necessary administrative action that needed to be taken and the procedures which needed to be accomplished for the proper and effective implementation of the Road Traffic Act were not seriously thought out and considered and were not effectively put into play, and that is why we have had the sort of statement made by the hon. member for St. Michael East, the Minister for Transport, and I think it was a statement made by him out of mere frustration at what he inherited when he took up the Ministry of Transport and Works. We had that unfortunate situation where one Department of Government, the Police, in the exercise of their duties, put a number of transport buses off the road because they had not complied with the requirements of the law, and that is what I am talking about when I talk about this concept of shoddy planning.

The Minister was obviously frustrated because of his concern for the problems of ordinary people in this country who were very much inconvenienced by the buses not being on the road. But the problems of inconvenience which poor people in this country have had to suffer because of the problems of the transport system are not confined to this one area. The people are accustomed to being inconvenienced, and I say that the attitude and the comments which were made by the Hon. Minister on that occasion were unfortunate in one sense, but uttered I am sure with a sense of frustration at not being able to see that the work of his Ministry was effectively carried out because of what was in fact happening, so that there was a serious indictment of the Ministry of Transport and Works because here it was a Ministry responsible for getting the whole system of licensing properly organised and the Ministry itself not being able to complete the licensing work which was required to be done so as to get the Transport Board buses licensed in time.

Now we have to look at this whole aspect also against the background of the whole attitude of the Chairman of the Transport Board, part of the Ministry again. Now he seems to think that the Transport Board is a little republic divorced from anything else in the community which can do as it likes, and he gives his

employees instructions that they can take the law into their own hands; conductors have the licence to do as they like. Now I think the hon. member for Christ Church West would be one of the first to remind his colleagues on the other side that no corporation, person or institution is above the law. He is very famous for talking about the rule of law and the rule of law requires that there is equality before the law for all citizens whether they be humble or high and mighty. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The law does not bind the Crown though.) The law does not bind the Crown? Is that a new departure in constitutional theory? Does that mean that statutory corporations all over this country can do as they like? Because if we reach the stage in this country where statutory corporations like the Transport Board can break the law with impunity, what is left for the ordinary man in this country to do? And we talk about crime spiralling and snowballing in this community. If you have the bad example set from on high, exactly what would happen further down the socio-economic ladder is that you would have the same disregard for the law which we all pretend to uphold.

5.50 p.m.

The buses belong to the Transport Board which is a Statutory Corporation. They have to obey the law too so that the Chairman cannot regard the Transport Board as a separate republic. You cannot regard the Transport Board as a separate republic and order it to do as it likes irrespective of whether it relates to this problem of licensing or whether it is in relation to instructing conductors that they should use their discretion and break the law so that I say that proper planning has to go into all of Government's work.

If they knew that it was required that the Road Traffic Bill should come into effect in June, the necessary steps should have been taken to ensure that all of the infrastructure for compliance with the law so far as licensing vehicles are concerned that all of the infrastructure for compliance with the law has been supplied so therefore that is why I say that this Resolution highlights the whole problem of bad planning and shoddy management in that part of the Department.

I would invite the present Minister responsible for Transport and Works to use his initiative and the drive that we know that he is capable of and make sure that these problems which now dog the Ministry of Transport and Works, a Ministry which is so vital to the health of the economy of this country to make sure that steps are taken to right all the wrongs that exist in that Ministry at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member has come into this Chamber probably with his skin in good order but I think he has trespassed in the wrong arena

this evening. He trespassed in two arenas at the same time without having his gloves out in order and I hope he can answer when I am finished.

In the first place, Mr. Chairman, if there has been shoddy planning in the Ministry of Communications and Works, it has been the direct result of the Democratic Labour Party in dealing with Civil Servants who the hon. member for St. John called an army of occupations that he could not control. That is the first thing and I am going to start from there and show you how the bad planning came in.

I was Minister responsible for Communications and Works for 2½ years at MCW and I have called it the Ministry for the Rejects. (ASIDES). All right. All right, and I will show you how, Mr. Chairman. If there is shoddy planning, you cannot blame the Minister. You cannot blame the Cabinet. You have to blame the system which the Democratic Labour Party used for staffing the Ministry of Communications and Works between 1961 and 1976 and I will give you examples of that.

Six years later we tried to get rid of them but nobody wanted them. Nobody wanted the staff you had at MCW. Whether you like it or not, nobody wants them. Here is a typical example of this. That Ministry was responsible for the Electrician Wiremen Board. That Board held a meeting under the Act where a member of the staff is to act as Secretary of the Board. You know when the Minister knew that the Board was not sitting, 18 months later when the then Chairman of the Board wrote me a personal letter saying that he was resigning his post because he could not get a meeting called because he could not get the Minister to the first meeting and when I started to enquire I found out that the officer had every excuse in the book why he could not get the Minutes prepared and why another meeting had not been called. When I asked what to do I was told, well, that officer has gone around the Civil Service and had been passed off to MCW, so that is what we had to work with to begin with.

Now, let us get back to the shoddy planning. When I came to the House in 1970, there were complaints from the general public about taxis, mini-buses and about tour coaches. The Democratic Labour Party never sought in any way to regulate the Transport Industry in Barbados. Carlton Brathwaite had a mini-bus that used to run up in St. Lawrence and while the Policemen were reporting the other minibuses, Carlton Brathwaite and Peter Morgan's minibuses were running uninterrupted. (ASIDES) All you have to do is to come outside and see about mine and I will make you prove it. Anybody could make you prove it.

When we went into Government, the first thing we set out to do was to regularise the transport industry in

Barbados. You had minibuses that the Democratic Labour Party had licensed a few of them and had others illegal. I represented a man called Albert Branch whose vehicle was marked MCW I who had 36 summonses between the months of December and January for running an illegal minibus but at the same time, his colleague, who was a supporter of the Democratic Labour Party had his bus running in the same fashion but never got reported. I do not mind who I accuse now. You find the answer.

So, Mr. Chairman, what do you call shoddy planning, to try to bring an Act in to force to regularise the transport? You had taxis that people were complaining. The tourists were complaining that they were being ripped off by taxi drivers charging them all sorts of fares, etc. The taximen came to me and said, "it is not us, it is the pirates you have in the industry."

I called a meeting of the Police Department, the Ministry of Tourism and my Inspectorate. The Police said quite clearly that they could not police the taxi cars properly because it meant that they would have to walk about with a torchlight, lie down on their bellies and spot to see the little hackney licence that was on the plate because they know full well there was a man called Sidney Byer who used to park in this busstand in the Lower Green with a vehicle marked "Taxi" across the front who never had a taxi permit (ASIDES) a member of the Democratic Labour Party so it shows you, Mr. Chairman, the problems that existed in transport at the time.

Now, what did we have to do in order to regulate the industry? When I was looking for a Road Traffic Bill — they will not tell you that from 1962 a Road Traffic Bill was drafted. Fred C. Smith when he was a Minister of Communications and Works said in here that he has given an officer one year's leave to complete that Bill and I found it locked in the bottom drawer of a cabinet at MCW. I took it home and spent about four weeks every night trying to get the Bill perfected to be introduced into this House.

It was in a drawer at MCW. It was up there from 1962. I called meeting after meeting between the Rates and Taxes, between the Police and all other interested persons in order to get the Bill into the House. The main problem existing was identification of specific vehicles in Barbados and we came up with a system that we would create a new licence plate so that you could identify the taxis from the minibuses, from the tour coaches and from the Government buses. You had people registering taxis and running them as minibuses.

The Democratic Labour Party licensed a number of transport vans in the Port to carry six passengers while they had a seating capacity for 14. The taxi drivers complained that when the vans belonging to the large

magnates came out of the Port with 12 and 14 passengers, they were allowed to pass freely but when they came out with theirs and they had more than six, the people at the gate used to say, "take out the extras. You are only licensed to carry six" so the Act is a completely new Act to satisfy these fellows, particularly the small man in Barbados to give him a stake in the economy like anybody else.

We had a number of illegal minibuses running about the road and in order to get them to pick up the licences that were granted them, and in order for the Police to be able to identify them, we came up with new licence plates.

Now, when I hear people talking about the statement of the present Minister of Transport and Works, I will tell you this that never in the last five years have all the vehicles that should have been inspected in Barbados have been inspected at the Ministry of Communications and Works, never.
6.00 p.m.

They have never been. Rates and Taxes will tell you that two, three years go by and some vehicles never paid taxes because they were never inspected and the Transport Board was no different from any of them, the Transport Board was no different.

So, when you talk about sloppy planning, it was the Democratic Labour Party that had two inspectors at MCW for all the years. You know the duty for those two? They had to inspect vehicles, they had to go out to traffic accidents — and I have heard the Rt. Hon. Leader of the Opposition in here complain of not being able to get to Parliament because there was an accident on Bay Street and the two vehicles blocked off Bay Street waiting for a policeman to come and take measurement and to get somebody from MCW to test the brakes — they had to go to court to give evidence in fatal accidents, they had to go to court to give evidence every time the police report somebody and then they had to go back to court and help with the planning of the re-organising of the particular section of the Ministry.

Now, we have increased those to six. So, when they talk about sloppy planning, they never planned in MCW. The planning for them was to send officers they did not want in other places to MCW. But, fortunately, MCW came to be the Ministry carrying the bulk of the developmental work in Barbados (ASIDE) So, then you have pressure of work on officers. Mr. Chairman, we have designed the new licence plate. We said to ourselves — now, they criticise us, when you come down and you have to put on a levy, you come to the Honourable House for money, they criticise it, I do not know what they expect — because we said to ourselves — the taxi drivers or those persons who have got to change their licence plate were

not responsible for this the change — this Government wants to regularise the industry and we have come up with new plans for licence plates, where we would issue the first lot of plates free and anybody licensing after, without a licence, will have to buy the new plates. The new plates were designed with the logo of the Ministry so that they could not be falsified. (ASIDE: Pretty enough) in order to know whether it is a legal plate or not and the Government agreed, Cabinet agreed, to absorb the first cost which was just over \$100 000.

So I do not understand. As soon as you come down to help the people and you come to the Honourable House for money, they say that you do not know what you are doing. On the other hand, when you come for money to improve the situation, "you do not know what you are doing". You must go abroad, you must get a committee and you must come back and sit down while they get outside and rant and rave over the Government not knowing what it is doing. In this particular case, we knew what we were doing.

We agreed that we will make it easier — and the Honourable Member seizing upon the opportunity of seeing beautiful licence plates out there, comes in with a question. When they were in office, I asked the question over and over, how many vehicles Government had and nobody could tell me. Under their system, it takes probably five minutes to know how many hired cars are in Barbados, how many legal taxis are in Barbados, how many legal minibuses. You can know at a flash the legal vehicles and you can deal with the illegal ones. You are able to plan more effectively in the industry if you know what you have. If you do not know what you have, you are always guessing and you are always ending up in confusion, you are annoying everybody.

Now, Mr. Chairman, when you come to the Transport Board, (ASIDE: 21 new buses already) this Government took up office to find the King Report. The Honourable Member for Christ Church West Central would have been well aware — you know something, Mr. Chairman, these fellows have short memories. He used to be legal adviser to the Public Utilities Board and the bus companies had to go before the Public Utilities Board to justify fares and he knew that they were dying from about 1965. He knew the bus companies were dying. He knew as well as the world that the agent for the Seddon buses was the late Mrs. Rock, that with all of those buses, we had drivers going up the road and suddenly, the steering wheel used to drop down out of their hand, drop down in the road and the fellows scrambling to hold on to the seats. He knew there are some 80 of those buses that have been condemned by Mr. Denton Sayers and another engineer. He knew that you never got parts for them because Mrs. Rock was only interested in selling the buses and has never yet brought one spare part to Barbados for the 70 buses. He knew that and the

Transport Board is saddled up to today with the 80 buses that it has been recommended over and over, and especially, in the King Report, should all be dumped.

This Government has put in over 100 buses in five years and that is how the Rocklyn survived because Rocklyn sold Seddon to the Government at a high price in order to subsidise what she got out of the lot. And, when they talk about inconveniencing the travelling public, they know as well as the world, systems have been established in Barbados. Are you going to run a Transport Board for profit or are you going to run it as a socio-economic institution? Are you going to ask senior citizens to pay or are you going to give them a free ride? Are you going to ask the school children to pay the full fare or are you going to ask them to pay a reduced rate?

But, you come back to another problem, Mr. Chairman, if you go down in either of the bus stands — I do not know if it happens now, I do not know it — but you had school children, you had two buses running from St. Philip to the Garrison and from the Garrison to St. Philip moving children cross country. Children from St. Philip were going to school at the Garrison, children from town were going to St. Philip. But, you had children travelling into Bridgetown standing in the bus stands and enjoying the hustle to get into the bus on evenings at 4.30 p.m. — 5.00 o'clock.

We must ask ourselves a simple question. Are we quarrelling over how we are running the Transport Board, are we quarrelling over the profitability in the Transport Board or are we going to discuss the method of financing the Transport Board, full well knowing that there is a large percentage of that institution that is devoted to the social life of this country? That is what we have to ask ourselves. And, when the Honourable Member speaks about shoddy planning, they have never produced anything in transport.

The Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic Act was passed in 1937 in this country. There have been 26 amendments to the point that they came in here and amended an amendment that had been amended previously. Nobody knew where they were going in the Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic Act up until this Act came into force. (ASIDES) Nobody knew about it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Wind up. (ASIDES) Order, please. Do not mind these asides. Please, let us get on. You have a minute to wind up.

Mr. C. L. BOLDEN: He does not understand. You try to bring an Act in force, the Regulations have been done. There has been a shortage of legal officers in the Ministry of Legal Affairs, as far as I have been told. The Act has been finished. The Regulations

had passed the Ministry when I left there, it is only for them to come into force now I cannot accept that there has been any shoddy planning, when it comes to the Motor Vehicle and Road Traffic Act or the Ministry of Communications and Works.

We picked up a Ministry that was bad, we tried our best to improve it. If they are now so ashamed that we have been able to produce a Road Traffic Act in 1981 which they were trying to produce since 1962, it is the public outside to judge who had shoddy planning, who did the work and who did not.
6.10 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I have listened with rapt attention to both sides of the House over the last session and the couple of meetings we have just had. The financial statement which was just debated in here, it was the Transport Board; I believe I heard the former Minister of Transport saying the same things, the Road Traffic Act, licence plates, Seddon buses, this type of bus and the next bus. From the Opposition benches I have been hearing the same thing. I believe if you look at the debates you will see that both sides of the House over the last session and these few meetings that we have held here, have been saying the same thing over and over and over again, Sir.

What is the Resolution here for? A hundred and thirty thousand dollars, because we did not make provision in the Estimates for the purpose of looking after the licence plates, which you can see. The former Minister of Transport said you are now in a position to make sure that there is a better form of identification. We heard the Minister of Transport and Works last week in here saying that he is going all out of his way to improve the bus system in Barbados, he was going to Miami to get buses. He has at Acme Engineering Works buses being built which they cannot turn out fast enough. He has buses coming from England, all of these things I have heard over and over and over and over again.

We heard of the contribution the minibuses are making, but we have not heard how discourteous they are to the general public and to other road users. Other motorists on the road when they see the minibuses they have to run out of the road. They are unruly. You see, I am not a vote catcher, this lot of foolish talk in here about the invaluable job they are doing in this country, yes, they are assisting the Government and they are doing a job and they are making money for the job which they are doing, but I want to say this to the minibus owners now. They must learn to conduct themselves in a manner in which all Barbadians can be proud of them, they must put on clean clothes, comb their hair, bathe. (Mr. GREAVES: I agree). You tell me you agree, why don't you get up and say it too? They must park their buses at the bus stops and not around bends and cause accidents.

They must be able to appreciate that they must not go off the routes so as to cut off other vehicles, causing danger, I believe, to little children running through avenues and so on.

I believe they have a contribution to make, but I also believe that they must be controlled in this country. You do not want to say it, because you believe that the minibuses will win a Government. They do not win a Government, there are minibus operators who like the Barbados Labour Party and there are minibus operators who like the Democratic Labour Party, and come an election they are going to put in the Taitts and the Franklins and the Greaves pictures in them and they are going to put in the Millers and the Craigs and the Fordes. You cannot tell the people how to vote, because whenever you are finished you will be fooled, and I am tired.

You heard the Minister himself outline what he is planning to do, everything to improve the system in Barbados, and I will say this now on the floor of the House. Many of you in here on that side and on this side of the House have travelled, but a lot of the public have not travelled. Barbados still has one of the best transport systems in the entire Caribbean and I believe that you are unreasonable to be dragging down the Transport Board all the time in the eyes of the public for cheap publicity. I see buses up and down Bay Street, on Highway 1 and on Highway 7 running with two and three passengers in them up to one and two o'clock in the morning, but the minibus operators are at home sleeping or are at a dance. The minibus operator does not have to look for an Auditor, a Traffic Manager, nobody to sell tickets, very few of them carry Conductors, they do not have to look for a Personnel Officer, they curse and insult the police and all this kind of thing, yet you are talking about the invaluable service. (ASIDE). I want to hear you get up and agree with me, do not sit down there and say you agree, put your money where your mouth is, get up and say it too.

For the interest of all concerned in this country, we have pretty high standards in Barbados, in the fields of housing, education, economic management; both administrations over the years have made a significant contribution to the country. Do not let anybody fool you. Never go anywhere and say that the now Leader of the Opposition did not make a significant contribution to Barbados. I could not say that, I am a Barbadian first and foremost. I feel proud when I go outside and examine what I see in St. Vincent, in Antigua and in Trinidad with all of the oil money; in places like Caracas, Guyana and Jamaica where you have only chassis with hoods on top of them, you have the cows, pig feed, pig food, chicken, bags of rice and everything in the bus with you. Here in Barbados you have fine buses on the road, coaches, with upholstered seats. I believe some of them must be air conditioned. (Mr. TAITT: Only the Defence

Force buses are air conditioned). I would know, that is for you, I know you do not like the Defence Force at all. What has the Defence Force done to you and Lewis? You only have to say "air condition", the Defence Force. Nobody is going to come to shoot you down, you are not that sensible. Nobody would shoot at Gearbox, nor would they shoot at you, you are not worth that much. (Mr. TAITT: Nor you). That is what you do not know.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Address the Chair.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I am still addressing the Chair, I have not called on anybody else, I call on you all the time, I am saying "Sir". I believe that the time has come when you should give the Transport Board that opportunity. It suffered under your regime, it has suffered a lot of blows under ours. Give it a chance. In the Estimates we will hear them talk about the Transport Board again. In the Resolution which was just debated in here, it was the Transport Board. You want \$130,000 now, are you going to talk about the Transport Board again? Do you have "Transport Boarditis?" Give it a chance, it is for all of us, it is my taxes too. I pay a lot of money in taxes per month, I do not want to see us giving the Transport Board money all the time, draining my pockets. Give it a chance.

The Minister outlined his policy. If that policy should fail, then you would be in a position to discuss the Transport Board and be critical of it. You heard him in here repeatedly saying how much money he is planning to spend on it, the problems he has to operate under, and now this Resolution again — and this is no reflection on you, Sir — but I believe it is another time wasting factor, the Transport Board. Get up and talk about the bus fares now again. Once it is something with the Transport Board it is bus fares and school children, so get up and talk, but I want to hear you also support me in saying that the minibuses, though they are making a contribution that is of worth in Barbados, I want to hear you also say that they must understand that they are not the only persons who use the roads and they must conduct themselves in a proper fashion whereby all Barbadians, you and I, can be justly proud.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member for St. James North cannot tell me what I am to say or what contribution I should make on any Resolution, including this one. I am not interested in the Road Traffic Act, in number plates, I have nothing against the new number plates, I am interested in the movement of people, because I know that if people are not moved from one place to another, the economic life of this country will come to a standstill.
6.20 p.m.

I believe we have probably the best transport system in the West Indies. I believe I can say that without

fear of contradiction. I have lived in other parts of the West Indies and I have travelled on the buses; but to say that is not to say that we are necessarily satisfied with what we have got. I personally am not satisfied that the people from Jackson are getting a sufficiently good service to move them from where they are to the place where they work or want to go for one reason or another. I am not satisfied that the school children from Jackson, the school children from Cave Hill are getting that kind of service that will take them from where they are to where they should be.

I have heard the Prime Minister on the radio say what to me was a contradiction of what was said in the House — I may be wrong, but that is as I understood it — that if the children travel on the normal buses on which the general passengers travel, they must pay sixty cents. I have understood him in here to say that if children travel on such buses they will pay two-thirds of the fare which is forty cents. No place in Jackson, and I go further, no place in the area where I live at St. Davids, is there a school bus. No place in Jackson or Lodge Hill is there a school bus, so the children in these parts are not benefiting from the \$6.00 a week school child fare. I do not think it is fair to those children from those areas where there are no school buses to serve those areas that they should be called upon to pay the full fare of an adult person.

The general service now apart from the school service to places like Cave Hill where at one time you had a reasonable service is now non-existent, and as for going on top Lodge Hill, it does not go now at all. There used to be a service there. Now over the past several weeks there is no service there at all. I recall when I was making my rounds before the elections one evening I was in a car at Lodge Hill and a youngster came to me and said "did you see that bus turn around just now?" I said I did not see any bus. "Well" he said, "a bus just turned around there; that was the first bus for the day!" He was a school boy, and it was a quarter to eight in the evening, and the first bus should have been at 6 o'clock in the morning. Since then there is no bus service to that part at all.

I am appealing to the Minister of Transport. I believe that he has the interest of those people at heart and he would like to see something done to relieve the suffering of some of these people. The people in Jackson, I must return to this again, and the school children have to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning and try to take a bus, and if they happen to be there by 6.30 or 7 o'clock, and I believe the hon. member for St. Michael North East can vouch for what I am saying, they have to take a bus and travel backwards in order to get a bus to get them where they are going. This is what is happening in this country now, and they are saying that I am knocking the Transport Board because we

have a reasonable service. We want a better service; that is what we want, and I am again appealing to the Minister to bear these things in mind and try to improve the situation.

I think that this is a constructive criticism. I would think that he should be aware of where the problems are, and I should like him to try and do something to relieve the suffering of those persons who want to travel.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, increasingly one has to become concerned at the style of debate which seems to suggest that hon. members of the Opposition are now to choose what they are to speak on and how they are to speak on it to suit the idiosyncrasies of the Hon. Leader of the House. If the Hon. Leader of the House because of his long years and long time in this Honourable House is getting bored or tired or fed up, the hon. member knows what is the proper thing to do; but we have a duty to perform, and if that duty requires us on this side to speak on matters over and over again until they are corrected, we are doing no less than the hon. member did from this side of the House in his time and lived to brag about it.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order, I submit to this House that the speech so far made by the hon. member is irrelevant and has nothing to do with the matter before the House, and I would ask that it be struck out.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please let us get ahead with the debate.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, with the greatest respect to the hon. member who just got up, I do not think what he said is worthy of him and I would not touch it. Mr. Chairman, there are a number of things that have been said about transport that are simply not true. They have been said about the party which I have the honour to preside over and I wish to set the records straight. I believe that the Hon. Minister of Transport and Works is correct when he says that he has had only a short time to preside over that unfortunate Ministry. It was unfortunate and it continues to be unfortunate every time the former Minister responsible for Communications and Works gets up in here and starts to speak with authority on a number of matters which if they allowed them to lay low we may allow them to lay low, but to suggest that the morass which now exists at the Transport Board is in any way an inheritance from the Democratic Labour Party is to misinterpret or misrepresent the history of the situation.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I will have to ask hon. members to stick to the Head. We are really straying much too far and there is too much irrelevance. I will have to tighten up somewhat.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I will endeavour to abide by your ruling, but I am sure you will appreciate that one on this side has to respond to what has happened. The Transport Board goes back a long way. It has been said on the floor of this House, for example, that the Democratic Labour Party was responsible for the 65 cents bus fare. That is absolutely not true. At that time when the bus fare was 65 cents as the hon. member has said, you had to go to the Public Utilities Board to get the rates fixed, and the Public Utilities Board fixed those rates at 65 cents, and it was the Democratic Labour Party after a study of the King Report — I have a copy here in my hands — that reduced the fare. The King Report recommended in the fare structure at page 21 "the operation of the motor omnibus service throughout the Island by a single concessionaire which should be the Transport Board established by the Transport Board Act 1955-37". At page 22 it said "The introduction of a single uniform fare right throughout the Island with a free transfer system at selected points with the fare rate fixed at 25 cents per journey and with the rate for school children reduced from 15 cents to 10 cents per journey." This was in the King Report. (Mr. BOLDEN: Read on.) You had a chance to read the King Report and you quoted it. Let me quote it. The fact has to be recorded that the King Report set out all these things and hon. members in here and outside have tried to suggest that the Democratic Labour Party is responsible for the 65 cents fare.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, is the hon. member going to make that a document of the House? There are further readings to be made out of that.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, this has been a document of the House for a long time.

Mr. BOLDEN: With all due respect to you, the King Report was never published.

Mr. TAITT: You are not making this one a document of any House. This one belongs to me. Mr. Chairman, the hon. member over there got up and said that he took home the Road Traffic Act. The former Minister sitting right next to the former Attorney General implied that it was only because he took it up and carried it home and worked on it that we were able to get it in the time we did.
6.30 p.m.

Mr. Chairman, no wonder the Road Traffic Act was such a disaster. He carried it home and I am waiting to hear the Attorney General on it because I think it was an insult to the former Attorney General and his Chambers for him to be getting up and talking about he had to carry home the Road Traffic Act in order to get it here.

Mr. Chairman, I have no particular view on the licensing system which has been introduced. If the only legacy or the only monument to the towering expertise of the hon. member is the new licensing system, let him have that, Sir. The licensing system has nothing to do with the improvement of the efficiency on transportation in this country. He has said that the licensing system allows for easier identification.

It seems as if the Police were having global problems identifying drivers in Barbados. Mr. Chairman, you know that any driver that passes any road that is longer than 100 yards with a light that is not burning that if the Police wants to find him they will find him before he gets home.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of elucidation. The hon. member must not mislead the House. I said quite clearly that there were numerous complaints about vehicles being used in a category that they were not permitted to be used in and the Police complained particularly when complaints were made to them about visitors saying that they were overcharged by taxi drivers. The Police said it was impossible for them to know the legal taxi driver from the illegal taxi driver and the only method of knowing was the little hackneyed plate which was stuck to the licence.

I even went so far as to say that they said they would have to have a light to go down and see if it was there. I mentioned the name of Sidney Byer who marked "Taxi" on the windscreen of his vehicle but did not have the legal permit to operate as a taxi driver. That is what I said so the hon. member must not twist what I said. He is a past master at twisting. You have to listen to him carefully. That is why I came back inside because I know behind my back he would say all kinds of things but I am in here to face him.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, let me compliment the hon. member for being in here, Sir. Let me compliment him for producing the Road Traffic Act. Let me compliment him for having the foresight to recognise the solution to the problem which the Police had of identification. I will move on from that and give Jack his jacket. (*Asides*) The Chairman understands that I would never give him that old tattered jacket.

Mr. Chairman he said, Sir that there are 80 Seddon buses out there and it has been said and repeated and it has been left hanging in the air that a large number of people in Barbados have come to believe that the Democratic Labour Party took over the buses. They know that it was after June 1977 that the Government took over whatever buses were taken over from the Concessionaires, the buses from the Rocklyn. I have heard it said in here that we took over old decrepit Seddons from the Rocklyn. I have heard it said in here.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, we have never said that in here because the majority of the Rocklyn buses were left down in St. Andrew and about 40 of the other buses belonging to the other Concessionaires were left with the owners. The Seddon buses were all ordered by the Transport Board.

Mr. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, this has been said in here. I am sorry that the former Minister is not in here but it has been said and the record will show that they said that we went and took over all the old decrepit buses from Mrs. Rock. They said that time and time again. Let the records show that the buses were taken over by the Barbados Labour Party administration in 1977.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Hon. Leader of this House said that he would like to hear some new things about the Transport Board. He said that he does not wish us to be repeating what has been gone over and over again. I say that the mismanagement and the shoddy planning which has been talked about includes such matters as the relationship of the Chairman of the Transport Board to the Board itself.

The hon. member who just sat down on a point of order, the hon. member for St. Joseph, would be better able to enlighten this Hon. House on the difficulties he had when he was Minister with the Chairman. I am not in a position to know who was right or who was wrong. Sight unseen I might be entitled to believe that the Chairman was right but the hon. member for St. Joseph has demonstrated an expertise in transportation and therefore I accept that he is right.

He went to the office of the Hon. Deputy Prime Minister with the Chairman, I am told, the Chairman of the Transport Board, when the hon. member for St. Joseph told the bus drivers and conductors that he gave them his word that he would get rid of that Chairman. He is going to deny it now.

Mr. BOLDEN: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The hon. member is saying — I really do not understand how he is putting it. I heard him say something about I went to the office of the Deputy Prime Minister with the Chairman and said that I would get rid of the Chairman? What did you say, because I have never used any word to anybody about getting rid of anybody. I do not believe that the Deputy Prime Minister can tell anybody that I have ever went to him in his office but once, once and I took him down to his office. I used to keep in my Ministry. I am a Minister like anybody else. If you want me come to me. What are you getting on with?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please. Hon. members of this Committee let us get ahead with this debate. I think we have been straying too far, too wide. Let us get ahead with the business of the House.

Mr. TAITT: It is the whole question of the policy, the policy regarding the licensing of the Transport Board and the attitude of the Board, the policy of the Board with regard to licensing as opposed to the policy of the then MCW. We are dealing with the policy regarding licensing, Sir, and it will, of course, touch on other aspects of policy.

The Chairman of the Board is reported to have said in the presence of witnesses that you cannot get rid of him that he is a friend of Tom. I do not know who is Tom, Sir. I do not know who he meant, Sir, and I do not know who is Tom.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: All of this does not have to be stressed now.

Mr. TAITT: (To Hon. L. S. CRAIG) You are such a nice white-haired old gentleman and getting so fretful now.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, let us not get so personal. Hon. members, let us get ahead.

Mr. TAITT: Getting so fretful in his old age.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please, order. Will the Hon. Leader of the House I implore you please to restrain yourself. I take it that the hon. member is about finished. You have about one minute more to finish.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir. I want to finish and talk about how there are two persons working at the Transport Board who have created so many problems as to have low morale at the Transport Board.

There is one man called Babbo. The Board fires Babbo. Babbo goes up to somebody and gets instructions. The Board Manager gets instructions that Babbo must be employed again. He is now *de facto* General Manager and one man called — I do not know his name but the information given to me, a man called Arleigh Bell who is reported to have stolen gasoline, beaten up people, stolen parts. They fired him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Licence plates, too?

Mr. TAITT: Licence plates too. They fired him.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order.

Mr. BOLDEN: I believe that Standing Orders say somewhere that you have to give notice of names you intend to call in here. (ASIDES) Well, you should have stopped me just now. You should have stopped me.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your time is getting up.

Mr. TAITT: Yes, Sir. Mr. Chairman, it is not the individual that I am concerned with. What I am concerned about is that the individual can leave the Transport Board and go to the political sector.
6.40 p.m.

These are matters which create confusion and you have no morale in the Transport Board (ASIDES)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. With these interruptions, I would have to give you another half of a minute or so to wind up.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The fact remains Sir, that, when we are debating the Transport Board, these matters are important in the context of the total scheme of things. If the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works, seeming as he wishes to, to keep himself abreast of all that has passed and go shopping in Miami for the new buses, *et cetera*, what we want the Honourable Minister to be aware of is all of the information and problems which we, on this Side have. No amount of bellyaching and/or back scrubbing by the Honourable Leader of this Honourable House will stop us from putting the position as we understand it.

The King Report is available for all to read and, if it is read in the context of what has happened in transport, the whole problem will be seen in an entirely different light. It is not fair for the Honourable Member to say that the Democratic Labour Party had no planning for transport when, in fact, the King Commission, or King Committee, was set up under the Democratic Labour Party in 1972 or 1973 precisely because people were concerned about transportation and the Transport Board as far back as then.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to be very long on this issue, but some reference was made by the Honourable Member for St. Michael North in relation to some of the problems the constituents of St. Michael North East experience, particularly during the early morning hours in getting to work, as well as their children in going to school.

Neither do I want to say that the opposition Democratic Labour Party did not have a policy, when they were in Government, for transport. Nor am I saying at this time that the Government does not have a suitable solution to the problem in transport. But, what I am saying is that there might be a need to look at our existing resources in the Ministry of Transport, in relation to buses and to look at our system and ask ourselves, "is it not a time for some change in the existing system?" In the Estimates of 1978, I made brief reference to what I would consider a very simple way of alleviating the problems which this country is now having or having moreso this year than in any time of its history. I am re-

ferring to the fact that there are more people working in Barbados today, there are more children going to schools and the existing bus numbers on the road — the fleet — have changed very little.

In 1978, during the Estimates, I suggested that an experiment could have been taken to have the working public or businesses in Barbados, perhaps starting at a little later hour and so ease the number of children vying for the few places on the buses with the working public. I still believe, Mr. Chairman, that could be a solution to the existing problems that the country is having, in relation to getting the children to school at an early hour and getting the working public to work at a seemingly early hour. I would suggest that businesses, generally, start at 10.00 in the morning on an experimental basis, at 10.00 o'clock probably, until 6.30, 7.00. That proposal, Mr. Chairman, would allow children who use the same facilities to get on to school and get home from school at a proper hour and then allow the business community more flexible time in using the existing transport system.

I am told that, on an average daily basis, the Transport Board carries 140 000 passengers, I am told that the working public in Barbados is 103 000 people and I am told that there are 5 000 children using the buses in Barbados and I am further told that there are only 256 buses. Would it not make sense, Mr. Chairman — it might seem simplistic in its approach, but it makes sense — if schools were to start at the normal time and businesses were to start perhaps at 10.00 o'clock? Then the public would not be competing for limited services.

Then, again, I submit to you that we spend a lot of money on tourism. We have a lot of tourists coming here and I am saying that over 40% of them use the same public transport system. This is an additional burden on the use of our services and I want to suggest to the Honourable Minister, even though it might seem simple — we do not have to have an expert come in from America or the United Kingdom to tell us to try this experiment — let us have the working public starting later. Legislation has already been passed for the shops to open. Do not wait until Christmas time to talk about late shopping. Let us start now to experiment on late shopping, so that we could assist the public from being stranded on the road every morning, some wanting to get to school, some wanting to get to work while there seems to be no solution.

My solution is an experiment in having businesses generally start later, let the children go on to school, so that they would be off the road when business is still functioning and then, I believe, Mr. Chairman, we will see a lightening of the problems in Barbados.

One little point, Mr. Chairman. It should be noted that we might not also be benefitting to the maximum of our potential in attracting the tourist dollar in Barbados because of the same system. Tourists traditionally like to sleep late, tourists traditionally like to fete late and when they come to Barbados to spend a few dollars and find that they have to readjust their lifestyle into an 8.00 to 4.00 situation, when they perhaps like to rise around 12.00 o'clock, there is a lot of revenue which the tourists might like to spend in this country, in this community but, because of the existing structure of our shop hours, of our store hours, they do not take advantage of them.

I would suggest, again, Mr. Chairman, that we reconsider. Have a committee set up to see how feasible the idea is to have businesses open from 10.00 o'clock in the mornings until probably 7.00 giving the children a chance to use the existing buses without having to compete necessarily with the travelling business public.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will ask the Honourable Minister to wind up the debate, if no other Honourable Member wishes to make a contribution.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have become inured over the last few months to listening to a welter of criticism and, of course, it would be remiss of me not to listen to any criticism from whatever source it might emanate. But, much of it, I regret to say, is not constructive and represents a maximum of chaff and a minimum of wheat.

The Ministry of Transport, therefore, will go about its business keeping its own counsel and do the work that it is required to do. I feel, however, Mr. Chairman, that I must advert to a comment with respect to the status of the Ministry of Transport and Works in the hierarchy of Ministries. It is a well-established psychological axiom that the performance of individuals is in large measure determined by the expectations of others around them and, for a long time, the social expectations of the Ministry of Transport and Works, or as it was called before, the Ministry of Communications and Works, were extremely low. It had nothing to do objectively with the importance of the Ministry in the social and economic scheme of things, but it represented the subjective limitations of those who believed that it was an area of Government that was not important because of this purblind attitude, Mr. Chairman, to the Ministry of Works, because there was sadly, over the years, criminal neglect on the part of policy-makers. The cumulative effect of these policies of neglect has come to haunt us in the year of our Lord one thousand, nine hundred and eighty-one. 6.50 p.m.

I believe that much of the comment that has been evoked in recent times, even the destructive comment,

represents a dawning awareness of the importance of the Ministry. There are too many people in Barbados whose material wellbeing has been adversely affected by the disfunctions within the Ministry for the society any longer to console itself with the belief that if this area is ignored that it will miraculously correct itself. It is not going to correct itself, Mr. Chairman, but it has to be straightened out. I believe this Minister has the will to do it and I am not put off or diverted from my important responsibility to the public by the battle of noises I hear day in and day out in straightening out this mess, and I believe that it would be an important public service to Barbados of which I will be extremely proud. I do not believe that I am working as some kind of ministerial scavenger, but rather performing an extremely important function.

If our traffic is not regulated our arteries will clog and the society will be afflicted with thrombosis. We are already paying the social and economic penalties of regarding the Ministry as a wasteland within the governmental structure, so I believe that it is an important Ministry, and perhaps at this stage in our life, given the crisis that the Ministry is experiencing, perhaps the most important Ministry in the scheme of Government at this time.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that in any big organisation, especially a clumsy bureaucracy which we have inherited from the days of colonialism that we can always point to deficiencies, and therefore like all agencies operating by men born of women there will be shortcomings, and Ministers will have to assume responsibility for the fact that human beings will make mistakes and that human beings cannot foresee every eventuality that is likely to arise.

I do not believe that the inability of the Ministry to foresee the necessity of including the sum of \$130,000 in this year's Estimates can be transmuted into a sweeping generalisation about the inefficiency of the Ministry itself. I have already elsewhere commented on attitudinal problems within the Ministry and the level of work done there, and I am absolutely satisfied that the problems related to attitudes and productivity are not significantly different from attitudes and productivity anywhere in the Public Service, or in the private sector for that matter. When I was Minister of Labour I heard a litany of complaints day in and day out about the poor attitudes of workers in the world of work within the private sector and I think that we are struggling with a problem where we have moved into independence where there has not been a parallel development of national consciousness, and this is a problem which policymakers will have to seek to ameliorate, if not rectify, by example themselves. I believe that the best way to improve input in a Ministry, the biggest contribution that a Minister

can make is to set the example by working hard and being productive himself.

In so far as the Transport Board and its tete-a-tete with the Police is concerned, I must here state quite plainly, Mr. Chairman, that I do not retract a single animadversion that I levelled at the police, because it is a fact that there existed an understanding between the Transport Board and the police. (Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Do not go back to that now). I am going back to it, because I am not afraid of it. There are certain people who speak and whisper about the police behind closed doors, but as long as I have a responsibility to move passengers from the point of embarkation to their destination, then anybody who seeks to disrupt that process is a person who comes within my consciousness, and if their actions warrant criticism then I will criticise them. If I cannot criticise the police for moving buses off the road and causing passengers trouble, and causing sick people to faint in the gutters by the bus stop, well then I am prepared to give up the Ministry altogether. I do not believe that there is any body of men or women in this country who are above criticism, especially people who are paid by the taxpayers of this country. I cannot accept the comments of those who declare that you should not criticise the police, because if you criticise the police you are condoning a breakdown of law and order. It is a reprehensible distortion to generalise a criticism about a single act of a police to an attack upon how police function with respect to criminals or with respect to any of their other functions within this society. It is absolute foolishness and I have no time for it whatsoever.

I do not retract or unsay a single word of what I said, I will merely ask, Mr. Chairman, why after over 20 years where buses have been running without licence because of the difficulty in the logistics of licensing buses on time that the Royal Barbados Police Force chose that moment without prior consultation with the Transport Board to ground the buses. I am not aware of the fact that when private vehicles are involved that the police forbid the drivers of those vehicles to go on the road. People are called over, given a warning or reported, and then sent on their way. It is extremely mystifying therefore to me that in a public transport system some 40 buses were pulled off the road while thousands of passengers were left stranded.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If the Hon. Minister could finish within five or ten minutes.....

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: I cannot guarantee that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will have to report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. CHAIRMAN reported progress and asked leave to sit again, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House resumed Committee of Supply, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This House is in Committee. The Hon. Minister of Transport may resume his address to the Committee.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Chairman, when we broke for dinner, I was dealing with the question of licensing the Transport Board buses. There are some naive people who believe that the process of licensing simply involves the payment of the fee for the licence. There is a lot more involved, Mr. Chairman. What is involved is the preparation of the vehicles by the Transport Board to be sent to the Ministry of Works for inspection. Because they happen to be operating within the same administrative structure, it does not follow that the Ministry of Works relaxes its standards when it is inspecting Transport Board vehicles. In fact, given the size and the weight of such vehicles meticulous attention is paid to any possibility of a defect in these vehicles and consequently in many respects Transport Board vehicles have to pass a much sterner test than ordinary vehicles.

In order to service these vehicles it is necessary to get access to a service pit. There are only eight service pits which are available to a fleet of some 270 buses. Properly functioning transport systems recommend that you would have at least 30 pits to the kind of bus fleet that you have for such buses to be serviced properly, and given the fact that the Transport Board experiences continuous breaking down as a result of the serious mistakes made by the Democratic Labour Party in purchasing sub-standard buses, there are nearly every day some thirty buses waiting to use those eight pits, and therefore we are faced with a real problem of patching up the identified deficiency and having the bus back on the road that is not properly serviced as a result of its withdrawal for repair. Those buses which we are sure would pass the test must stay on the road, otherwise

an already bad problem would deteriorate even more. That is what I mean by the magnitude of the logistical problems involved in having buses licensed. It is nothing as simple as paying a licence fee.

This problem has been in existence for over two decades. The police have honoured the understanding that they have with the Transport Board, and we cannot understand why without warning they chose to cause the public such inconvenience and threatened the life of certain sick individuals by pulling the buses off the road.

The hon. member for St. Michael North raised some questions about inadequate service on certain roads in which he has a personal and political interest. To that I will respond that his problem is not a unique one in St. Michael in the short haul routes where the brunt of the transporting of passengers falls upon the minibuses. We believe that this problem is solved only by building up the Transport Board's fleet to an adequate size. At the same time we are looking at the possibility of developing a separate fleet of buses for school children, not minibuses, buses to transport school children. When I was in Florida we saw some possibilities and if we acted precipitately it would be possible with the transportation levy to have a fleet of sixteen school buses by the end of January which would eliminate most of the pressure which intensifies when the children return to school. Having regard to the nightmarish problems caused by the bad decisions made by the Democratic Labour Party in the purchase of Seddons, we will act with all deliberate care and speed and to this end some of the American representatives of the bus company interested in providing us with buses will be visiting Barbados to look at our roads and to look at the topography of the country with a view to ensuring that the buses are built in a sufficiently sturdy manner in accordance with specifications which would enable them to function with reasonable longevity in this environment. So our school children and our passengers may have to wait a few months longer, but this is to reduce the margin of error in selecting vehicles to a minimum.

One witnesses, Mr. Chairman, day after day, during the off peak period buses travelling with five and six passengers. A bus travelling with five and six passengers is a bus that is losing money, and therefore we are looking at the possibility of acquiring more fuel efficient buses, smaller units which would enable us to pull the bigger units off the road in the off peak period in order to ensure that there is no unnecessary wastage of fuel or unnecessary wear and tear on tyres.

Mr. Chairman, it is getting late and this is the first item on the Order Paper, and I do not want to expatiate upon any policy questions relating to the Transport Board. In fact the problems of the Transport

Board are not germane at all to the Resolution that is before us. I craved your indulgence merely to follow certain members down the paths of irrelevance in order to correct certain misimpressions which might be conveyed to the public, and so, Mr. Chairman, there will be other occasions when I will bring to this House matters that directly impinge upon the Transport Board, and then in the fullness of time my plans for the Transport Board will be unfolded in their entirety.

The question that Head 37 – Ministry of Communications and Works, stand part of the Schedule, was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour report the passing of two Money Resolutions in Committee of Supply.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
8.10 p.m.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move Item No. 3. Sir, before we go to the next Item, Mr. Speaker, I crave the indulgence of the House. There is a money Resolution which I would like to give notice of, Sir. Not to be done in all of its stages, Sir, no way, but to give notice of it, Sir. It came down late today, Sir, and I crave the indulgence of the House and hon. members to re-open Item (g) under the order of business, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of this Hon. House that we recommit, at the request of the Hon. Minister, this Head to give permission to introduce this money Resolution? It will be placed on the Order Paper for next week. If there is no objection, leave is granted. The Hon. Minister may proceed.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$55,529 from the Consolidated Fund and place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates, 1981–82, Part I – Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1981–1982 No. 5 which form the Schedule to this Resolution, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 3.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT OISTINS, CHRIST CHURCH

Item No. 3 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Oistins, Christ Church.

Hon. D. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Resolution is pretty simple. It is to acquire a piece of land at Oistins, Christ Church for road improvement.

I do move, therefore, that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to second it, Sir. This Resolution relates to the last piece of land. All the rest of the land has been through the House on many occasions and this piece relates to a property known as the Archer property, the last one.

Originally, this was to have been acquired earlier but representations were made by the gentleman that he had an old relative and it was always understood that this would have to be acquired but I believe the situation is now that one need no longer take that matter into consideration. It would be, in fact, the only house left in the whole of the seaside starting from the District Hospital right down to where hon. members are familiar where it is in the curve of the reclamation and the widening of the road is going to go very near to the house so it would just be an eyesore stuck out there. All the houses along there have been acquired and they will be knocked down and for the information of hon. members, the second part of the development on the seaside and the last one that we are doing on the seaside has started.

The contract has been awarded in accordance with the European Development Fund financing. It had to go out for tenders and a certain period of time had to elapse before the tenders were accepted and a certain period of time had to elapse before the work was started. That work has now started. It was awarded to a Guyanese firm who are eligible under the European Development Rules. You had to advertise in every ACP country and the contract was awarded to them in accordance with the Special Tenders Committee comprising our Tenders Committee and representatives of the European Economic Community so that this Resolution relates to that piece of land.

Mr. KING: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister who just sat down said that there was just this last parcel of land to be acquired at the Oistins site. I believe there is another house which I see standing on lands to the East – the house is still there – a parcel of land on which there is a house to the East of the property now being

sought to be acquired. I think the house is called Sea Grape. I wonder if the Minister could tell us what is the position of that parcel of land on which that house stands.

The other thing I would like to enquire of the Minister is the problem of drainage in that area. It seems to be creating a great problem now, right in the area where these two remaining houses still stand. In the heavy rainy season a lot of water backs up there and it is practically impossible for traffic to pass. I wonder if the Minister could perhaps give us some assurance, Sir, that immediate steps will be taken to remedy the problem which is a result of the works now being carried out in that area.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Sir, in respect of the House Sea Grape, that was acquired a long period of time and that was left there because that was the contract headquarters when the reclamation was being done by the contractor.

8.20 p.m.

It was agreed that, since the house was not interfering with anything, it should not be knocked down, but rather, a sum should have been deducted from the contract which, obviously, would have to make provision for temporary contract headquarters. That is the only reason why it is standing, The Sea Grapes. But, that was acquired a long time ago.

With respect to the drainage, the arrangement at Oistin is that the landward side is being planned independently of the seaward side and the drainage study on the landward side has been completed. The problem with drainage in Oistin is that it comes from all the way up the second level and when the two shops immediately above the drain are fixed an integrated drainage system will come right down and join into that. A firm by the name of David Lashley Associates, I believe, did that and they are only continuing a study which was done years ago by an English firm called Wallace Evans. Oistin's study was done by Wallace Evans years ago, so that they are well aware of that problem.

The reason why the two shops have not been knocked down is that, in the new development on the sea, there will be two shops there and it has always been agreed that these people, in view of their displacement, would be offered the two shops there. So, you have to build those two shops first before you can knock these down. So, that drainage system, together with the road widening, would be the last part of this. That is how it is being done, just as the Police Station cannot be knocked down until the other one is finished and the market cannot be knocked down until the other one is finished, the road will then be done right through. That is the answer to those problems.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Item Number Four.

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AT WHITE PARK
ROAD, ST. MICHAEL**

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

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the purpose of this resolution is set out in the Addendum.

The portion of land is to be acquired for the purpose of siting the new Headquarters of CBC, Caribbean Broadcasting radio.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this resolution do now pass.

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

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, this particular resolution for the acquisition of land for the headquarters of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation raises a number of questions which we, on this Side.....(ASIDES), we want, Mr. Speaker, to enquire about – the need for the purchase of this land for the purposes set out. In other words, what we are asking is this. Does the Government not have lands anywhere else on which the headquarters for the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation may be sited? I am not dealing at the moment or, indeed, at all, with the whole problem of the restructuring of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, I am not dealing with that. I will limit myself for the moment with asking the question again. When we look at all of the land which this present Government is responsible for through its agencies, and which may have been acquired prior to 1976, in addition to the several acquisitions which have taken place since 1976, is it really necessary for the Government to purchase additional land on which to site the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation? Indeed, how much land is required for the site of those headquarters? (ASIDE)

I believe that the Government owns land at various points including Ilaro Court. Maybe we could be told what is happening to that. Is it still to be used?

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, do not carry the debate up to Ilaro Court. The Honourable Member can certainly

table a question in respect of Ilaro Court and get all the information he wants about Ilaro Court. Do not take this particular debate up to Ilaro Court, other Honourable Members will then rally all the way down to North Point, St. Lucy.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: But, Mr. Speaker, I take your particular admonition very carefully...

Mr. SPEAKER: Not, "if" you take it, you either take it or sit down. Not "if" you take it.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: This is not a question of "if" I take it, I never said "if" I take it.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is exactly what you said.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I said, I take your admonition to heart.

Mr. SPEAKER: No, you prefaced it by, "if" I take it.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I did not, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us get the records, let us call for the records, Mr. Clerk. (PAUSE)

The records do not show the Honourable Member saying, "if", so the Honourable Member may continue.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I take your admonition to heart, but, in this particular matter, Mr. Speaker, if I am basing my contribution to this debate on the premise that the Government may own other premises and other properties which might be suitable as the headquarters I may have to mention other properties owned by the Government maybe at Ilaro Court, or maybe at North Point or other places.

Mr. SPEAKER: And, you also said, in respect of Ilaro Court, you went on to say that you do not know what is happening there, what is going on there.....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: and it is at that point that I tried to check the Honourable Member to let you know that you have every opportunity to pose a substantive motion in respect of Ilaro Court and get all of your information.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am asking the Honourable Minister, does the Government not own other properties within reasonable proximity, either to the existing facilities of the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation, or within reasonable proximity of

Bridgetown, or wherever they may wish to site these headquarters which might be suitable for the purposes intended?

8.30 p.m.

We are told that this is a period of belt tightening. We are told that it is a time for hauling in, and we would want to know in these strenuous times that the Government itself is giving a lead and demonstrating that it is making maximum use of the land and the other properties which it may own at the moment. In other words, given the many competing resources, the many competing areas around for which the Government has to make provision, is this expenditure on this particular property necessary at the moment? I wonder if the Minister would respond to these particular areas of concern, but I think it is a genuine question from this side and we are genuinely concerned.

Maybe other members may raise other questions relating to the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation. I do not myself intend to raise them, but in terms of this particular acquisition that is the problem that is concerning us.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I support the submissions of the hon. member for St. Michael South, and I will add my own. I believe, Sir, that any lands in such close proximity to the centre of the City as Whitepark is, must indeed be high priced land. This is not to say that the Government is not getting the land reasonably, it might very well be getting the land reasonably, but that does not mean that the value of the land is way beyond what the Government is paying for it.

I do not think that a service, like a broadcasting service, necessarily needs to occupy valuable high priced lands, and I believe that the Government owns considerable land — Government is the biggest land owner in Barbados — around Bridgetown, in St. Michael and beyond, and I believe that the Government could find a site for this very purpose on some of the land it already owns without having to acquire this for that purpose.

Having said that, I also want to say this, and I am going to relate it now to the Roebuck Secondary School. The Roebuck Secondary School is to my mind in very cramped space, but it is there already, there is nothing we can do about it now. There is little room for playing facilities, it is very limited. I have no objection to the acquisition of this land itself, my objection would be to the purpose to which it is being put, and I believe that any acquisition of this land there, joining, abutting and bounding the Roebuck Secondary School should indeed be reserved for that kind of educational purpose rather than for the purpose of the information service that we are talking about here, and I would invite the Government to give serious consideration to this aspect of it.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, very briefly, the property is just for housing the radio station, and it was thought that because of its nearness to the City that people would have access to it. Other proposals were put forward but the Planning and Priorities Committee decided that this was the best alternative. I suppose the hon. member for St. Michael South now understands why we have decided to purchase the property. There could be other expensive properties, but it was thought that because this is a building and it would just need a matter of refurbishing for the purpose that it should be acquired. To construct a building on an open site would be rather expensive, running into millions of dollars, so I hope the hon. member is satisfied with that explanation.

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

5. RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT APPLGROVE, CHRIST CHURCH

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, this is yet another acquisition, the purpose of which is to provide recreational facilities for the residents in the Applegrove area, in the parish of Christ Church. The hon. member for Christ Church West Central would be the beneficiary of such a Resolution and I do not think that he would have any quarrel with this particular acquisition.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. SISNETT: Mr. Speaker, I feel it my duty to say a few brief words on this Resolution, because I know how much the former member for Christ Church North Central, now Senator Maurice Ward, attached.....

Mr. SPEAKER: It really is not proper to make reference to a member of the Other Place.

Mr. SISNETT: I thank you, Mr. Speaker. The former representative who now sits in the Other Place, I know how much importance he attached to the acquisition of this property, and being a backbencher as I am, he was under constant pressure from the constituents in that area of Applegrove, particularly the youth, who were after him to have that property acquired for use as a playing field, and I would not want this Resolution to pass without having said something on his behalf. I would not like the new member who now sits in his seat to take this as a jumping board to start his 1986 campaign on Sunday morning by acquainting himself with the youth of

that area as having done something in so short a time for them in this new Chamber.

8.40 p.m.

I believe that the former representative worked very hard with the Ministry and the Minister to get this acquisition done, and it is unfortunate that he is not here this evening to speak on behalf of the constituents of that area; but I would just want the new hon. member to know that he really did try very hard and he will be around when the corner stone is laid for this playing field to make sure that he has full representation still among the people of that area.

Mr. KING: Mr. Speaker, if I were introducing this Resolution, I would say that this Resolution gives the lie to a very irresponsible and mischievous statement I had heard on election night by a young man at the polling station who said that he was going to make sure that he, some gentleman he mentioned by the name Tom Adams, I do not know whom he was referring to.....

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot allow this House to be too much drawn into what has been said about the street corners and whatever.

Mr. KING: Mr. Speaker, with all due respects.....

Mr. SPEAKER: That is no part of our business.

Mr. KING: With due respect, we have to pay attention to what the people are saying.

Mr. SPEAKER: Not in here.

Mr. KING: We are doing the people's business, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: But it has not been said in here and it forms no part of our business.

Mr. KING: Mr. Speaker, I accept what you have said.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not. Erskine May tells us so.

Mr. KING: I said I have accepted what you said, but I think it is still necessary to make the point that I was saying that this Resolution gives the lie to any suggestion whatsoever that this Government would do absolutely nothing for the people in Christ Church West Central because they did not return a candidate of the Government. I am pleased too to see that the Government is proceeding with the acquisition of this parcel of land with a view to providing playing facilities, so it says, for the people in the Applegrove area, near to Vauxhall, a very good area.

I support the Resolution, but I do have one area of concern. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that it is a parcel of land of approximately half an acre. To me it seems that an area of land half an acre in size is not sufficient of itself to provide for a playing field. I do not know what sort of playing field is contemplated because the Resolution does say that it is for the purpose of providing a playing field. Now I believe that Government has some additional land in the area, part of Warners plantation, I think. I wonder if perhaps.....(Asides)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must not be heckled by the Government benches.

Mr. KING: Maybe the Applegrove you are talking about is in Black Rock. The Applegrove I am concerned about is an area which is a very good area in Christ Church West Central. The people from Vauxhall and Briar Hall can tell you about Applegrove. I am happy that some facilities are being provided for the people in that area, but as I said, Mr. Speaker, my concern is about the size of the land which is being acquired. I should like to know what sort of playing field it is proposed to put there. I should like to know if lands from the surrounding areas, contiguous areas which I believe also belong to the Government are being used for the purpose of providing a proper playing field, and perhaps the Minister could tell us what are the plans in relation to the facilities which are being contemplated for the people of Applegrove and the surrounding areas of Vauxhall, Briar Hall and even Kendal Hill and the people from Silver Hill and Sargeants Village can come down too.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The Resolution here is one which when I was in Community Services way back in 1977 the former representative for that area now in the Other Place had taken me to see. It is just above Mr. Evelyn's guesthouse, the former Comptroller of Customs. The hon. member is really not familiar with the area. First of all, this Government is not that irresponsible to buy half an acre of land for a playing field. This demonstrates you do not know this area. This half an acre of land is to add to the additional playing field which they have there. You see, you do not know these things. You didn't even know there was a playing field out there. So we are only buying half an acre to make it bigger. You do now know what is going on. You hear about Briar Hall, Wes Hall and Bank Hall, but you do not know about Vauxhall. Nobody knows you up there. You just pass through the area, and that has been going on for years. You are an accident of political democracy. You are intransigent. You will come and go just like winter and summer.

Mr. SPEAKER: I require the hon. member to speak to the Resolution.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is exactly what I am doing, Sir, speaking to the Resolution and about the hon. member for Christ Church West Central. It is a long time

this has been hanging fire and I am happy to see the Minister of Housing and Lands has brought it down. But the hon. member's contribution is negative. You really do not know anything about the land. The half acre of land is to make an additional playing field and to make the area larger. That is all it is; so this demonstrates how we have to accept the will of the people. The voice of God spoke and you are in here and do not even know where you have come from.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief. I wish to congratulate both the Ministers, both the past Minister and this Minister as well as the Minister of Sport for bringing this Resolution before the House. I remember when the former member for this constituency which was then Christ Church North Central made representations about this matter and frequently spoke about it in fact in this House and the former Minister of Lands and Community Services and the present Minister of State undertook to get this project going, and I think it is commendable that the Government in keeping with its policy to make sure that these facilities are available to everyone regardless of what constituency may have voted which way, is proceeding with this project.

I think this is such a commendable project that I would like to remind the front bench of the equal needs of the people of the adjoining areas of Rendezvous and Sargeants Village, not merely Vauxhall, Rendezvous Hill, the famous Fordes Road, and I am sure the Minister is aware that on the left hand side of Rendezvous Hill as one backs the Drive-In cinema that there is an area of land which is at present used by all of the persons — and the hon. member for St. Michael South West would like to hear this — in the lower socio-economic group. What is usually referred to as poor people use up there at the moment and need adequate facilities. The Hon. Minister of Sport and myself visited that area now some probably fourteen or fifteen months looking for a suitable location for a playing field. We have found one. I would hate to think it is bought up by the Pillersdorf or other people who are in housing speculation and development and land development and is lost to the recreational use which has already occurred. So rather than directing the question to the Minister, I am directing his attention to the fact that the land is currently in use and that all we need are the powers of acquisition, and the Minister of Sport is already aware of the needs of the bulging population in this area and the lower part of Vauxhall and the whole of Sargeants Village both in the constituency of my friend from Christ Church West Central and my own constituency, and the Minister's constituents as well across from the other side of Upton and Sargeants Village and lower Wildey can make use of these facilities. I am sure the Minister of State sitting in the Cabinet would remember my plea on this occasion and support it.

8.50 p.m.

Mr. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I think it is expected that this House will proceed a little more slowly on public matters because it is a House of 27 members and not 24 members and I do not think that the Leader of the House should get too worried at the fact that he is making slow progress today. There is no filibuster on this side. It is that we have a larger House and therefore more time will be taken over public matters.

On this particular matter, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the procedure of compulsory acquisition is generally invoked if lands cannot be purchased by private treaty or if there may be some defect in the title or some such circumstances and I am raising the question as to whether there was any difference in the acquisition or steps to acquire this land. Was there an effort to acquire it by private treaty? Was there an offer or acceptance or was there a difference over the consideration? I would like to know if there have been any problems, if discussions have been going on with the owner about this particular property about the acquisition and why, in fact, we have to use this particular measure for acquiring the land. Maybe the Minister can tell us something about that.

We have been told that it is for the purpose of adding to other land. We will, of course, have to note that the former Minister of Housing get up and I do not know if these debates are listened to as carefully by other members as I listen to them but I took the purpose of his intervention as one of signalling to the present Minister that he did the work and that this is his Resolution and that the Minister is only coming down with a little mopping up operation but the member for St. James, my representative for St. James North, he is letting the present Minister know that he did the work way back in 1977. This is a little thing going on now between the two Ministers. I believe this is what that is and he is telling him that this is my little baby. Give me a little credit for the work that I have been doing.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, on a point of order. There is nothing going on between my colleague and me apart from having collective responsibility. I spoke in the light that (a) I live close to him and (b) I was Minister of Community Services at the time when the sitting member at that time has taken me to that area. That was my intervention because the member for Christ Church West Central was conveying that he know about it and that kind of thing when he did not know one single word.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is really no point of order.

Hon. D. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I wish to give the hon. member the assurance that there have been

negotiations all along and the owner of the land has actually offered the land to Government so that there have not been any problems arising therefrom. Thank you.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 6.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT HASTINGS, CHRIST CHURCH

Item No. 6 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Hastings, Christ Church.

Hon. D. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is for the acquisition of a piece of land which is situated at the corner of St. Matthias and Hastings Road. It is a hazard to motorists and people alike and it was considered that this portion of land should be compulsorily acquired so as to accommodate better visibility at that particular junction.

I do not think there is much more to say other than it is for road improvement as the Addendum sets out quite clearly and with that, Mr. Speaker, I do beg that this Resolution be now passed.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is with great pleasure that I announce my intention to vote for this Resolution. I see it is 9.00 o'clock so I will not be long, Sir.

I wish to say, Sir, that visibility is almost nil at that corner and that this is one of three corners on that road that needs improvement. The fourth, Hart's Gap is now being improved because a private development is going on there but it is necessary as well to do a similar acquisition at Brown's Gap as well as at the corner of Garden Gap, No. 1 where it joins the Worthing Road and Cot Road, at the head of Cot Road, Sir and I am asking the Minister if he would be kind enough in conjunction with the Minister of Transport and Works to give absolute priority to the improvement of road conditions in that area. The people of Christ Church West would be forever grateful and thankful to him and Government for this, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The time is now 9.00 o'clock and I take it that this is not controversial.

Mr. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I will not be very long but during my tenure of office in the Ministry of Communications and Works we carried out a survey of the road condition from Pavilion Court until we reached

just above what was Blue Waters. Anyone driving along that highway will notice that in the area of Kentucky Fried Chicken that most of the utility poles have been set back to accommodate plans which are still lying in the Ministry of Communications and Works for the improvement of that particular highway.

This brings into sharp focus, Mr. Speaker, the problems which any Government faces, particularly in Barbados in carrying out necessary road improvement programmes based on the modern day situation where we find ourselves saddled with particularly large vehicles for which our roads were never designed.

You hear complaints and you read them in the Press about the size of the buses being too big for our roads but nobody has ever stopped to think that when the roads in Barbados were laid out and I am told that Barbados has a network of roads and has had a network of roads from its very early period of colonisation when you had donkey-carts and probably what you call oxen. 9.00 p.m.

Now that you have large, heavy vehicles, you have buses and you have that situation where manufacturers abroad are not manufacturing vehicles for small roads, we are faced with the problem of major road improvement without finances to carry through these improvements as speedily as the public would require them. But, I assure the Honourable Member for Christ Church West that plans had already been drawn in the former Ministry of Communications and Works, these plans were submitted to the Planning and Priorities Committee, but, it is only a question of Government having enough money to acquire the land and carry through the necessary programme.

We have also investigated the road from Collymore Rock corner up to the "Y" junction. That is also due for widening and updating, but, here again, it is a problem of finance to carry through these plans. I know that many people have said that they have seen no one coming out of the Ministry of Communications and Works over the last two years. They talk about what comes out of the Transport Board, *et cetera*, but I can assure Honourable Members of this Assembly that if they went into the Ministry of Communications and Works they will find approved plans lying down only waiting for the money to put them into operation.

This particular corner, we have had several reports during my time, there have been several complaints, I believe there have been accidents at this junction with traffic trying to get on to the main road from the St. Matthias gap. We took the decision then, that the land should be acquired and the road should be widened and this is like many other roads we have in Barbados now that we have traffic of the size we have.

If you come into Bridgetown, right there by the Foundry, we have designed a road widening scheme for the one way street which comes on to White Park Road — I do not remember the name of the road — next to where Owen T. Alder has his shop in Chapman Street. The Foundry has some open land on the left hand side. But, you turn right — it is a one way street — to turn right, you have a blank wall, so you literally have to put the face of the vehicle on to the main road before you can see vehicles passing. These plans have been completed, approved by Cabinet, approved by Planning and Priorities, but no money.

We go back to Country Road corner. We started the improvement at Country Road corner, when we had the land owners insisting — one land owner agreed to give the land at Country Road corner, he sold the land in the interim before Government could complete the takeover of the land, the new land owner is asking \$10 per square foot to get the land in order to complete the junction. But, there we are. Plans lying down, no money. And there is no Minister whether he be in Communications and Works, whether he be in Agriculture, whether he be in Housing who can carry through projects, unless the money comes from the Ministry of Finance and Planning so that he can carry out the work. (ASIDES)

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Item Number Seven.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT BOSCOBEL, ST. PETER

Item Number Seven was called — To move the passing of a resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Boscobel, St. Peter.

Hon. DeL. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I suppose you would be very delighted to know that this resolution seeks to acquire a portion of land in Boscobel, St. Peter for the purpose of erecting a storage tank by the Barbados Water Authority. I am sure that you would be only too glad to know that the Water Authority has found it possible to erect such a service in that area.

With that, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg that this resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: In seconding this resolution, Sir, I am quite sure that, since we are both from the North, and you are King of the Boscobellians, I daresay, I know that you would be more than happy to have a better water supply from the Water Authority in Boscobel, and additional facilities, which I know you would like to

express from the Chair, — but unfortunately, Sir, you may not — I am quite sure the people in Boscobel still know your great interest in them and that is why resolutions of this nature will come before this august Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I heartily second this, Sir, and I am quite sure it is a credit to your representation over the years, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Especially, if it is going to function better than the one at Indian Ground.

The question is that.....

Mr. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I notice that this resolution is for the erection of a water tank. The Honourable Minister of Housing and Lands also has certain powers and I note, with regret, that the housing development at Lammings has come to a halt. Now, as part of that housing development, there were plans by the Water Authority to set up a tank in the St. Joseph area which would relieve the shortage of water in the Bissex housing area. That part of my constituency has been suffering water shortages from about January this year despite the heavy rainfall. Now, I hope that having shut down the building that they would not abandon the water tank as well. I know you have had pressure of not getting pressure in Boscobel. I am having pressure of not getting pressure in the St. Joseph area and I would hope.....

Mr. SPEAKER: You are talking of high blood pressure or water pressure.

Mr. C. L. BOLDEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Speaker.

Mr. C. L. BOLDEN: Mr. Speaker, I am hoping that the Honourable Minister will bear in mind that there are plans for purchasing land and constructing a water tank in the St. Joseph area. I hope that we do not run into a situation where we have had to go for many years with water being shut off at 6.00 o'clock on a morning and people going throughout the day, no water tanks, nothing whatsoever going, to relieve the shortage of water in that particular area.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 12.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1981

Order No. 12 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Town and Country Planning Act.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Town Planning Act which was passed in 1965 was under review some years immediately after it was passed. During the Democratic Labour Party's Regime, certain provisions were looked at and certain considerations of those amendments were reviewed by the then Cabinet, as way back as, February, 1976.

This Bill which is now before this Honourable Chamber seeks, therefore, to incorporate most of those amendments and matters which were considered by the then Government in 1976. It was felt then, as it was felt now by my Government, that there is a need for the tightening up of planning control. At the same time, it was thought then, as it is felt now that there should be a limit on the life of past and future planning permission.

This Bill has a completely new section, Section 32, which deals specifically with the time after which the development may be allowed to expire. On a past planning permission, will have up to two years from the date of this Act the developer to start his construction or development. For the future, there is also a two year span. In short, Mr. Speaker, there will be a two year period from the date the application was approved by the Town Planning Office.
9.10 p.m.

The only difference between the two year period on past and future planning permission is that permission which was granted before the passing of this Act will have to start within six months. The Chief Town Planner, in other words, has the power to call on the developer to start his construction or development within six months from the date of this Act.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, it also gives the Chief Town Planner the right to enforce certain controls over developments. In other words, to stop the unauthorised development. There are a number of unauthorised developments going on throughout this country, not only since 1976 but before then, and this has occupied the attention of both Governments. In short, the Bill seeks to tighten up planning control, and it is with this in view that I present this Bill to this Hon. Chamber for its consideration.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

Mr. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, this Bill has new provisions for giving the Chief Town Planner considerably new powers in respect of development in Barbados, and it is one that we need to look at very carefully, since at the present time if one were to do a cost analysis study of the expenditure to prospective developers in Barbados due to the delay period from the drawing of the plans and the actual permission, taking into consideration the rapid acceleration of building costs, one has to be very careful that in giving additional authority to the planning people that you do not make it so burdensome that permissions would be further delayed than they are at the moment.

Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the proposed amendments to the legislation, what comes to mind immediately is that there is a provision which states that if you do not receive permission from the Town Planner in a two month period, that that is treated as an automatic referral to the Minister for his consideration, and it is my considered opinion that this provision only holds out hope to applicants to Town Planning that there is some redress for having their applications dealt with more speedily, since as is expected, any decision that is referred to the Minister for his decision, it is only natural that the Minister will seek the guidance of his technocrats in this area, and if the technocrats at that time have not had sufficient time to process it and give an opinion, it is hardly likely that they will have had enough time to advise the Minister on the planning implications of that particular section.

When we look at the particular amendment, Mr. Speaker, we must appreciate that the present Planning Department has problems which should be looked at, because it is a cost and effect situation. First of all, the space. Those of us who have to use the facilities of Town Planning would realise that the officers up there are operating absolutely cramped. Sometimes you go to speak to an officer on a planning matter and there are so many files on his desk that you can hardly see the officer, not because he likes to have the files on his desk, or that the filing cabinets are always bulging, his drawers are all filled and the only place he has to put the files is on his desk, and it is extremely difficult for the officers at that department to function.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Minister should be made aware of the fact that inside the Department there are certain problems *vis-a-vis* the structure of the Department as far as promotional opportunities are concerned where you have officers who have been functioning there for a considerable time and they can only act as Assistant Town Planner and due to a qualification situation they cannot be appointed. On this point I think the Minister's attention should be drawn to the fact that there seems to have been a reluctance in the past for the training of people in this particular discipline, or every now and again you get one coming

through, but it is still my contention that the training in this area has not been as vigorous as it could have been and which would considerably assist the Planning Department in the proper functioning of its activity.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will definitely give us time in Committee to have a look at a lot of the areas, but the new clause which gives the Chief Town Planner permission to call upon applicants to start development has to be very closely looked at, because one would realise that during the feasibility study of a big development and the actual starting of a project could be a period up to two years if the project is big enough, and the economic climate could well have changed considerably during this time, and one has to be very careful that because permission has been granted that the Town Planner does not approach this new power indiscriminately, since it might not be the best thing at that particular time for the applicant to proceed with his development due to a change in the economic climate and otherwise.

Other provisions in this particular Bill I will address myself to as we go ahead from section to section in Committee, but I am particularly concerned about those new provisions and I will seek to have the Minister's assurance on certain aspects of the provision when we deal with it in Committee.

Mr. ODLE: Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat interested in this Bill, especially in so far as it gives the Town and Country Planning Officer the authority to review past permissions or permissions that have been granted. I want to ask of the Minister if it is possible for the Town and Country Planner to review and if necessary to reverse a prior decision in view of changing conditions in an area with which I am quite familiar, where permission has been granted to establish two acre lots. That area in Charles Rowe Bridge and around the Glebe is being developed, a lot of housing is going in, the whole complexion of the area is being changed, and whereas the area has been set aside for agriculture there has been no agricultural activity on the land for several years, and it seems to me a waste of time to have the land sitting there, nothing growing on it, whereas the people who own it and who have sons and daughters who want house spots should be given house spots and should be allowed to build houses on it, Sir.
9.20 p.m.

I do hope, Sir, that this change in the law would make provision for the Town and Country Planning Officer to review those past decisions that they have made.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, the amendment proposed by this Bill gives me some cause for concern. I believe that legislation of this kind should only be necessary to cure some evil that exists in the administration of

the Town Planning laws as they exist at the moment. Now it is possible that that is the case. The Hon. Minister in introducing this Bill has not treated with us, has not told us, has not disclosed what are the problems relating to the administration of the Town Planning Department particularly as it relates to the matters that we are dealing with here now. (*Asides*) The hon. member says I am aware of what the problems are. But even if I was aware of what the problems are, they should not be my private domain. I am told that I was a member of the Cabinet in 1976 when these matters were first brought to the Cabinet. Suppose I were present or not present at a Cabinet meeting and I had access to Cabinet papers, my colleague on my right, on my left and the other ones were not members of the Cabinet. I think the House has the right to know. This is not a Cabinet matter; this is not a matter that should remain within the knowledge of those persons who are now or were at some time in the past members of the Cabinet. I think these are matters that should be disclosed to the House.

I think in presenting a Bill that these are matters that everybody should be made aware of. Now the Hon. Minister says he would make the disclosure when he comes to speak on it. I say this because to revoke whether by an Act, a definite act, a positive act or to revoke by effluxion of time a prior permission given can possibly create hardship on those persons who were given the permission in the first place. Now this is an automatic revocation. That is what we are dealing with here. This is, as it appears to me, an automatic revocation of permission given to do certain things. It is possible that at the time the application was made, this application took time to come to fruition, not necessarily the fault of the Town Planner but very often the fault of the applicants themselves, that there were all good intentions to carry out the development applied for, but by the time that the permission is granted months later, sometimes years later, as I said just now, not necessarily the fault of the Town Planners, the situation has changed and the applicant is very likely waiting until he is in a position to carry out the development for which he has applied, and for which he has got permission. What this is doing is imposing on that applicant a second time the necessity to make another application and pay another fee to the Town Planning Department, because as I understand it, when the permission is revoked there is no return of the

application fee that has been paid. So if you want permission again you have to go all over again and make a second application in order to get done what you were not in a position to do when you got your permission the first time.

These are matters, Mr. Speaker, I think we should look at carefully. Maybe when I hear more about it, I might agree fully with it.

There is another aspect of it and this other matter relates to the power of the Chief Town Planner to call upon the permitted developer within six months to carry out the particular development. This relates particularly to applications made and approval given to these persons before the passing of this Bill. I understood from the Mover of the Resolution — quite honestly I was not consulting the Act at the time — that so long as permission has been granted, I could be wrong on this, prior to the passing of this Act, then the Chief Town Planner has permission to call upon that person who has been given permission to carry out his development within six months.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope that the hon. member who is addressing the Chair would instruct the Minister to make notes and in his final reply answer the queries that are raised.

Mr. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I cannot give any instructions to the Hon. Minister.

Mr. SPEAKER: Well teach him.

Mr. GREAVES: All right, Mr. Speaker. Anyhow, Sir, I think these are matters we should want to hear more about. I particularly want to hear some more about it. I am not a developer; I have never been one, but these are matters that concern us as ordinary citizens. Not everybody who makes an application to the Town Planner is necessarily a developer or a wealthy person, and there is another matter as well.....

THE ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting now stands adjourned until Tuesday, 6th October, 1981, at 12 o'clock noon. 9.30 p.m.