
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, July 20, 1982.

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.15 p.m. o'clock, on Tuesday July 20, 1982.

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. L. B. BRATHWAITE, (Minister of Health); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, M.A., (Minister of Labour and Social Security); Mr. B. M. TAITT, B.A., (Hon.), M. A., LL.B. (Hon.); Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, (Minister of Housing and Lands); Mr. L. L. SISNETT; Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE; Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, (Minister of Transport and Works); and Mr. L. A. WEEKES.

Prayers were read by Archdeacon F. A. Cayless.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES, Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, Dr. R. C. HAYNES and Hon. H. B. St. JOHN entered the Chamber and took their seats.

Mr. SPEAKER: The meeting is called to order.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, July 13, 1982.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Your Honour, I beg to move that the Minutes of the Meeting of July 13, 1982 be now taken as read.

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

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Your Honour, on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Minister of Finance and Planning, I am commanded to lay:

Statements showing Net Customs and Excise Receipts for two (2) months ended May, 1982; and

The Service Tax (Amendment) Order, 1982.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay:

The Health Service (Communicable and Notifiable Diseases) (Amendment) Regulations, 1982.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

A Bill to revise the law relating to legal depositaries in Barbados and provide for related matters.

REPORTS FROM SELECT COMMITTEES

Mr. J. G. ODLE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to lay the:

Report from the Select Committee on the Bill entitled an Act to repeal and replace the Barbados Chamber of Commerce Act 1868.

I also beg to lay the:

Report from the Select Committee on the Bill entitled an Act to amend the Agricultural Society Act together with Minutes of proceedings of the Committee.

FIRST READINGS OF BILLS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, Sir, that a Bill to revise the law relating to legal depositaries in Barbados and provide for related matters be now read a first time.

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

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move, Sir, that Government Business be the Instant Order of the Day. Item No. 9, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the Instant Order of the Day. Item No. 9.
12.25 p.m.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT HAGGATT HALL, TWO MILE HILL, ST. BARNABAS AND MOUNT FRIENDSHIP, ST. MICHAEL.

Order No. 9 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Haggatt Hall, Two Mile Hill, St. Barnabas and Mount Friendship, St. Michael for the construction of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic Access Road.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, when this Government assumed office in 1976, it declared a policy that all acquisitions by this Government should be done after invoking the Land Acquisition Act, Cap. 228 of the Laws of Barbados. The Government decided on this policy because at that time people were questioning some acquisitions, and the motive behind some acquisitions, prior to 1976.

The Government is aware that some acquisitions can be determined by treaty and, in such a case, at the end of the Parliamentary Session, and during the financial year,

such acquisitions must be placed before this Honourable Chamber.

In short, Mr. Speaker, this Resolution is one of those Resolutions which are brought here in order that this Chamber can fully ventilate its views on the pros and cons, the merits and demerits of such acquisitions.

The acquisition in question deals with the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic Access Road, the road which runs from the northern side of Cable and Wireless to Wonder Bakeries in Haggatt Hall. The Government, having agreed to site the Samuel Jackman Polytechnic in the Wildey area, realized that more and more traffic would be placed in that vicinity and it became absolutely necessary to provide a wider road, which we now know as the Polytechnic Access Road, in that area.

The acquisitions have proceeded rather slowly. In fact, the process of acquisitions have received very little hostility or impediment. Those who were affected by the acquisitions have all compromised with Government and I must say that there are no longer any bones of contention. There was only one particular case where there was a problem and that problem has been in fact resolved somewhat amicably.

There is no further acquisitions but the land has already been entered upon; because all that is required for Government to proceed to effect work in an area that is to be used for public purpose is to have the Section 4 notice published. That Section 4 notice, having been signed by His Excellency, then empowers the Chief Surveyor to direct the Director of Works to enter upon the land and carry out such work. So one does not have to wonder why the acquisition is brought before this Honourable Chamber at this stage, because the very Act which I have previously mentioned provides for work to start well before the actual Resolution receives the assent of this Chamber.

Some of the vendors, or those persons whose land have been acquired, have already been compensated; and those who have not yet received compensation have agreed to a price which was put forward either by them or the Government. I foresee little or no difficulty in settling all the land acquisition matters, and I wish to state that publicly.

The road is proceeding on time, to the best of my knowledge. All the houses which were supposed to be resited or moved have already been moved and all the residents have returned to their homes after the renovations and the resiting of the houses were completed.

I wish to state publicly that I, myself, acting in two capacities, as Minister and representative of those residents,

am satisfied that they are virtually happy with whatever arrangements were made by Government. Not only are they happy, but I am sure, from all reports, that persons who were not affected by that resiting programme are happy and satisfied with the arrangements that have been made in that area.

The resiting programme is a model for all those 'doubtfuls' and those who feel that Government does not care about people who have been displaced as a result of acquisitions.

I wish to state that those persons in Speightstown whose land have been acquired and those who have to be resited will be given similar treatment. They will have the same water-borne facilities and they will have all the amenities which this Government has afforded those persons at Mount Friendship and St. Barnabas.

I wish on this occasion to denounce and give the lie to what was said, or allegedly said, by the people affected by the acquisition in Checker Hall. Those persons will be resited in Checker Hall — land has been acquired; the appropriate stages have been entered into, and very shortly — because all that I was awaiting on was the cutting down of the canes; the canes have now been cut down and the lots will be laid out by the technical division of the National Housing Corporation — the resiting programme is starting very shortly.

I wish to say this because it is necessary for me to point out that when one thinks in terms of resiting and the process which is involved, one has got to understand that Government have to put units, put houses, on the sites so that persons who will be affected will be able to occupy those houses while their homes are resited and the work to be done on their houses is completed. That is the process.

I have already directed the National Housing Corporation to build the houses and erect them in St. Lucy, as well as in Battaleys, St. Peter, so that the actual moving process will start soon after that.

I wish to point out as well that roads have already been put in or are in the process of being completed at Battaleys. At Battaleys, some four acres of land were acquired for the purpose.....

12.35 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not want to interrupt the Hon. Minister. This is an acquisition at Haggatt Hall. It has already stretched through St. Lucy, through St. Peter and what not. I am not stopping the Minister, but I am only pointing out to the Minister that when another Member rises to make a contribution the Chair then cannot be expected to stop the other person from

going to Six Roads, St. Philip, to somewhere off Pelican Island and beyond. I am only warning the Minister.

I appreciate what is being said about St. Peter, but let it be understood that nothing he has said so far satisfies either me as an individual or the people of St. Peter. But let the Honourable Minister carry on with his debate.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I have determined this course in my introduction because I know that I am in fact relevant in my contribution. I am dealing with acquisitions and I am sure that I will welcome any queries on acquisitions at large. That is why I took pains to point out that in dealing with acquisitions there is a process, and resulting from this process persons will be able to determine what is Government's policy.

The acquisition at St. Barnabas, as I said, is complete. The roads have been put in, and it is hoped that by the end of the year or very early next year this road will be completed. The road is not being held up as a result of any lack of work on behalf of the Ministry of Housing and Lands. Everything has been done by my Ministry, and I am satisfied that Government has done everything in its power to ensure that the work finishes on time.

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

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

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE COMPULSORY
ACQUISITION OF LAND AT DANESBURY,
PARADISE, SPRING GARDEN AND
WALMER LODGE, BLACK
ROCK, ST. MICHAEL

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 10.

Mr. SPEAKER: Which number?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: No. 10, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 10.

Order No. 10 was called — To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Danesbury Court, Paradise, Spring Garden, and Walmer Lodge, Black Rock, St. Michael for road improvement.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, here again this Resolution calls for parliamentary approval for the

acquisition of lands which are being acquired for the purpose of providing the Spring Garden Access Road. As we all know, part of this road has already been completed and the lands in question have already been entered upon by the contractors. But as I have said earlier, it is Government's policy to have parliamentary approval for any acquisition of lands or properties.

This Resolution does not involve any new acquisitions, but is seeking to give parliamentary approval to the lands that have been utilised already by Government.

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

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

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I think that the Spring Garden Road is one of the projects of the Democratic Labour Party which you will find in the Physical Development Plan of Barbados and the development plans which have been introduced in this House from time to time.

There are three things that concern the general public in respect of the Spring Garden Road. The first one is the question of drainage. This is a problem which the inhabitants of Pinelands — I know it is not the same road — are now confronted with as well, where the road is being built — both at Spring Garden and at Pinelands — is considerably below the height.....even of the windows of the houses which are in the immediate vicinity of the roads.

As a matter of fact, Sir, as far as the Spring Garden Road is concerned, one part of the road is even over the roofs of houses in the immediate vicinity of Danesbury Land, it is over the height of the roofs of the houses on the seaward side of the road.

Now, we have been having a period of relatively dry weather. The inhabitants down there, the people in Pile Bay, are very concerned about what is going to happen. The people in Brandons are very concerned about what is going to happen if we get a really good heavy shower of rain, because there is no physical evidence that proper drainage facilities have been provided in the construction of the road. (*Aside*). I am saying this, I do not care what the Minister says, I am saying it for the record, because I know a few months from now, when we read about the disasters in the newspapers, somebody will say that nobody raised it. I am not an engineer, I am saying these are the apprehensions of the people who live in the vicinity of these new constructions.

The second thing is, Sir, I do not think in the history of any Parliament there have been as many

Resolutions, the necessity for which I have questioned before, coming to the House for acquisitions.

We came to the House when there was a question of title; we came to the House when the negotiations over the compensation which would be paid to the owners of the properties had broken down and therefore we had to invoke the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act. The Government has come to the House with every single piece of acquisition, making it appear that they are doing a lot of work. It is a question of opinion.

But despite all these acquisitions, which the Minister is coming into the House with, the people are not being paid for their lands, and the Constitution of Barbados stipulates that nobody should be deprived of their property without adequate compensation.

It is all right to say that you intend to pay somebody, that you do not intend to expropriate the land owners of the property which they have worked for or which they have inherited, but if you take three and four years before you even discuss adequate compensation with the people, or make a move towards compensating them for their property, that is tantamount to expropriation. That is what I am saying.

There are millions and millions of dollars involved. If the Government does not have any money to pay the people for their land, they could at least make a token payment, come to some kind of agreement, because there is provision under the Land Acquisition Act whereby the Government may find itself confronted with a lot of law suits.

12.45 p.m.

We have not got to the stage now like they have done in one of the neighbouring territories, where they get on the cricket ground and pass a people's law taking away the people's property, because the Land Acquisition Act is still in force in Barbados. And the Government wants to be paying out a lot of legal costs — the members of the legal profession have refrained, knowing the position that you can get a judgment which may be an empty judgment because the Government still does not have any money and you cannot really levy — technically you can levy on the Government but the taxpayers will be levying on themselves.

So I really enjoin the Minister — if you are taking people's land, be ready to pay for it. You would not like your property to be confiscated in this way, nor neither would I, Mr. Speaker, unless we know that if we have been deprived from earning an income from a piece of property that you are going to be compensated so that we can at least find some alternative source of income from the land which we were using before.

I know the Minister will say that some of this land was not being used, but that is not the point. The fact that the proprietor would not engage in agriculture or something like that, does not preclude the payment of the compensation for which they are entitled.

And I am not dealing with any particular case. As a matter of fact, although many people around there are my clients, I have let other people deal with those matters down there. I rather them go to see other people because I do not want to get into any contention with the Government because they may think I took them for political reasons; and you can take it from me, Mr. Speaker, I do not have such motivations. I like to see the people get compensated.

We do not have many cases in the constituency of St. John where the Government has taken over people's property. It may be an index of the lack of Government activity in that particular area, but they have not, as far as I know, taken over many pieces of land — even for road widening or even house building purposes.

There are parcels of land like the Small Hope Development, which had been abandoned for private developers, and which we intended to have some land sold to the people who wanted house spots and so on. Nothing much is happening up there, but we are a fairly contented area up there and we are prepared to wait for a new dispensation before we get further development in that particular constituency.

In St. Michael, particularly — in the parish of St. Michael and in the parish of Christ Church — there are large numbers, very large numbers — I do not know about St. Peter, Sir — of people who have been alienated — sequestration, call it whatever you feel like calling it. They probably have been sequestered, but they are not in the truly sequestered ways of life where they can sit down and enjoy an income from that property; because the Government has got it and they are getting nothing from it.

I would respectfully like to suggest to the Minister that they try to get some money from somewhere, Mr. Reagan, Mr. Seaga, or even Mr. Burnham, if he has any, and try and give all constituents the compensation to which they are entitled.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I really have to wonder at times if the Hon. Member for St. John would have the courage to get up and make the kind of speech which he made just now. Really.

The acquisition Laws of Barbados up to 1976 have not been changed. There are the very laws which they were operating under; the laws under which they caused the Government of Barbados to pay to Shamrock Trading

Company Limited millions of dollars, the same laws which they operated under that when I went to the Ministry of Housing I found over 200 acquisitions and almost \$4 million to be paid out to people.

At that time it was in the office of the Attorney-General before it was transferred to Housing, and the Attorney-General had to set up a register. There was no register. You did not have any idea of who was paid and who was not paid and the then Attorney-General, the Member for Christ Church West, had to set up a register — I believe that register should be up to date — to determine what money was outstanding and why it was outstanding.

Look at the impression given here this morning when the Rt. Hon. Leader of the Opposition stated that the Constitution of Barbados states that you should not — putting it in my own language — take away people's land from them or deny them the right of their land unless you pay them at least some token payment. But there were 200 applications for acquisitions, people's lands were taken up under the Laws of Barbados which they operated under.

I think it is after the third notice is published — my colleague, the Minister of Housing will correct me if I am wrong — the right is given to the surveyor to enter on to the land. (It is the fourth, well, one of the notices, Sir). The purpose for that, I believe, was to make sure that you would not hold up the development of a country.

You have problems with titles and all of these things. So if you have to wait until you get somebody from Bogota to come to Barbados to go before the law courts to prove that the title is right or wrong — and as the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John made it clear, the lawyers in Bridgetown would then hold up the land and spend the money, like Mr. Michael Simmons spent the Government's money — \$700 000.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, on a point of elucidation. At no time in the very short intervention that I made here this afternoon did I say that any lawyers in Bridgetown had held up anybody's land. I just want to correct the Hon. Member.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point taken.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Well all right. I am going to say that the lawyers in Bridgetown, and some of them from Lincoln's Inn, some of them from the Honorary Society of Lincoln's Inn — not from Cave Hill which you have nothing to do with, when you signed an agreement to put the Cave Hill Campus up there and now pour scorn on the students at Cave Hill. I will never forget the scorn that you poured on your colleague on the left

here last Tuesday. You have nothing to do with the Cave Hill boys. They are nothing. They do not have any sense. You went to the Honorary Society of Lincoln's Inn and the Member for Christ Church West went to Cambridge and Middle Temple and you are a Barbados Scholar and you are an Island Scholar, birds of a feather, see, typical snob value.....

You come in here this morning talking about the Constitution of Barbados. You boast about how you created it. You boast about the very Constitution. You wrote the whole Constitution one night. In one night you wrote the whole Constitution and wrote the Laws of Barbados which you operated under. And now you come in here this morning criticising the acquisitions — how they are done, how long they take and we are not paying the people their money.

You made mention of your brethren in Bridgetown, all like Lawson Bayley who pointed out the wrong land to you and went and built a house on somebody's land that was wrong — your brethren, he is from Lincoln's Inn, too. *(Laughter)*
12.55 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I regret I have to rise again.

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

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of elucidation. At no time has anybody ever pointed out to me any wrong land, because I am not a surveyor. *(Laughter)*

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: You know we are having Hansard in here. I will remind you, you know. You criticised Lawson Bayley for how we showed you the wrong land and found a house built on the land; and asked what sort of idiot Lawson Bayley could be, that he took fifteen years to become a solicitor. You criticised your own brethren. You got and poured scorn on people, but you went to school with.....

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I am now on a point of order. I think the Standing Orders provide that if the Hon. Member intends to call anybody's name and criticise him that he should give notice to Your Honour. That is how I understand the Standing Orders.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have never seen that Standing Order to which the Rt. Hon. Member is now referring. *(Laughter)*

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Well there is one very close to it.

Mr. SPEAKER: Nor does it form part of the Standing Orders of this Honourable House.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: That if you intend to criticise anyone who holds a public position that you do not have to give notice to the Speaker? The rules of decency demand it, if not the Rules of the House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The Chair demands that surely, and he cannot attribute that to you. Sir, it is therefore very unreasonable for the right honourable gentleman for St. John to get up and make the type of criticism in here this morning — conveying to this House that the Government is going out of the way and refusing to pay people for their lands, and also that the Constitution, as I understand it, and as he put it across, does not permit this.

But the Laws of Barbados permit it, because we are operating under your very laws, Chapter 228 of 1967, speaking subject to correction. So what you hear is unreasonable criticism.

What we do know is that the reason why we come here with every piece of acquisition is because we had to disband the "land cabinet" that you had, the sub-cabinet. You had a "land cabinet" on which the Chief Town Planner had no say.

You had a special cabinet, of which I think you were the chairman, set up to deal with the land. If I am not mistaken, you were the chairman, and all sorts of land got sold to Packer, Simpson, your friend from Guyana, Sir Lionel Luckhoo, Cozier, Carlton Brathwaite, Gerry Bull; that whole side. You were the Chairman of that land committee from within the Cabinet.

We want to make sure that the land comes here before this Honourable House where no one could for a single moment think that there is anything dubious as far as we are concerned. So it is very unreasonable for the gentleman to get up and make these sorts of accusations.

As far as the Spring Garden Road is concerned, I am in the same position, I believe, as the Hon. Member. I am not even a blacksmith, furthermore an engineer. He is a person unto all things. He is a camera man. He took a camera and walked from North Point in St. Lucy one summer day, he said, and went south, east — and ended up down here taking a picture of the Cubana aircraft with that very camera. Even then he criticised the experts. He knew it fell in the Bridgetown Port. He was armed with his camera that day again. He is a Willie Alleyne, a Brooks and a LaTouche. Now he is not an engineer this morning all of a sudden!

As soon as he got up to speak I said to my colleagues, "Look out, Danesbury Land; Maggie Goodridge's own friend". You are putting a case for Maggie Goodridge. You are not putting a case for the people. As soon as you got up I said, "Danesbury Land".

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order. Just now when I drew something to Your Honour's attention, you said that you knew of no such rule. I should like to refer to Rules of Debate, Standing Order No. 28(10), which says,

"No reference may be made in debate to the character or conduct of any person except in his official or public capacity".

That is found on page 35. That is a matter between Your Honour and me. I just wanted to draw this to Your Honour's attention.

What I really want to say is that I never called any person's name. I said I have no legal interest in any of the acquisitions. I was particular to say that. The Hon. Member gets up and calls the name of a land owner and said that I am getting up to put a case for a particular land owner. I object to that because that is imputing improper motives to an Hon. Member of this House.

I was particular, when I rose to my feet on the first occasion, to say that I am dealing with three principles — one of drainage, one of compensation and a third one. I think the Hon. Member should withdraw that statement.

Mr. SPEAKER: I agree. The Hon. Minister is imputing improper motives.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I unhesitatingly withdraw. The Hon. Member is putting a case for the residents of Danesbury, citizens of Barbados and constituents. He is putting a case — not for the owner of Danesbury, I know he would never do that — Maggie is his good friend, and Lillian — he is now putting a case for the people who live around Danesbury as he has done for the people in Pile Bay.

Now I would think that the IADB — I think they are the people who put up the money for the loan — would have gone through every single drawing and made available to the Government of Barbados all the expertise they have at their disposal to determine whether there is good drainage or bad drainage. That is my belief.

I sincerely hope that the engineering drawings are good enough that you would not have any problems with drainage. I can only hope. I do not know about that aspect of it, but I believe that they would not put out their money, as I understand these things, unless they are satisfied beyond a shadow of a doubt. Let us hope that nothing happens.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the other point which the Hon. Leader of the Opposition raised, about every little acquisition we come here with is concerned, we recall how that party bought a house in New York, I think it was for the Ambassador at the time and how Mr. Bull.....

Remember Sir, 'Mr. Barrow and Brathwaite went to Bull in Canada.' Do you remember that headline in the Truth newspaper? I cannot remember who was the editor at the time, but the Truth newspaper carried a headline "Barrow and Brathwaite gone to Canada to Bull." That is what the Truth newspaper carried as a headline.

I cannot remember who was the editor, but I came to the conclusion that the editor was in trouble, then when I read the article, it was that Carlton Brathwaite and an Errol Barrow had gone to Canada to see Dr. Gerry Bull, the man who started to build the rockets here to sell to the South Africans to kill black people. That is who an Errol Barrow went to see. But you had it looking very good. They went to Bull in Canada, North America.

Now it is that very Gerry Bull who acted as an agent to buy a property in New York. At the time I think it was for Ambassador Gale — High Commissioner Gale, if I am not mistaken — another very good friend. 1.05 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir, the Hon. Member is misleading the House when he talks about Ambassador Gale in New York, Sir. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: High Commissioner.) There has never been a High Commissioner in New York. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: High Commissioner in Canada, Gale.) And there has never been an Ambassador Gale in New York, Sir. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sit down. You only want your voice heard this morning, man. You are getting on with a lot of nonsense.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: As a matter of fact, I agree with you. Nobody washed the walls, except the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John because she was nowhere qualified to be a High Commissioner in any part of the world.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. I submit to Your Honour that a person who has held office as a principal representative for Barbados abroad ought not to be subject to abuse under Rule 28(10); that person ought not to be subject to the kind of language which the Hon. Member is using, if that Rule is to be upheld. I submit that the Hon. Member.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Qualifications? I could talk about George Moe who carried away the money, he and..... I could talk about Cammie Tudor, hear. I could talk about Cammie Tudor hear. That devil.

Mr. SPEAKER: We cannot have two Hon. Members on their feet.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I submit that in the light of the fact that the person was appointed a High Commissioner of Barbados, to say that you did not know what she was, in that context, and the language that was used, is offensive. I submit that.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have not yet heard any abuse. The Hon. Member may continue.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Well, I agree with you. You, yourself, did not even know. I believe you want me to say something about them, you know. I know these old tricks, you know. I am not going to say anything about them, no more than what I have said.

The Rt. Hon. Leader of the Opposition knew that a woman who was a secretary — a secretary; typing, making notes — rose suddenly to the high office of High Commissioner in Canada. I do not know what her qualities were.

I believe the Rt. Hon. Member who recommended and approved her appointment would know. I would not know. He has always been a good, old fellow. He is a silver fox. He has always been.

The very house that that High Commissioner Gale owned was bought by that Government; was acquired by that Government at a figure much more than the value put on it. (Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Shame.) The very High Commissioner, Gale, to Canada; looking after the Barbadians' interest in Canada; approved and appointed unchallenged! We got up one morning and read that this lady was the High Commissioner. You bought her house, the house now known as Pine Plantation House.

You talk about acquisitions? I know she was paid immediately. That was not on the long list. She was paid immediately for her house. The ink did not well dry on the agreement before she had the cheque in her hand. If you are using that as the criterion as to how you should pay people in a hurry, I would agree with you. (If I am not mistaken, Pine Plantation House is now the training centre for the civil servants.) And then the Government turned around and bought the house again.

And you are saying that we are not to come before this Parliament with acquisitions. You should be the last to get up and say anything about acquisitions. You were the Chairman of that Select Committee; you and the Member for St. Michael North. The Chief Town Planner, who was the adviser to the Government on town planning

matters concerning land, was not allowed to sit on that Committee, for reasons beyond my knowledge.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Speaker, I am on a point of elucidation.

The Hon. Member has said, at least three times, that there was a Cabinet Committee on which the Town Planner was not allowed to sit. This is quite untrue.

There was a committee which dealt with applications and the Chief Town Planner was always a member, and was chief adviser to the Government on that committee. At no time was any decision made by an individual Minister to which the Chief Town Planner was not privy and was not present when those decisions were made; and, invariably, the advice of the Chief Town Planner was taken.

If the Hon. Member will go and search the records, he will see that on occasions when the Chief Town Planner even advocated permission being given, particularly in the case of a member of the Government, the Ministers turned down the recommendation and refused our permission for the land to be developed. That is the land which this Government has now taken out of agriculture and built Portvale Factory on. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Joy Edwards had that.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to use a big word that I hear is used — amnesia, that is the word. I do not want to say that you are getting old and you are getting senile. I do not want to say that.

The Chief Town Planner, Luther Bourne, never sat on any committee of the Cabinet on any acquisitions of land, any select committee of which the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John was the Chairman, Sir.

I recall quite recently that I had to go to see "Sleepy" Smith — to see Mr. "Sleepy" Smith — Mr. Frederick Gladstone Smith, your brethren again — from another Inn, the Island Inn this time. I had to go and see Mr. Smith in connection with a matter with his house. The Chief Town Planner was present and he pointed out to Mr. Smith on that occasion that there was no covenant on that land because he was in no position, during the Regime of the Democratic Labour Party, especially within the last seven years, to sit on a committee which was set up by the Cabinet. It was a Cabinet committee.

As long as it was, Sir, I remember Mr. Smith saying how my colleague from St. Lucy was bringing a country house into Bridgetown to devalue his property. I will never forget that. It was going to cost \$120 000. My colleague from St. Lucy had built a house close to it, and he said he was bringing a country house in Bridgetown to

devalue his house, Sir. That Saturday morning....*(Laughter)*
(Aside) Yes, John Yearwood, your colleague from St. John has about six or eight spots. You tell me no way? But he has the biggest house up there.

Do not talk about acquisitions and land dealings. You are on a bad wicket. The ball would turn and bounce, the atmosphere is heavy. You cannot talk about land and acquisitions in here. You have a bad record and you, as head of the Government, must take the blame. (Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Bad.) A bad record. And, as head of the Government, no other person

As a matter of fact, your colleague on your left did not even know what was going on. He was too busy trying to establish the Burger Bee place. I know you had a little acquisition on that also.

Do not talk about acquisitions. When these land acquisitions come in here, sit down. If you ask for the plan; yes, we could agree to show you the plan so that you could put your legal knowledge at our disposal. But, oh no, not your credibility, not on land — not on land, Sir.

You have advised the Burnham Government into what they are in today. Now, you want to advise this country to go that road. You said openly that you are a consultant to the Burnham Government. Why don't you talk about the Venezuelans and their dispute. Tell them how to acquire that land down there, too. That would also be an acquisition.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minister has said enough for now. Please.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, this Resolution has my wholehearted support. And you could rest assured, Mr. Speaker, that I would advise the other Members — do not get up on it. There is more to come from this side. Do not get up. *(Applause)*
 1.15 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, this debate has taken a turn which is very interesting. As the Hon. Member sits down, he sits down and warns Hon. Members on this side not to get up on it. There is a calypsonian who says, "He must be mad, mad, mad."

If the Hon. Member believes that he can get up in this Chamber, and utter words of a certain kind, and then say to Hon. Members on this side, "Don't get up", in the hope that we will sit here and allow Your Honour to feel that we can be cowed by the kind of language which is used, he had another thought coming.

He starts off by suggesting that in this acquisition for Danesbury that the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John,

who made a restrained and reasoned speech concerning the Spring Garden Road, had no right to raise questions, because the engineers, according to him, are persons who would not have embarked on their works, "unless they are satisfied beyond a shadow of doubt."

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of elucidation. I said the IADB would not sign an agreement unless they were sure that the engineers were competent and knew what they were about.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am grateful to the Hon. Member for making it even clearer. I want to say, without a shadow of a doubt — and I challenge any one of the Hon. Members over there to deny it — that by the time the Spring Garden Road had got to Black Rock they were no plans for the roundabout; not a single plan. They had to get the plans for the roundabout afterwards. He is talking about the IADB would not sign money, when in fact when the builders got to the point where the road is to exit into the Black Rock Road, there was not a single plan. They had to run and start from scratch. The IADB could not have been aware of that. So if the Hon. Member comes to this Hon. Chamber, he must come fully and totally equipped. He must not allow any half way.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir. I am in no position to confirm or deny that there were no plans. But I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this Government could not be that irresponsible as to have gone into something without having a plan. What you may say, is that they had to modify the plan. That is what they did; they modified the plan. A surgeon starts off cutting off one hand and realizes that he has to cut off the toe — it is only a modification.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point taken.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, the point I am making that an Hon. Member who gets up and makes the kind of categorical statement which he makes ought to have checked his facts before making that kind of categorical statement. And I am seeking to demonstrate that in that particular road the plans were not completed. So that the Hon. Member.....

Mr. C. L. BOLDEN: On a point of order. Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member, I believe, is a very responsible Member of Parliament. I believe that if he is going to make statements like that he should be asked to verify those statements.

I was Minister responsible for the Ministry of Communications and Works at the time when the acquisition and the proposed plans for the Spring Garden Road were brought to this Chamber, because the Rt. Hon.

Member for St. John specifically asked for the plans at the time for that road.

The roundabout at the University junction which is now being constructed was one of three proposed exits for the Spring Garden Road. One was a dual carriageway with a by-pass road, and the other was a roundabout. The IADB engineers proposed a split junction with traffic lights. We said that the Government of today did not believe in traffic lights based on the problem we were having with the wearing out of the electrical parts. We asked them to come with a second design. We proposed the roundabout and those were the two.

When the Hon. Member sits, I will make my speech concerning the IADB and that road. But I would like the Hon. Member to remember carefully that the plans to that road have been laid in this Chamber.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I think that the matter is easily resolvable by stating what the facts are. At the time the road was planned, at the exit to the new Spring Garden on Highway 1, it was proposed to regulate the traffic by means of traffic lights. Within the past year the plans were revised, because it was felt that the flow of traffic would be facilitated by constructing a roundabout. I believe those are the facts.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the last Hon. Member who just spoke, because the last Hon. Member who just spoke confirmed the point which I was trying to make — that Ministers who are not carrying a portfolio ought not to come into this Honourable Chamber and make categorical statements. If they are not capable at the time of verifying what they are saying, they are in danger of misleading this Chamber and the House.

So when the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John raises the question about the drainage at Spring Garden, I believe it is a legitimate question that can be asked by an Hon. Member who is familiar with the terrain, who is familiar with what has occurred in that area even before there was any dislocation of the ecological situation in the area.

What we are talking about, Mr. Speaker, was not a political position. We were raising legitimate questions as to whether steps are being taken, as the road is being hurriedly completed, to ensure that when the rains come those residents who are still around, and indeed the environment in the area, will not be desolated by flooding which could come as a result of the kind of construction which has gone on.

What have we had instead? The Hon. Leader of this House embarks on an excursion, a political excursion, the

road with which we are familiar. We are familiar with the utterances of the Barbados Labour Party in regard to these matters ever since 1975 right through 1981. There are certain stop phrases which come out of the mouths of senior politicians of the Barbados Labour Party. If you say, "Bath", it is like a Pavlovian reaction. You say Bath Plantation, they are off for the running.

One remembers that they accused the Democratic Labour Party of the heights of corruption, or the depths, and they have been like Caesar's wife was supposed to be — above suspicion. But the only place they are above suspicion is among themselves. In terms of the rest of the population, it does not bode well for the honourable gentleman to come in here and try to give the impression that his hands are clean; that their hands are so pure.

Mr. SPEAKER: What are we taking about now?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: We are talking about acquisition. We are talking about the same acquisitions he was talking about Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hardly think so.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, I am trying to, Sir.

We are talking about High Commissioner Gale, and we are talking about acquisition of land in New York by the Government, and we are talking about all of those statements which have been made this morning.

But the Hon. Member did not tell this Chamber about the acquisition in the same New York — and he said New York, when he meant Canada. He does not tell this Chamber about the acquisitions in New York since 1976. I will invite the Hon. Member over there; there is at least one honourable gentleman sitting on the front bench who is in a position to give chapter and verse on the folly committed by that Government in its acquisitions of property in New York during the period.

It is not for me, Mr. Speaker, to come in here and start to throw out the kinds of political garbage which permeates the atmosphere when an election is on.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order. I would be very grateful if the Hon. Member could tell this Chamber what acquisitions were made between 1976 and 1981, in New York as he has implied, that this Chamber does not know about? Tell the Chamber. Just don't hide behind these vague statements. Speak up if you are to be heard and respected; speak up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point taken.
1.25 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As I have said, Sir, there is at least one honourable gentleman who is more seized of the details and would be able to tell this Chamber in a better manner than I could. Let them talk about their acquisitions. That is what I am saying.

Let them talk about the situation, for example, where they acquired a property that remained empty for an entire year, and where rent was paid..... not only on that property, but was paid on another property — at the same time. Let them talk about that. That is the sort of thing that has to do with the use of the public's money. Let them talk about that, do not let them try to give impressions.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, Sir, what are the Rules about misleading the House? The hon. Member must not make accusations of the Government, must not cast aspersions on the Government, and make accusations about acquiring properties and paying rent on two properties at the same time unless it is going to be substantiated.

The only property which I can conceivably think of as empty is one which was acquired before we took power, and Mr. Elliott Mottley used to live in it. Nobody lived in it until we could get it sold. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is Taitt's house). (That belonged to Taitt?) That is the only property I can think about, but it is casting aspersions on Hon. Members if he suggests that there were property acquisitions unknown to the House which were conducted in an improper way.

Mr. SPEAKER: The point is taken, Mr. Prime Minister. Casting aspersions against the Government is an entirely different thing from casting aspersions against a person. The hon. Member may proceed.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I consider, Mr. Speaker, that the debate which we have had so far this morning was totally uncalled for, totally unnecessary.

Mr. SPEAKER: Leave that to the Chair.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, with the greatest respect, I have an opinion which I believe that Your Honour would not deny me the right to express.

I am not casting aspersions on the Chair's rulings on this point, I am saying that an hon. Member, in my opinion, made a totally unnecessary — and the Rules of the House do not permit me to say irrelevant — but he made a totally unnecessary speech.

I do not believe that the hon. Members on this side are going to get drawn into trading insult for insult, tit for tat, word for word, because what I wish him to

understand is that our failure to do so in the interest of proper debate must not be misunderstood for any cowardice, and he must not believe he can sit down and dare us not to get up and as a result lead persons to believe that our failure to get up is an indication that we do not wish to speak about these things.

I believe that the debate could go on for another six hours if we start trading information of that kind, alleged information, or what people say about the acquisitions.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, it is not alleged information, what I am saying is factual. It is a fact.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, he did not even say what he is on, he cannot just jump up. He should know how to behave.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister, like the Chair, perhaps is still wondering what you got up to speak about.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The same acquisition, Sir. You see, Sir, when the Democratic Labour Party is assailed in the way the Hon. Member attempted to assail the Democratic Labour Party, there is the necessity to put the record straight.

You, yourself, ruled earlier on this question of acquisitions, — that once we had started the trek from St. Lucy to St. Peter, that this was likely to happen. So we went all the way to New York and all up to Ottawa, and that is why I have joined the bandwagon of going on this excursion.

But I think the Hon. Member did the Rt. Hon. Member a disservice today. I think there is a time when political rhetoric might be in order, but I believe the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John made a reasoned and, if I may say so, a good speech concerning three points which must be of interest to the people of Barbados.

Furthermore, the Hon. Member said that we had some 200 acquisitions when he took over as Minister from the Attorney-General. I believe that if you examine the record of the Democratic Labour Party you will find that we did not make 200 acquisitions in the entire 15 years. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is true, because you did not finish them). So when the Hon. Member gets up and gives the public the impression that he found a lot of acquisitions which were not paid for, that is not correct.

Furthermore, the point that has been repeatedly made here is a point of principle: when do you acquire land by parliamentary procedure?

If you acquire land by parliamentary procedure, and that land remains unpaid for, for three or four years, the

person who owned the land is in a worse position than if you attempt to negotiate for the land and only use the parliamentary procedure as a last resort, or when you have difficulty with title.

For example, Mr. Speaker, if a person is getting income from the land, from the day it is acquired that person ceases to have any jurisdiction to receive an income from the land. (Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Your law.) (Under the laws of Barbados). Therefore, if the acquisition occurs and three or four years pass before the person receives payment, if the person goes to court the interest rate which the person receives is 6 per cent. The interest rates in Barbados are now 17, 18 and 20 per cent, so you can see, Sir that a person whose land is acquired and who does not receive payment immediately is in a worse position than if the land was not acquired.

Again, I think that the Hon. Member who raised this question raised it in a legitimate way. He went on to state what we have seen, and heard from the Hon. Members, that there are large numbers of persons in Barbados whose lands have been acquired and who have not yet received compensation.

Is the Hon. Member denying that? The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister has told this Chamber that there were persons who had not received their money. He has come to this Chamber for supplementary provisions in order to get money to pay persons who have not yet received their money. The Minister himself, introducing acquisition legislation in this Chamber, has discussed the question of persons who have had to wait a long time to receive their money. How then can it be that the Hon. Member for St. James North is berating the Rt. Hon. Member for raising this question concerning the length of time it has taken to pay people?

The Hon. Member for St. James North talked about decency. I believe that decency and intellectual honesty demand that when we make statements in this Chamber that those statements must not only fall within the four corners of the Rules of the House, but they must fall within the four corners of what is common sense and what is acceptable to the broad body politic in the context of the kind of debates we have in this House.

I have no more to say on this at this point. I hope that what I have said will go some way toward reducing the kind of rhetoric which could flow from the Hon. Member for St. James.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I am seriously concerned about the question of compensation under the Land Acquisition Act. I believe that on many occasions this matter has been raised in the House and on each

occasion I find it necessary to point out that the principles of compensation are settled in the provisions of the Land Acquisition Act.

I also believe that the question of payment of compensation is of great importance and that there are two sides to this story. The Hon. Member who spoke first on that side attributes the blame to the failure of the Government to pay. My factual investigation of this matter has revealed that in nine cases out of ten the failure to pay compensation is a result of the claims put in by the former owners of the land which are regarded by the Valuation Committee as being unreasonable and not in accordance with the rules as set out in the Act. 1.35 p.m.

I think it is important for us to get across this point — that under the Barbados Land Acquisition Act the Government is not allowed to pay for potential value. They only have to pay for land on the evaluation of existing use — and that is the cause of the conflict.

The Hon. Member for St. Philip North, who is an expert on these matters — he was the former Chief Valuation Officer in Barbados — he, himself, on the floor of this House, has repeatedly requested that an amendment to that part of the law be introduced; and we on this side have repeatedly said that it is a question of trading-off.

If we amend the Land Acquisition Act in accordance to settling compensation on the principle of potential use, the Land Valuation Act would have to be correspondingly amended so that the valuations for Land Tax purposes would also take that into account. That has been an argument.

Sir, I could draw to Hon. Members' attention a number of occasions, some of which have even gone to the Supreme Court of Barbados. I think it is but right, when we are dealing with this on a technical basis, that it be pointed out to the public that Section 14 of the Land Acquisition Act, Chapter 228, says that:

"Compensation payable under this Act shall, in default of determination by agreement, be determined by a Judge as hereinafter provided."

And when we read Section 15 of that Act it says:

"Proceedings in respect of any claim to compensation under this Act (other than claims determined by agreement) may be taken either by the claimant or by the Chief Surveyor".

It then sets out the procedure, and the procedure is not difficult — a simple summons before a judge in the High Court asking for compensation.

Now I say this: why is it that in the last six years there have only been two summonses, as far as I am aware? I can also say that the Hon. Member for St. Philip North has done an investigation in this matter too and sometimes the professional advisers of the claimants have to tell them that they have an exaggerated view of the value of land.

It is not only the members of the Democratic Labour Party that have this exaggerated view. Some members of our own party have it, too; and we have to meet all of them with the same answer. This is the law. You can only get compensation on the existing use.

The Hon. Member for St. John introduced that amendment and I remember when he was introducing it. When we had the Constitutional Conference, steps were tried to change that; but the Hon. Member insisted that it be not changed and he advised all the others as to his reason.

He felt that where land was acquired in the interest of the State, that potential value should not be taken into account because the community would get the benefit of the expenditure because you could only acquire land for a public purpose. That was the Hon. Member's argument.

We do not mind paying for potential value, provided the land valuation reflects potential value too.

So there is a specific remedy set out in Section 15 of the Act for any of the Hon. Member's constituents — like mine, like those of every Hon. Member — a simple summons before a judge to determine the compensation.

My belief is that when the clients go to the lawyers, the lawyers tell them, 'look the valuation has been carried out in accordance with the existing law and you cannot win the case', and that is why we have not had many cases.

We just had one in connection with the Oistins Re-development where one of these so-called experts on valuation decided that he would go around the law. He brought an action out for trespass, on the ground that the Crown went in and knocked down the building, although the Act says very clearly what you can do, after Section 4 — and he brought a claim for \$500 000. Well, the judge pronounced on that and dismissed the case.

I know — and I could give evidence myself, because I pass there everyday — that the building was a building that was abandoned, taken over by Rastas, went up for public auction, and was sold for \$56 000. His claim was for \$500 000.

We also had the same thing at Howell's Cross Road where a prominent member of this community had an exaggerated view of a strip of land at the corner of Howell's Cross Road — an exaggerated view — and the Government abandoned the acquisition and left him with it. We left him with it. He wanted \$800 000 for that. We left him with it.

That was one that the Hon. Members on the other side were trying to argue about the value in their time — in your time. I can bring the file and show you that in your time there was an argument. I believe the Hon. Minister of Finance was the Lawyer.

This is a difficulty, there are disputes. Value is not an exact science. It is very much a question of opinion. Where you have a difference of opinion between a claimant and his professional advisers and the Government's professional advisers, we have set up a Valuation Committee and we try to get a compromise. And if, as a result of a review, you put a new offer; then there is nothing that the Government can do to convince a man that his property is not worth what he thinks. So we tell them to go to Court. The Act contemplated this— go to court.

I am sure that any court judgment at all that has awarded in acquisition has been honoured from the time of the Graeme Hall Acquisition.

The Hon. Member for St. John will remember this. When Graeme Hall was being acquired, they had a big argument, a lot of evidence given, as to the value of the beach land in Worthing, as to the value of Graeme Hall sour grass pasture, which is now Goodwood Park in Christ Church.

They wanted to take that 40 acres, separate it from the rest of the agricultural land, and value that as house spots land on the ground that it had potential. I remember the decision. The decision was that with respect to that area of land the Act said, "its existing use," which was pasture, because it was growing sour grass. That was the law. We have not changed the law.

If they want a general change of the law we have to change it not only in respect of potential value but we also have to change it in respect of taxation. We are willing to go through the whole of this.

The Minister of Finance has said he would like to settle all of these questions. He would like to have a common system, one for taxation and one for acquisition. The Minister of Finance believes that that would be advantageous to the community.
1.45 p.m.

So there is no big mystery in this. I just thought it was necessary to point out, for the education of the public, that on questions of acquisition, very often failure to pay is as a result of a genuine professional disagreement as to value. I also wanted to say that the Act has machinery for the settlement of these disputes, and I would hope that more people would take advantage of that built-in machinery in the Act.

I agree, of course, as everybody would know, that the question of 6 per cent interest which is in the Act is bad. That could be upgraded and the judge could be given a discretion to take into account such interest rates as is prevailing in the deposit rate of one year notice money.

I believe that all countries in the world have now taken specific interest rates out of Statutes and have been giving the judges some flexibility, because current interest rates are fluctuating in a manner which was not contemplated in the past, so obviously 6 per cent now must be a three month rate. A rate of 10 per cent, I understand, is more appropriate, but it may come back down to 6 per cent, so you cannot put in a specific amount. These are the matters I would like to bring before the House in respect of acquisitions.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Speaker, I, myself, did not consider it very necessary at the beginning to enter this debate, but I am convinced that Hon. Members on the other side seem not to be aware of some of the immediate problems as the road is being developed.

Personally, I would share some of my constituents' feelings had he said that by tomorrow this road would be completed, because the experience of these people during the past few years, during construction of this road, seems to me to be one which one must consider very seriously.

I am not questioning the long-term benefits of the road because both parties are agreed on the road, neither am I questioning the competence of the people who are designing the road, but what I believe is of interest to all of us should be the immediate side effects as the road is being developed.

Mr. Speaker, Barbados has a wet season and a dry season. It is quite all right in the dry season when the road is being built, and fortunately for many of us that are on the seaside, when the wind blows the dust goes into the sea. But during the wet season, particularly in low-lying areas like Brandons and Pile Bay, one has to be very concerned about the amount of water accumulating during the building of this road.

During last year I had the very experience about 6 o'clock in the morning, perhaps being newly sent here to represent the people from that area, probably having

found a representative of their choice, of being called out to assist them with a problem which could have developed into a very serious one.

There was no proper drainage or substitute drainage during the building of the road for the water to flow into the sea, and the water came down and collected on one side.

As the Hon. Member for St. John had said, the height of the road makes it impossible for the water to drain off, so the water collected would tend to flow back into the areas. As a result of all that, some of the water was above floor level. Many of the people probably lost their belongings and they were very concerned that they got no compensation. But most of all, Sir, I had to get the contractors to cut a road in an effort to relieve those people from this water problem.

As one who is also concerned with health, it is a dangerous thing to have water remain among residents for one or two days. Any of you who is familiar with the Brandons area would know that there are many crab holes around. We have the mosquito problem. There are many small children around and some of these people may be sick. As it is, some are sick and are likely to suffer side effects of a health hazard.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking the Minister, in times like these, even though the road may be progressing — to some it may be progressing very slowly — at this particular time of the year I am suggesting to the Minister that provision should be made, if any such development occurs during the rainy season, to make it possible at least to get the Fire Service, because this is one of the areas which can be very helpful to relieve some of those poor people. I would suggest that we make some kind of arrangement where these people can be relieved of that problem.

Similarly, on the Pile Bay end of it, I believe that you will have another problem, but I hope that with the conclusion of the road this problem will disappear. The river has been blocked and all that water which normally flows into the sea is gradually collecting on the other side.

Again, if we think seriously about our health, we must make sure that these problems do not last very long. Mosquitoes do not live for years, they live for a few hours in a day, and I hope that the Minister in his effort to get this road completed will do his best to relieve some of the inhabitants and people of that area of that problem.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I had not hoped to contribute to this debate, but following the speech of the Hon. member who has just sat down

touching on a new point relating to the actual construction of the road, I thought that as Chairman of the Planning and Priorities Committee and the person who originally conceived the road in its present form and negotiated for its financing and construction, I would say a word.

The Minister tells me that he has had no complaints of flooding. The road is intended to deal with flooding problems. I find it impossible to think that flooding conditions and swamp conditions are worse at Brandons with the road there than before the road was there.

I know the Brandons River reasonably well, and the area to the west of the Farm, and I am familiar with the swamp down there. That swamp water has never, in the 42 to 43 years that I have been travelling on that road, gone into the sea in my sight. That water backs up towards Brighton and the Brighton Swamp.

The recent condition of that swamp was very disgusting immediately before the road was built and while the negotiations were going on for the purchase of the wooden property, and the land on which it stands, owned by Mr. Pile, because there were dead animals, there was a greenish, yellowish scum on that swamp, opposite Pile's place, for about two years. That, to my mind, is one of the greatest health hazards that had existed anywhere in Barbados — but it existed before the road was being built.

The history of the whole of the Brighton Swamp is reasonably well known, because people like the Chandlers, who went down there and must have been, so to speak, among the first settlers of Brighton, can tell you that the swamp comprised many acres of relatively clean, fresh water before Brighton was built up, before Brighton Terrace was built up, and before the Farm Housing area was put in place — so much so that the water supply of Brighton, seventy to eighty years ago, actually consisted of the northern swamp which was down there.

But the swamp has got dirtier over the years, and the dirtier part of the waters has flowed towards the south, towards Brandons. And part of the Government's approach to building that road was to improve the environment of Brandons by draining the Bird's River, draining the Brandon River properly. Brandon is a very low lying area with the rivers at the back and the rivers had got consistently dirtier.

1.55 p.m.

Now, the engineers have had a lot of trouble trying to let out the Bird's River and the Brandon River for the first time under the road. But I think it is very hard on the contractors to say that they have been careless of people's health when in fact all along they have been trying to improve the conditions.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister be longer than 15 minutes?

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I could finish my speech in three minutes, Sir.

It is very hard indeed. The mosquitoes down there have always been a problem. But the Hon. Member could point out that as a result of all the works that have been carried out down there, the fly problem has been much diminished, because the dumps have been covered over in the course of levelling, cleaning and preparing for playing fields to be built. I can yell you that, from my experience, flies are by no means the problem from Brandons northward that they once were.

Mosquitoes are going to be an incident of any body of standing water in Barbados. Down there is a very difficult place to drain. I believe we are going to have some problem with drainage forever, but it is better than what was there before.

As far as the question of compensation, really, Sir, if a letter were written, I am sure I would have heard about it. We have not had any complaints.

I also think the Hon. Member was a little unkind when he said that the road is progressing very slowly. I think that the road is progressing at lightning speed by Barbadians' normal experience of the pace of road building.

Finally, what I would add relates to the roundabout and I would be amplifying what the Hon. Members for St. Joseph and St. Michael East have said.

I always wanted a roundabout and over and over, experts kept on and on — and I do not absorb the Ministry of Communications and Works' experts either — indicating that there could be no roundabout.

At earlier stages, I remember the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John — it may have been in here, it may have been discussion otherwise — letting us have the benefit of his experience of the history of the spine road, because it does appear that there was a divergence of opinion. The Town Planner considered that the whole spine road was released and therefore it was all right for him to give planning permission for the exact area where the roundabout should have been. The Rt. Hon. Member for St. John considered that the spine road was only abandoned in Bridgetown and that the line of the road should always have been maintained. Well the file, Sir, really accord no final answer to the controversy but the facts are that a hotel stands where the roundabout should have been and there was objection to joining the roundabout to University Drive.

I would like in conclusion to pay tribute to the engineers at C.O. Williams & Co. who, as soon as they saw the road junction, to which I must have spent eight months at meetings at the Planning and Priority objecting and trying to have changed — as soon as they saw the plans, they produced another plan for a roundabout, a much superior system — exactly the same system as I asked the MTW and the IADB engineers to prepare, — that is, a roundabout joining University Drive and Black Rock road to the new road.

They produced it at a cost — I think the Minister of Communications and Works will have the exact amount — it was something like \$37 000, (ASIDE) \$36 000 more than the original plan. In other words, to put in the whole roundabout and have exactly what was needed, in the end, in a contract of \$16 million, only cost \$36 000 more than we had anticipated, plus the cost of these acquisitions, which I believe is not very great.

I really think that all concerned can be congratulated on getting the Spring Garden Road moving so quickly, and with the modifications and improvements, which I think have already made it attractive for the public of Barbados even before it is officially opened.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. SPEAKER: It is now Question Time.

I am advised that there are no replies to questions ready. Consequently, we go right into Private Members' Business.

I have learnt that under Private Members' Business, the Honourable Member for Christ Church West is seeking the indulgence of this Honourable House to proceed with two Bills under Private Members' Business, which stand in his name, if it is the wish of this Honourable House — I repeat, if it is the wish of this Honourable House — the Hon. Member may proceed.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: We certainly have no objection, provided that on the completion of his bit of business I can proceed with mine.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, earlier today, the Hon. Chairman of Committees presented the Report of the Select Committee on the Bill to repeal and replace the Barbados Chamber of Commerce Act, 1868, and I beg to move that the Report of the Committee be now adopted.

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

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

On the separate motions of Hon. H. deB. FORDE, seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, the Bill, as amended, was read a third time and passed.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, again earlier today the Chairman of Committees presented to this Honourable House the Committee's Report on the Bill to amend the Agricultural Society Act, 1890.

I now respectfully beg to move that the Select Committee's Report be adopted.

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

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

2.55 p.m.

On the separate motions of Hon. deB. FORDE seconded by Mr. L. L. SISNETT, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Order No. 1 was called — to move the passing of a Resolution calling upon the Government to undertake an urgent and comprehensive review of price fixing mechanisms for electricity in Barbados.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, some time ago, recognizing that the cost of electricity in this country was causing considerable damage to the economy and considerable hardship to all groups within this society, I brought this resolution to the attention of this Parliament because I felt that since 1979 we have been unable to get a debate going on the major problems facing the price-fixing mechanisms for electricity in this country.

I believe, Sir, that the views that I have often expressed in relation to the inclusion of notional expenses, such as deferred taxes and investment tax credit, as a cost of service in the calculation of rates chargeable to consumers; that those views have met with the approval of the legal regulatory authority in this country, namely the Public Utilities Board, and found expression in a judgment recently handed down.

I believe, Sir, that all of us can breathe a sigh of relief; that we should congratulate the Public Utilities Board for the very close scrutiny that they gave to the application before them, for bringing the judgment within the four walls of the laws as set out in the Act before them, and also, Sir, for those persons who gave of their service, particularly Mr. Frank Alleyne and Mr. Leroy Inniss who gave considerable service to this community.

It will be noted, Sir, that in handing down that judgment, the Board spoke to the basis of their objection, namely the objection on an increase based on a calculation of a composition of depreciation expenses on a historical and a replacement cost basis, and also, Sir, particularly to the question of an investment tax credit and to the question of deferred taxes.

Anyone who doubted the predictions that were made in 1980, that the electricity rates would have contributed considerably to recessionary trends in this country, can have absolutely no doubt about that.

We depend, Sir, on our ability to earn valuable foreign exchange for our survival in this country. It is a very close margin, Sir, if we are to remain competitive in respect of our exports from this country, and any factor which unnecessarily increase those costs cannot be deemed in the public interest.

One only has to look Sir, at the state of the tourist industry today, and when we think of the cost of hotel rooms in Barbados, it is necessary for us to understand that a major component of the cost happens to be the cost of electricity. There can be no question that the high hotel rates, associated with the high electricity bills, have contributed considerably to the virtual temporary destruction of the hotel industry in Barbados.

Sir, if one looks at another major sector, the manufacturing sector in Barbados, you will find that the same thing has been operative. There, our exports are facing exceedingly stiff competition, from the Far East and elsewhere, and quite negligently, we allow the situation to develop in Barbados whereby, quite unnecessarily, we increase our manufacturing cost by unjustified increases in the rates of electricity. This is resulting, Sir, in the closure of many factories in Barbados and has contributed significantly to lay-offs in the manufacturing sector.

I was not at all surprised, Sir, to see the cost of electricity listed as one of the reasons why one of the major companies, which employed a large number of people, claimed they were shutting their doors recently.

In the commercial sector, Sir, the electricity rates have just wrecked havoc. Many people have had to cut back on the number of people they employ in order to meet their electricity bills. They have had to put up the

cost of food, particularly food subject to cold storage, in order to meet the cost of those electricity bills.

And so, Sir, we see that not only in the tourist sector, but in the manufacturing sector and in the commercial sector, the current electricity rates have created the kinds of problems which were envisaged by Members of this side of the House.

Today, we pay the price — by its contribution to the rate of inflation in Barbados, and to the ever increasing unemployment levels in this country, and, Sir, we have reached a situation where many domestic users of electricity can literally no longer afford to pay the Bills that they receive on a monthly basis now. These are facts that we have to face.

Perhaps the most unfortunate part of it relates to old age pensioners, many of whom received letters before the last elections, telling them that the Barbados Labour Party Government was prepared to pay their water and electricity bills, and then after the election, after several months had passed, they receive those bills again, after they had amounted well over \$100 and, in some cases \$150, Sir.

3.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, we have also seen the unfortunate impact of those electricity rates in the water rates, because the increases in the water rates in Barbados, those that existed before the recent increases were due to the increases in the electricity rates in 1980, principally. The projected increases and the recent increases, consequential on the last Budgetary Proposals, were based on the fact that the Government had anticipated that there would have been further increases in the rates of electricity this year, next year, and the year after, in accordance with the unholy and worthless agreement that they entered into with the World Bank and the Barbados Light and Power Company.

Sir, that Government, the Government of Barbados, entered into an agreement, which in my view is invalid — and probably unlawful — with the World Bank in relation to the expansion programme of the Barbados Light and Power Company. I think it is unlawful, Sir.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, please. Does the Hon. Member not accept himself as being part of the vote of this Honourable House which concurred in the agreement?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I do not think that agreement came to this House, Sir. This was after the agreement was signed.

Mr. SPEAKER: This House concurred in the agreement.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The guarantee, but not the agreement. I am talking about the body of the agreement.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: On a point of order, Sir. The Hon. Member is not allowed, under the Rules, to reflect on a vote of the House. That is the point.

If you guarantee, there must be a primary liability, and the guarantor is the person who guarantees the primary liability. In the event of a default the guarantor becomes subrogated.

So therefore the Hon. Member cannot reflect on a vote of the House. The House concurred in the agreement.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, the basic premise enshrined in the Laws of Barbados relates to the fact that rates are chargeable on the basis of property used, and useful, in the public service of this country. It is my considered view that any situation which arises where rates have to be based on a projected expansion of any public utility, then we are not acting in accordance with the laws of Barbados. When you reach a situation, where in order to generate an internal cash position to meet the requirements of loans which you have made from international bodies, that in order to do that you have to invoke new accounting procedures because you could not sustain your argument on the basis of the Public Utilities Act, then I think that there is something very wrong about that.

Sir, I have come to the conclusion that, not only electricity, but natural gas, bottled gas, transport, and all these public services, should come under the ambit of the Public Utilities Board playing an expanded role in the defence of the customers, the consumers of this country and in the defence of its proper and orderly development.

Today we have reached a situation where the Barbados Light and Power Company believing, in association with the Government — and the Government should hang their heads in shame for not objecting to the proposed increases on behalf of the consumers of this country, because you are calling upon the people, not only to pay those exorbitant rates in the areas which I have already described, but also to pay it by means of increased taxation that you have to levy on the people year after year to meet Government's electricity and water bills and the other inflationary factors consequential on the cost of electricity and water in this country.

You have created a situation where these people at the Barbados Light and Power Company have gone ahead and started spending money as if money had no value whatsoever. They went out there and they drew down, considerably, on the lines of credit available to

them — before they even knew they would get an increase.

If you were to look at the last Annual Report — and I will make it a document of the House — the 1981 Annual Report of the Barbados Light and Power Company Limited — you will see exactly what has been going on in this country, and what the Government and the Barbados Light and Power Company expected the people of this country to fork out of their pockets in order to provide money for them to expand their plant which will remain the property of the 1800 shareholders, or however many there are — and the small shareholding is by Government — because once they have expanded that plant at the expense of the consumers, then they will turn around and use the new value, quite properly, as a basis for the computation of further rate increases in Barbados.

To put it very simply, Sir, it is as though a lawyer in Bridgetown had an office of two rooms and he told each of his clients, "Well, I am not going to charge you \$25, I am going to charge you \$30, because I want to put on a third room." So his clients pay him \$30 instead of \$25. But when he has added on the third room, then he owns the property. His clients would have put up the money, and then he turns around and tells his clients, "I now have the third room and therefore it is costing me more to exist in this office, so I have to put my fees up to \$35." That is the kind of scandalous situation that has developed in this country which, thank God, has been reversed by the decision of the Public Utilities Board.

In one year, Sir, work in progress, \$46 million; financing charges have jumped from \$553 000 to \$2.8 million. Then you get the excess of appraised value of fixed assets over cost jumping to \$54 million; accumulated deferred taxes, \$11.4 million. That should never have entered into the computation of rates in this country, that is \$11 million that must be given back to the consumers of this country. We are talking here about a lot of money. Accumulated investment tax credit, \$5 million. So between the accumulated investment tax credit and the accumulated deferred taxes, that is \$16 million that was taken out of the pockets of the people of this country and made available to the Barbados Light and Power Company for an expansion programme that cannot even match, now, the contracting expansion programme of the country and of the Government. Mismatched development, bad planning, and virtually amounting to a rape of the pockets of the poor people of this country.

3.15 p.m.

Sir, this is a matter of the most serious concern and I would want to know what the Government is going to do now to meet its obligations in the context of the

World Bank Agreement and what it is going to do in relation to that \$16 million.

I am also very glad that the Board has kicked out Mr. Bird and treated him in the way which befitted him, because they rejected the same evidence that he presented before the Barbados Light and Power Company in 1979 — it was after the irrelevant and extraneous agreement between the Government of Barbados and the World Bank was introduced into evidence that that position was changed in 1980 — and now the Public Utilities Board has, quite rightly, determined that Mr. Bird is no expert and they cannot accept his evidence either on the matter of deferred taxes or on the matter of investment tax credit.

Sir, I have never said — it has always been a mistaken position by the Deputy Prime Minister — that the sums accruing to the Barbados Light and Power Company, would go into the pockets of the shareholders. I have always taken the position that even if it improves the cash position of the Barbados Light and Power Company, the fact is that it reflects in the rate base.

In other words, you charge electricity rates based on the fact that those two factors are in your accounting position within the company.

You owe the people, and it is your duty now, to make sure that that \$16 million will go back to the consumers of Barbados, or, in the alternate, that they should be given shares in the Barbados Light and Power Company to the extent of that \$16 million. That is the only logical and just conclusion that one can come to as a consequence of the Public Utilities Board decision.

Sir, at that place, at the Barbados Light and Power Company, I think the question of management is critical. When you examine this statement, you will see that they have now, in one year, increased their long termed debt from \$7.8 million to \$51 million. This is a small country. How are we going to absorb that kind of debt, particularly when many of these loans are external loans and have to be repaid in hard currency?

You have, on the one hand, the cost of electricity which is destroying the economy, destroying your capacity to earn hard currency, and on the other hand you have the situation where you are going to use the supplier's credits and other sources of loans — and then you will not be able to pay back the money that you have borrowed from those sources.

The whole situation is complete madness, and I am very glad that the Public Utilities Board has taken that decision; because it has to force the Government, now, to stop coming in here and telling the people that they are stupid, and telling people that they do not understand

what is going on and force them to re-appraise their entire position to electricity in Barbados.

Another major scandal, Sir, is that the Barbados Light and Power Company has gone to that Swedish Company I am not quite sure of the pronunciation — I think it is Fvenska Handelsbanken — and committed themselves, Sir, to purchases amounting to \$34.9 million of two-speed diesel engines using bunker C fuel. They could have obtain those same two-speed diesel engines from Germany and elsewhere in Europe and the management of the Barbados Light and Power Company did not even go to visit the people.

There has been actual actuarial evidence to demonstrate that over a 20 year period, consequential on that purchase alone, that this country will lose over U.S. \$100 million in foreign exchange, because when you calculate the basis on which this company operates, and the basis on which other Companies operates, then the turn key cost of installation would have been about 35 per cent of what the Barbados Light and Power Company has actually paid for that equipment, thus the rate of interest that it would have obtained from elsewhere would be at two and a half per cent lower.

Now, Sir, the time has come when the people of Barbados can no longer put up with this kind of nonsense. The time has come when the Barbados Light and Power Company has to see itself as part of this society.

The Government has to understand that before it gets into this kind of agreement with the World Bank, and gets into agreements with private companies like the Barbados Light and Power Company; before it commits the Consolidated Fund to this kind of guarantee, they should have a proper development strategy in relation to energy in this country. You are completely up the creek now, and you know it. You know you are up the creek in relation to that agreement that you have entered into.

Long ago, I have asked you to re-appraise it, to have a further look and see whether or not a different approach to the development of the energy needs in Barbados could not be taken. But, no. You have waited now until you are faced with this type of catastrophic situation.

Sir, I have looked at the Public Utilities Act. I have heard a whole heap of statements being made over the weekend by the Barbados Light and Power Company. Let the management of that company understand that the public of Barbados will not be tolerating any unnecessary outages, nor will this Parliament tolerate a situation where we know that on the basis of the cash generated over the past year, since the 1980 rate increases, there is no need,

in the short term, for them not to be able to offer a proper service to this country.

Let them try and see themselves in relation to the total economy; and when they make applications for capital development, let it go hand in hand with the development of the rest of the country — otherwise, they will impoverish Barbados.

I am telling you that if the present programme of expansion had continued to take place, in the face of a falling demand for electricity due to a recessionary situation, then the Barbados Light and Power Company and the Government of Barbados would be making a major contribution to further recession in Barbados and creating further difficulties in respect of this country coming out of that recession.

They should also be told, Sir, to stop wasting the company's money in a lot of misleading advertisements, that you see from time to time, that do not accord with the facts of the situation. I am referring to the Barbados Light and Power Company.

They should also be told, in no uncertain terms, that the people of Barbados cannot — cannot — pay the kind of electricity bills that they are receiving today, and that any programme for the further development of electricity in Barbados has to take into consideration the capacity of the people, and of the economy, to bear those charges.

Now, Sir, it is interesting to note — and there must be something wrong — that despite the 1974 oil crisis the Democratic Labour Party was able to carry out a massive expansion programme in respect of electricity in Barbados during the 15 years that it was in office. But nevertheless, Sir, the rates that people had to pay were always and at all times reasonable and you could not identify a situation during the period 1961 to 1976 when you could say, "look, electricity is causing unemployment, electricity is causing unnecessary increases in the pricing structure throughout Barbados, electricity is contributing to a recessionary situation in Barbados."

3.25 p.m.

There is something wrong. Therefore you have a bounden duty now to respect the decision of the Public Utilities Board to investigate and see how you can get that \$16 million that has been taken away from the consumers of Barbados, back to them.

And you have a further duty. I believe that you should amend the Act in relation to the Public Utilities Board in such a manner as to make it unlawful for deferred taxes and investment tax credit to be considered as a cost of service for the purposes of the establishment

of rates in Barbados, because in that way you would kill the matter once and for all.

Indeed, Sir, I am seriously contemplating, in due course, taking such action if the Government does not act on the suggestions that I make, because you cannot have a situation where in a year's time the Barbados Light and Power Company will probably spend another \$½ million on another rate hearing, giving away masses of money to lawyers in this country and wasting public funds, when, at the same time, a simple amendment to the appropriate legislative instrument can outlaw, for all time, any consideration of deferred taxes or investment tax credit as part of the consideration of cost of service.

Sir, I say this

Mr. SPEAKER: One minute to go.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am very serious on this point, because if that ever applies to other areas, such as the Telephone Company, if they ever put up a case for deferred taxes and investment tax credit, we would be in a lot of trouble; because once you set that precedent, the precedent can be used right through by any public utility.

Sir, I believe that I have made the main points in the very short time available to me. Regrettably, under Private Members' Business, we do not have too much time to deal with resolutions.

I beg to move the passing of this Resolution. Thank you very much (*Applause*)

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I have great pleasure in seconding the Resolution which has been moved by the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central. This Resolution, in essence, calls upon Government to undertake an urgent and comprehensive review of the price-fixing mechanism for electricity in Barbados.

What the contribution of the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central has shown is that electricity is so critical to the development of this country and the welfare of its people, that it impinges upon every area of activity. He has shown how it had its effect in increased water rates, it has an effect certainly on the cost of the products of industrial development, because industry is very heavily hit by the cost of electricity. In tourism, the tourist industry is itself very dependent on the use of all the public utility services.

So the effect of the high cost of electricity can be felt in every area of activity in the country, and the Hon. Member has shown, in his contribution, that electricity is so critical to the nation's development that it is terribly important that the price-fixing mechanisms for electricity should be well organised and ordered in the community.

It so happens that the price-fixing mechanism for electricity, which is in essence the Public Utilities Board, covers another public utility as well, the Telephone Company, so that the comments which can be made in a debate of this kind would obviously affect the Telephone Company as well, because if we are arguing that the Public Utilities Board, which is the price-fixing mechanism, ought to be re-organised and re-ordered so as to effectively carry out its work in regulating the cost of electricity services, then obviously it has its relevance to telephones as well.

The Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central has made the point that perhaps other enterprises which are in essence public utilities should themselves come within the purview of the Public Utilities Board. I saw the Hon. Member for Christ Church East Central, smile at that as if he is laughing at the Hon. Member, but it is clear that it is not a laughing matter. The Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central has a point.

What has happened in relation to other enterprises, like gas and water, is that water was never under the purview of any regulatory authority because water, traditionally, has been a part of Central Government activities, so that whatever price was paid for water was controlled by Government.

The position with natural gas is that originally it had been under the purview of the Public Utilities Board, but somewhere along the line it was taken out of the purview of the Public Utilities Board.

Natural gas was administered by a Statutory Corporation and provision was made by Government for the regulation of gas and the price of natural gas through the price-fixing mechanism, which we had in the Democratic Labour Party Administration, where the Ministry of Trade exercised control and jurisdiction over the cost of commodities over a wide range of areas.

Under the Democratic Labour Party Administration you had the Public Utilities Board, which regulated public utilities like electricity and telephone, and then there was the Price Control Commission which played a role in regulating the cost of natural gas and bottled gas with a variety of other commodities. So, throughout the Democratic Labour Party Administration's time, there was always a price-fixing mechanism which regulated the price of commodities which were in effect public utilities.

So when the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central makes the point that it is perhaps time that natural gas and water come under the purview of the Public Utilities Board, it is a point which is worth noting, because since the present Government came into power, it has not made use of the Price Control Commission, so

that there is, in essence, no price-fixing mechanism which controls the price of natural gas. So to request that natural gas be now brought within the purview of the Public Utilities Board is not as outrageous as the Hon. Member for Christ Church East Central would have us believe.

Water has now come to be administered by a Statutory Corporation, so that you have water now being administered by a Statutory Corporation, not by the Central Government itself; natural gas being organised and operated by a Statutory Corporation; the telephone being organised by a private corporation; Light and Power being organised by a private corporation; and let us not forget the other public utility transport services because transport is in essence a public utility itself being organised and administered by a Statutory Corporation.

So in the area of public utilities then, you have a number of public utility operations being organised by statutory corporations, some being organised by private corporations, but in the final analysis they are all now being organised and operated by corporations — whether private or statutory is beside the point. And, except in relation to telephone and light, you have no regulatory authority dealing with cost of service of the other areas of utilities.

3.35 p.m.

True, enough, the Government has a majority interest in all the Statutory Corporations and to that extent can exercise some control. But in essence what the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central is under-scoring is that there evidently needs to be a body of jurisprudence which needs to be built up in the community which will deal with the total problem of public utility regulation.

You get case law being developed from time to time. The Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central has talked about the investment tax credit and other financial and economic matters, which are accounting procedures, which are now taken into account in the whole area of public utility regulation. These are all matters which need to be analysed.

What is clear is that with the development in technology, new approaches in financial management, with ever increasing attention being paid to the science and to the jurisprudence of public utility regulation, it is important, and essential, that in a community like ours we should ensure that the price-fixing mechanisms for all public utilities are well organised and administered. It is essential that they be controlled to this very point.

Public utilities, by their nature, tend to be monopolies, and, to that extent, they defy competition. There is no competitive position for electricity in Barbados. There is no competitive position for telephone and for the mass of other public utilities, whether they are administered through Government corporations or not.

So if you have a situation where you have a corporation producing a service which is by its very nature monopolistic, it is important that regulation be well organised to deal with that problem.

And corporations like Light and Power and the Telephone Company, not only are they monopolistic and therefore defy competition, they are also international corporations in every sense of the word. They have head offices in some of the biggest industrial countries in the world, the United States and Canada. They have access to a wealth of experience and expertise in technology, in finance, in economic management, in public utility management, and all sorts of areas.

So in Barbados, for instance, when we have to come to grips with problems of public utility regulation, when you are asking a Public Utilities Board in Barbados, constituted as it is, to deal with the problem of regulating large international corporations which have access to this wealth of expertise and experience, it must be clear that in order for any regulatory authority to deal with the problems which can be presented in rate-making, that the public utility corporation must have access, one way or another, to the same sort of wealth of expertise that the international corporations would have.

We have been lucky in Barbados, so far, that there have been a number of persons who have been interested in challenging the submissions made by public utilities when they come to seek an increase in rates. But the time may come when there are no objectors to an application by a public utility company for increases of rates, and the Public Utilities Board may find that by virtue of its constitution, by virtue of the staff which it has at its disposal, or the lack of staff which it has at its disposal, it is not in a position to come to grips with the problems which utilities present.

Our concept and jurisprudence of public utility regulations has been borrowed largely from the North American jurisdictions, but there are some differences in approach. We have gone half the way but not all the way.

The Public Utilities Act, Cap. 282 of the Laws of Barbados, has created a broad framework within which the Board should function, and I believe that if the Board has all the.....(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Necessary resources.).....necessary resources, if the Board has all the necessary resources at its disposal, it can do an effective job. But certainly the time will come when we have to

make sure that the structure which is organised by the Public Utilities Act is in place for dealing with the problem of public utility regulation, in every sense of the word.

What happens in Barbados in the course of rate hearings, if there are no objectors, is that the Public Utilities Board has to come face to face with the submissions of the company on the occasion when a rate hearing is called.

Now, throughout the course of a year, public utility companies, if they are doing their work — and they must be doing their work — would have their accountants, their financial analysts, their lawyers, their engineers, everybody, going through the operation of the public utilities, preparing submissions for them, looking at the submissions, throwing them out for examinations, having their parent companies overseas examine them, having the experts from their parent companies examine all their submissions and then the result is put before the Public Utilities Board. The Public Utilities Board, at that stage, is now going to be asked to pronounce on the validity of the submissions which have been made by the company.

The Public Utilities Board has a Chairman and members who are, in every sense of the word, part-time. They are not full-time officers. They do not have a large staff. They have a Secretary who deals with the administration and does some secretarial work. There is no permanent home, no major staff.

I remember round about the late 1970s, when I was an advisor to the Board, I made a submission to the then Minister of Trade, the Hon. Member for St. Michael West, that the Board needed to have some teeth in it, because I was aware that the Board, as constituted then, could not deal with the problems which were being presented by the public utility companies at the time.

As a result of that, I am glad to say that a start was made in trying to put some teeth into the Board. Some investigators were appointed who performed the role of going into the public utility companies, examining their records and carrying out a general investigation with a view to acquainting the Board with what was going on.

But prior to that, there was not even — well, the opportunity was there by virtue of the statute, but the Board had no resources whatsoever to deal with the problems which could confront them as a result of the submissions by the companies.

For me, the appointment of investigators and the use of investigators to examine the affairs of the activities of the public utility companies was a start. It was a move in the right direction, and I think that given the oppor-

tunity, an effort would have been made to put some real teeth into the Public Utilities Board at that time.

To get back to the original point which I was making, public utility companies have a long period of time over which they can assess their own position, but the Public Utilities Board is asked within a period of one month perhaps — two months — even three months, if you can stretch it so far — to pronounce on the validity of an application for a raise.

I say that the Public Utilities Board should be in the position where throughout the course of a year it could be carrying out an ongoing analysis of the activities and the affairs of the public utility companies. The Act makes provision for that to be done and it seems to me that what we need to do is put some teeth into the Board, give it the resources, in terms of personnel, to deal with the problems with which they are being confronted.

3.45 p.m.

It might perhaps be argued that at the moment there are only two companies that are being regulated by the Public Utilities Board and that it would be expensive to have high-powered people, specialist high-powered people, on the staff of the Public Utilities Board to deal with these utilities on an on-going basis. It might also be said that although public utilities regulation is a very specialized area, it may not be necessary to have full-time professional engineers, accountants, lawyers, on the staff of the Board as a permanent fixture. But the Board can certainly have people of that kind professionals, on retainer during the year, give them all the information which is necessary, and ask them to do a survey on the operations and business activities of the public utilities during the course of any one year.

And, in fact, in between rate hearings, that is the time when the analysis of the work of public utilities' companies have got to be done, so that when the actual hearing and enquiry into the rates is being dealt with, the Public Utilities Board is in a good position to have a report on all of the activities of the companies from the specialists which will be at their disposal.

In the jurisdictions of the United States of America — and we borrow heavily from the United States jurisdictions as far as the regulation of public utilities is concerned — the Public Utilities Commissions — they call them the Public Service Commissions; the name is not important — have an abundance of staff at their disposal, which, throughout the year in between rate hearings, do all the investigative work on the operations of the public utilities companies. When public hearings are called, the public utilities companies have a lawyer who presents the case against the public utilities, based on the investi-

gations which the rest of the Commission's staff have done during the course of the year.

If we were confronted with a situation in Barbados, where there are no objectors, and we had that framework in place, then the Public Utilities Board would be in a position to rely on its own staff, which would have all the information available to it, to present the case against the public utility company.

You must remember, Mr. Speaker, that the Chairman and the members of the Board are not experts. In the course of the year they, themselves, are not persons who are concerned with the day-to-day investigations of the activities of the public utilities companies. They are not burdened by the investigations which the members of their staff would have been conducting. So when rate hearings are called, they are in the position to sit as an impartial tribunal, analysing the case which is presented by its staff against the public utility company, and analysing the submissions made by the public utility company as to why there should be an increase in rates.

The Board, then is in the position where, for want of a challenge by members of the public, a public utility company could not thereby go ahead and get an increased rate in the absence of an effective challenge from people who know something about public utility rate-making. When the Commission comes to make its decision, it may then consult a lawyer, if it so desires, for help in writing the decision of the Public Utilities Commission.

In essence, what I am saying is then the Public Utilities Board, which is the regulating agency, can effectively be duped so that in dealing with the problems which the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central talked about, the problems of massive increases in electricity and telephone rates and the spin-off effect which that can have on the whole problem of industrial development in Barbados, the problem of the consuming public who have to use the public utility services, you have to ensure that an organization is established and that your regulating agency is so structured that it can effectively deal with the problems of rate-making in the interest of the community at large.

This is a Resolution which I think should obviously get the support of all sides of the House, because what we are saying is that we have a deep and abiding concern for the people in our community who have to use the facilities of light, water, telephone, and all of the public utilities which are in Barbados. It is a Resolution, Mr. Speaker, which I have no doubt will have the unanimous support of this House and I have very great pleasure in seconding this Resolution. (*Applause*)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Resolution before us is in many ways a very simple Resolution and provides the opportunity for the Government to salvage some of its economic pride by agreeing that the mechanisms which this Resolution seeks to have amended, and improved, will go some way towards relieving this community of the perennial difficulties, which, even if we are spared their terrors for a short while, are bound to reappear within an even shorter period.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues have already dealt with some aspects of the problems surrounding the public utilities in Barbados. But there is a question which has to be asked — where do we go from here?

I recall very well when the Hon. Member who has just sat down spoke to me in my capacity at the time as Minister responsible for Energy; and I recall having examined the structure of the Board at that time; and recognising that the philosophy which established the Public Utilities Board envisaged a regulation of public utilities, because it recognized that public utilities unlike other commodities in a community, cannot be allowed to have what has been euphemistically described as "the ramification of supply and demand"; it recognized that certain services provided in the community are so vital to that community that it would be dangerous to leave the decision-making concerning those services only to the few persons who might have been fortunate at the time of establishing the services to have the necessary financial and other resources.

Mr. Speaker, at that time when we examined the Act, we discovered that there was a pattern for public utilities hearings in Barbados, where the Board made decisions, and if those decisions were contrary to the expectations of the public utility companies, the companies then automatically appealed to the law courts. Almost, invariably, the basis on which they were able to make their appeal, being both questions of fact and questions of law, and almost invariably because the public utility companies were better equipped for presentation of argument of both fact and law, they inevitably received a judgment from the courts that was favourable to the utility companies.

3.55 p.m.

The first change in the law, which from that vantage point I recommended to the then Cabinet, and which was accepted without much demur, was that on application for an increase in rates, that if the Public Utilities Board found that the particular company's case was not made out, that that company would only be able to appeal that decision on questions of law.

Of course, those attorneys or lawyers who are very skilled have been able to make almost anything a question

of law, and especially when they appear before courts that have a liberal interpretation of the law, they have been able to succeed, but even so we did manage to stem the automaticity of the movement of prices upward on the volition of a particular public utility company.

As my colleague has mentioned, there was also another more serious problem, and I regret to say that even some ten years later that problem still remains to dog the question of public utility regulation in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, it is virtually impossible for the Public Utilities Board, in its present form, to fully understand, appreciate and deal with the intricacies concerning the accounting, the engineering and the other aspects of the proper running of a public utility company.

I would take the risk to say that, to a large extent, public utility hearings in Barbados are dependent on the vagaries of the particular skills of the people presenting the case at that particular time, and are based more on the presentations made than on a thorough and complete knowledge of the facts, the figures and all other aspects concerning the public utility companies and their operations in Barbados.

I sought, through amendment to the Act and through directions to the Board, to have a measure of expertise added to the Board's resources. I regret to say that soon after this was completed, and while the Board was in the process of recruiting the kind of quality staff which would assist the Board in coming to its conclusions on more efficacious grounds, the responsibility passed to other persons — to wit, the Hon. Members on the other side — and it would seem to me that, more in ignorance than in wickedness, the persons concerned did not understand the effort that was being made to upgrade the quality of the staff of the Public Utilities Board, and as a result what has occurred is that instead of our going forward there has been a regression.

It means, therefore, Mr. Speaker, that a Public Utilities Board that is charged with regulating the supply of electricity and telephone services in Barbados cannot even today call on the services or let me put it another way, are not in a position to call on the services of an accountant whose business it is to monitor and follow the progress or otherwise of the public utility companies in Barbados.

The difficulties which that presents, Mr. Speaker, are multiplied when it is recognised that public utility hearings are brought about at periodic intervals in Barbados and are not an on-going quest. This means that each time for example, Barbados Light and Power Company seeks a new rate that the Public Utilities Board has to start, as it were, from scratch. They are not in a position to catch the Barbados Light and Power Company in the middle of

its stride, so to speak; they have to wait until the Barbados Light and Power Company or the Telephone Company have completed their own exercise, have determined what rate they would like and have presented their information to the Board before the Board is able to deal with the issue.

Mr. Speaker, we have the very ridiculous situation, in terms of the resources of the Board, that the Board itself has been known from time to time to turn to the very company, that is submitting the request for an increase in rates, to get the company to make its resources available to the Board, so that the Board can understand the issues which the company is presenting to the Board.

The Hon. Member for Christ Church East Central who has appeared on the other side in rate hearings would be aware that in the preparation — I am told he appeared on both sides, Sir — of the brief for the company, he has had to assist the Public Utilities Board in coming to their own conclusions.

Mr. Speaker, a simple matter of having the requisite case law available to it is not a feature of the Public Utilities Board in 1982. The simple matter of having a basic understanding of the principles for new members who should be appointed to the Board is not available to the Public Utilities Board in 1982. When one thinks of these matters, and when one examines the fundamental nature of public utilities in the economic development of Barbados, when one recognises that there is only a single electric company and a single telephone company in Barbados, one realises that this country, as a whole, is at the mercies, to a large extent, of the attitudes of these two public utility companies in this country.

Mr. Speaker, when I began I raised the question, 'where do we go from here?' It will be catastrophic for the people of Barbados if, in 1982, the Public Utilities Board denies an application from the Barbados Light and Power Company for an increase — of say, three cents per Kw, only to come back in 1983, as a result of the effects of their decision, to have the company submit a request demonstrating that they now need, taking into account arithmetic or algebraic progression, not twice as much, but twice and a half or three times as much in 1983, and — this is the point — it will be catastrophic — if the Board, through its own investigation, is not in a position to point out to the Light and Power Company that the request, which they now make two years hence, cannot be granted in the form that they requested it because the Board's investigations demonstrated that the case which is being put forward is not valid.

If in fact, as has happened with the Public Utilities Board in the past, as a result of making a wrong decision

one year, they complicate the issue by making a doubly wrong decision two years later, primarily because they were not in a position to investigate either the work of a previous Board or the on-going difficulty or problems of the companies in the present circumstances, we are going to find ourselves on a treadmill — from which we will not be able to extricate ourselves, because the economy of Barbados two years from now, if present indications are maintained, will not be in a position to absorb any increases, of any kind, in any of the fundamental industries in Barbados.

4.05 p.m.

I am therefore suggesting that the Public Utilities Board has a responsibility to itself, and therefore the Government has a responsibility to the people of Barbados to ensure that the Public Utilities Board is in a position to monitor the activities of the Barbados Light and Power Company and the Telephone Company, as of now, so that they are in a position, themselves, to initiate directives to the Barbados Light and Power Company and to the Telephone Company, as the case may be.

Mr. Speaker, the Public Utilities Board is not concerned only with rate-fixing, and many persons have expressed some concern as a result of not granting this increase that Barbados can look forward to more black-outs, greater cut backs, less efficiency etc. I do not subscribe to that view. I believe that the company has a responsibility to examine, or re-examine, itself and to ensure that it performs at the highest level of efficiency possible, and that it behaves in such a way as to fulfil its responsibility, under the licence which is granted to it, for the provision of service in Barbados.

It is the duty of the Public Utilities Board to direct the public utility companies in the method of their operation, in the way they should supply the service, and, if necessary, to ensure that their level of efficiency is at such a point that it will not interfere with the question of proper pricing, by way of a need for increased rates, which would be based only on inefficiency and bad management decisions on the part of the Barbados Light and Power Company.

Mr. Speaker, I have never had it explained to me — why it is that when I was Minister responsible for Trade the Barbados Light and Power Company indicated to the then Government, and indicated to the Public Utilities Board, that it was going to be expanded in a particular way at Spring Garden; that it was installing, I believe, Rolls Royce engines — steam turbines — which would ensure that we would be able to purchase the lowest grade oils, and therefore the cheapest oils, which would guarantee a cheaper delivery of an efficient service because the price at which they would have been purchasing the lower grade fuels would have been considerably lower than we were then purchasing diesel.

This was around the time when the energy crisis was at its peak — or the enforced energy crisis, as my colleague on my right would say. This was a time when we had every reason to believe that the quality of decision-making policy at the Barbados Light and Power Company was such that we could rely on their judgment.

I find it passing strange that in a relatively short time — after all, Mr. Speaker, we were not discussing the rachet of a Raleigh bicycle; we were not discussing the purchase of a pair of sappats — we were discussing the purchase of high level technology, we were discussing the purchase of very expensive equipment, and one has to assume that the decision-making which went into that process would have been very carefully considered, and that, recognising the capital investment which was being called forth, we could expect a decision of the highest possible quality — it is passing strange that within the same decade we have had the same arguments, virtually repeated, in relation to these so-called two-stroke engines. Those engines which have been purchased recently are to do precisely what the Spring Garden turbines were essayed, according to the company, to do.

Mr. Speaker, if that logic is continued, it means that every six years or so the Barbados Light and Power Company would be in a position to say to the people of Barbados, "we have to buy another set of engines or equipment which would allow us to buy the cheapest possible fuel and which would continue — not continue — at last allow us to have the lowest possible cost of electricity in Barbados."

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to stand on my feet and suggest that in any part of the world, with the possible exception of Trinidad and Tobago, there is any such thing today as "cheap energy", or "cheap fuel", and it is for that reason that when the concept of a Fuel Adjustment Clause was introduced, the then Government did not fight the issue, because it was recognised that since there was a movement in the price of fuel, an extraordinary movement from time to time, it would only be reasonable that those consumers who were sharing the service should also share the cost of the purchase of the raw material which provided that service.

But, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the question of having to pay for decisions which are made, and which other people in the community have every reason to believe are decisions made at the highest possible level, then a company that is the private company, has got to suffer — if "suffer" is the word — the result of any bad decisions it makes.

It is a cardinal principle in the so-called private sector economy, it is a cardinal principle in the capitalist economy, that where you have made bad management deci-

sions you do not have a right to expect that the consequences of those decisions would be passed on to your consumer. The only reason why that kind of philosophy continues to be visited upon ordinary people in the Caribbean region is because of a lack of competition in the so-called private sector in this same Caribbean.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that brings me to my next point. If, in fact, there is no competition; if, in fact, the situation is a monopoly situation, I raise a question whether it is valid to discuss that same industry or that same enterprise in the context of "private enterprise" or "capitalist endeavour" because, Sir, it is a company that has a monopoly that is producing the service which is vital to the entire community, and which provides no element of choice to the consumer.

There is no consumer in Barbados who can choose between electricity and something else, or the telephone and something else. That is why, if one examines the decisions that are made in the United States by the Public Utilities Commissions, you will find that those Commissions in the United States take a decidedly different view of the so-called private sector operations in the public utility companies than they take of the profit margins in companies like those, the motor car industry and that sort of thing.

4.15 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, that is why the question of the rate of return has been allowed to become part of the law. It is precisely because of the nature of the industry that the rate of return is considered to be a matter of law.

But there has been a lot of confusion, among experts, among different Public Utility Boards and Commissions, and indeed among all those persons who have an interest in public utilities, as to what ought to constitute a proper rate of return and, more importantly, on what that rate of return should be based.

It is a contention of a number of persons in Barbados that the base which the Public Utilities Board has been allowing is not in keeping with the realities of operation of business in Barbados.

I believe that is valid; I believe it is a matter which must be investigated. It must be investigated in such a way that the persons concerned can reach a valid conclusion that is not approached or based upon any particular ideological concern.

That notwithstanding, Mr. Speaker, I would say that the people of Barbados will have, in the not too distant future, to review the whole question of the ownership of public utilities in Barbados. It cannot be that we can continue, for the next 20 years, relying on a system which has outlived its usefulness in the minds of a

number of people in so far as it applies to the fundamental industries in a particular economy.

I believe it is that kind of thinking which led the Government before and the present Government to allow investment into the Barbados Light and Power Company and the Telephone Company, and I believe it is fear of a certain propaganda direction which would preclude most politicians from discussing fairly and squarely the issue of public ownership of public utilities in Barbados.

Mr. Speaker, it is premature to argue from this position at this time that we have reached a stage where the public utilities should be owned, totally, by the people of Barbados. But it is not premature — it is not premature — for me to call for an examination of the basis of ownership of these two fundamental industries in a community of this size.

Mr. Speaker, during 1975 when there was a blackout in New York, the Board of the City Council of New York called, in a Resolution, for the City of New York — and this is in a bastion of capitalism, you could not want anything that is nearer to the capitalist ideal than Wall Street and New York — and the Board of the Council in New York, together with a number of important persons in Wall Street in New York, and a number of prominent economists, all raised the question as to whether it is desirable for Con Edison in New York to continue to be the sole owner of the electric supply company in that City.

I am suggesting that it has nothing to do with ideological consideration. I am suggesting that it has to do with the practical consideration of the supply of energy in a community that cannot exist without the supply of energy, and it has to do with a legitimate claim by those who invest of having a proper rate of return on their investment, and it has to do with the final facing of the people in a community of the reality as to whether they are able to manage their own affairs.

I accept that there are certain enterprises which do not lend themselves well to Government and bureaucratic interference and Government and bureaucratic running. I submit, however, Mr. Speaker, that public utilities and similar fundamental industries do not fall into that category.

I draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Barbados Water Authority and, before that, the Waterworks Department has been a government department in this country for a substantial number of years. And without reference to the interference from time to time of certain decision-makers, it cannot be said that the supply of water in this country has been inefficient.

I say that the Waterworks Department and now the Barbados Water Authority gives the lie to the concept that a wholly-owned Government enterprise is incapable of supplying an efficient service. I am suggesting that when the politicians agree that the enterprise must be run on the basis of non-interference — not non-direction, but non-interference — in the management of the enterprise, that it is perfectly possible for that enterprise to supply its services sufficiently and effectively. Mr. Speaker, I will go further. In the United States itself.....

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot go much further. Time is against you.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will wind up.

In the United States, itself, and in Europe — it is not well known in Barbados, but I think it should be said — there are suppliers of energy and other public utilities that are wholly-owned by the Government.

I am therefore suggesting that we in Barbados have got to examine this whole question of the perennial hearings by the Public Utilities Board, holding your breath as to whether the rate is going to go up, getting some form of relief, and then subsequently, in the not to distant time, the whole issue starts from the beginning and go all over again.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. *(Applause)*

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, if no other Hon. Member wishes to speak (I will wind up. It is not critical of the Government) *(Asides)* The particular Resolution, Sir, although not critical of the Government, impinges upon Government policy. I knew that some time ago I had received a few notes relating to this Resolution and I recall them to mind now that I look at the wording of the motion.

I do not want to go into all the ins and outs of public ownership, the price-fixing mechanism, Mr. Frank Alleyne, whether or not the Government agreed with the World Bank that at the next rate hearing the rates would go up — the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central has said so more than once — I hope he apologised for having said so, now that he sees the rates have not gone up and the Government has not had the slightest impact on the rate-fixing procedure.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, I stand by what I said. What I said was that the Public Utilities Board has slapped the Government in their faces.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I will tell Mr. Brandford that the Hon. Member has said so, but the Hon.

Members can rest assured that the only person who has been slapped in its corporate face is the Barbados Light and Power Company. The Government took absolutely no part in this last rate hearing, other than the fact that we did not object.

We did not object because there is very little doubt, Mr. Speaker, that although we did not have a choice in terms such as enunciated by the Hon. Member for St. Michael West between electricity and some other sort of power or between the Telephone Company and something else — I do not know what is an alternative to telephone or electricity — but we do not have a choice between that, but we do have a choice between an electric service where electricity is on twenty-four hours a day in every part of the island, in quantities sufficient to satisfy every user, and an electric service where there are frequent outages, inadequate services in some parts of Barbados, low voltage to industrial consumers and others ills that afflict light and power companies.

If I were going to entertain any review of the structure of the Public Utilities Board and the Public Utilities Act, I think I would be more inclined to invite the Public Utilities Board to consider a criterion by which the rate is more precisely against quality of service than it is at present.

4.25 p.m.

The Fuel Clause, I have very little to say about that. The Rt. Hon. Member for St. John, in the capable and masterly way that he has demonstrated over thirty years in politics in grasping at confusion, and succeeding, very often, in empathising with those who are confused, has upon occasion attacked the concept of the Fuel Clause. I hope that he sat there and listened carefully to the speech of the Hon. Member on his left who has just sat down to gain some grasp of the sort of speech that should be made to the public about the Fuel Clause.

We could, of course, do away with the Fuel Clause and the Fuel Charge. We would therefore have to have a full-time Public Utilities Board, which, perhaps, would have a meeting every month to determine what the rate should be every month, because fuel varies by as much now over a three month period as the entire cost of fuel up — say to about 1962 or 1963, when fuel was still \$2.80 a barrel.

I would also, if I were making a change, consider an analysis of different users of electricity, their requirements, and what it would be in the country's interest to charge each class of users.

I have heard one of the more persistent critics of the Light and Power Company — I will name him, Sir,

I am not criticising him now — Mr. Rothwell, say that we should double the charge of electricity to domestic users, if they used more, I think he said, than 1500 units a month — I may not have got all the figures correct. There may be a case for that. There may also be a case for off-peak charging to industrial users, and in this lies the merit of the Resolution — not in any argument which is put forward by the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central, who convinces me as little on his sincerity about this matter as he does about virtually any other on which he speaks, except perhaps the maintenance of medical incomes.

The wording of the Resolution, rather than the arguments used in its support, I think contains what is significant for the House.

The Hon. Member probably knows that the World Bank, as part of the pre-conditions for the loan to the Barbados Light and Power Company, did set, at one stage, the requirement of a tariff study and I think that an adequate tariff study — not a perfunctory one carried on so as to say that a tariff study has been made — is something that should be done by the company in order to distribute the burden.

There are enormous problems here, Sir, do not fool yourself. There are those commentators who say that the difference between a community that is well run and a community that is not well run is often the community's attitude towards utility charges of all kinds; that communities in which irresponsible politicians hold out to the public the possibility of getting cheap power, or cheap telephones, cheap gasoline and cheap services, are, inevitably, the communities in which the services collapse; and that communities whose politicians are brave enough and honest enough to tell the public, you get nothing for nothing, you get nothing for nothing.... (Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Free National Health Service.) The free National Health Service is being paid for by a subscription of one per cent on National Insurance. May be it will be more, Sir.

I have just come from an island where utility rates are relatively low. The electricity went off one morning — I really mean no offence to Jamaica when persons were required to communicate physically between the sixteenth floor and the ground floor if they were to make certain appointments on time. I do not mind walking down sixteen floors, Sir. Walking up is more a strain, I can tell you that. But this, apparently, is not unusual.

There is another neighbouring island, the island of Trinidad, where utility rates are negligible. They believe that the oil will be there forever, they can give it away. And I think it was salutary — I am not going to repeat it — every time I repeat it, the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John will dig it out of the *Gazette* and say that I say so,

so I am not going to repeat it — but I think it was salutary — a remark that the Rt. Hon. Member for St. John made about the oil running out and what would happen then. But it is given away in Trinidad.

It is given away to such an extent that there is no sense of responsibility — and I am again not being critical beyond what the Government of Trinidad itself has been critical — in the utility company.

There is no adequate approach to customer service — money does not matter — so they put in generating plant of something like one thousand million megawatts, something like that, if you count the industrial complex at Point Lisas, and they discovered that this plethora of electricity is too much for the transmission lines and so they have to replace the transformers at Barataria once a month. But electricity is cheap in Trinidad — when you can get it.

Now, an opposite path has been followed in Barbados, and it has been followed by both Governments no matter what any Hon. Member says in here. When the Hon. Member for St. Michael West was the responsible Minister, the Government did not object to the rates going up in 1974. The Hon. Member for Christ Church West Central was the lawyer for the electric company who stopped me from objecting. He made an objection to my appearing in order to plea for cheaper rates.

Mr. M. A. KING: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Speaker. I was never, at any time, the legal adviser for the electric company. I was never at any time the legal adviser for the Barbados Light and Power Company.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: But whose speech is he elucidating? He is elucidating his own confusion. I never said he was. I said he stopped me from objecting to the Public Utilities Board. He was the lawyer for the Public Utilities Board and he objected to my appearance. So nobody had an opportunity to object to the rate in 1974. (Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: So who were you appearing for?) I was appearing for a member of the Hon. Member's Party. (Laughter) For several Members of the Hon. Member's Party. I was not appearing for any Member of the Hon. Member's Party who conspired with certain counsel on the morning of the rate hearing to convey information to the Hon. Member — no, not the Hon. Member, nobody would conspire with him. Nobody would conspire with the Hon. Member. But the result of the conspiracy was conveyed to him well judged that he would be unable to detect the conspiracy behind it. Anyhow, I am not dealing with that.
4.35 p.m.

Both Governments in Barbados to their credit have understood the need to pay an economic price for electricity in this country.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I reluctantly rise on a point of elucidation. It is obvious that the Hon. Member came into the Chamber at the tail end of my speech and missed the gravamen of my argument throughout the speech. I don't think it is necessary for him to flog a dead horse.

The points he is making were freely acknowledged before the question I raised at the end — that while one did not consider that now is the time for public ownership, that one considers it is now the time for consideration. He seems to be of the view that one has made the point that we could throw out what is there. I thought I had better explained.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, I really have to rise on a point of explanation. The Hon. Member..... (Asides) Sorry, on a point of elucidation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Just a minute. The Standing Orders do not provide for this explanation.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Hon. Member should have no fear. I have said nothing about him that his colleagues don't freely say. The Hon. Member really need not have no worries.

Mr. M. A. KING: On a point of elucidation, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your rising again would have to be fraudulent

Certain remarks made by the Hon. Member for Christ Church West Central were ordered to be expunged from the Record by the SPEAKER at this stage.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Hon. Member can make a speech.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Please Mr. Prime Minister get on with your debate.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am trying to Sir, I am trying to.

I, myself, believe that what has happened in the recent rate case probably serves the electric company right. If it did not prepare its case, if it could not put its case, it could not put its case. The Public Utilities Board considers that the electric company's debt liabilities can be discharged by the present rate, I am not having the slightest quarrel with that. The electric company, if it can show otherwise, no doubt will come otherwise in the future. The Government is not stepping left nor right in this matter.

But I will say this — and it may not be known to Hon. Members — and I know this not by any communica-

tion from the company - the electric company has received a letter from the Commonwealth Development Corporation stating that its rate of earnings is insufficient to service the loan and has threatened to call the loan.

And I just warn Hon. Members, if something like that happens, and the Government in Barbados is called on to pay any guarantee, there can be no conceivable question of the electric rates staying where there are and the Government burdening the taxpayers with what is something like perhaps one quarter of Government's revenue because of this. I just warn about that.

The Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central is saying that we were warned not to enter into that agreement, we should never have had any expansion. *(Asides)* But I just heard him say so. But everybody knows that the electric services now is worse than what it was two years ago, because of the amount, consumption of power has exceeded the capacity of the existing system. And if we had not have an expansion in this island, the lights would be, by the end of next year, going off in every part of Barbados four or six hours a day.

That is a considered statement. This country could not have sustained the expansion of industrial activity, the expansion of electricity to every home in the island, which it has seen under the Barbados Labour Party, unless there was an expansion in power generating capacity of the electric company.

Don't let us fool ourselves or be carried away by any cheap argument by people who think that the whole public wants everything for nothing and that you cannot explain to the people that services must be paid for.

You could not have doubled industrial output in five years. You could not have filled the last 20 per cent of houses in Barbados with electricity. You could not have added 3 000 hotel rooms and air conditioned 350 000 tourists unless you had a bigger capacity at the Light and Power Company.

I say that if we had not this expansion, that if you think a 4 per cent or 5 per cent loss of tourists is something, wait until the tourists cannot get air conditioning and we go down 20 per cent; and wait until you cannot hold a meeting of the House of Assembly for six or seven hours or eight hours because the lights are going to go out in the middle of it.

Go to Jamaica or go to Trinidad, if you believe that electricity rates can stay low forever, or if you believe that the difference in the scale of profits between a utility company and another company is in favour of the utility company, as the Hon. Member for St. Michael West would make you believe.

You know where the business decisions.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation, Sir. It is clear now, Sir, that the Hon. Member did not understand my speech. I never at any time indicated..... *(Asides)*

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I really can't give way on this.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am already on my feet. You can't get up - you are not the Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the Member does not give way, he cannot be made to give way.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But the Hon. Member sat down, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Hon. Member is on his feet, and he says he does not give way.

Rt. Hon J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Hon. Member said that, and if he objects, because it is possible his objection is honest, I shall explain it.

The Hon. Member said that utility fixing boards in the United States apply different criteria to utility companies than to those prevailing in other businesses. That is true. They give them a smaller margin of profit. It is guaranteed, but it is smaller. That is the whole point.

So the price-fixing procedure which exists at present, and to which the only alternative I can think of will be the Government fixing it, the price-fixing procedure which exists at present, and which is patterned in the United States, is that a utility must provide a permanent service. It must not shut off its service. It must work twenty four hours a day in all parts of Barbados.

At one stage, indeed, I was going to make a Compulsory Supply Order for the whole island. This was years ago when the electricity company was giving a little difficulty about electrifying Lewis Village, St. Thomas and one or two places in St. George, and St. Philip, too. But we were able to get electricity brought within reach of every home in Barbados without that, so we have not had to do it.

Other than that they are compelled - and they don't have a monopoly, that is another point. The electric company has no monopoly. That is an error. The electric company has no monopoly. Anybody is free to

make his own electricity. Anybody is free, and it is a measure of the quality of service we have in this island that the Hon. Member for Christ Church West Central, the Hon. Member for St. Michael West and the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central can laugh at that.

If they lived in Jamaica or Trinidad it would be a commonplace that everybody has the right to make their own electricity, because there are countries where, when you must have electricity, you buy a generator. But nobody in Barbados, or very few people in Barbados, ever have to consider to buy an electric generator — a commonplace thing in some parts of the world. It is because we have a good service that we can laugh at having the idea of having our own generators. Nobody would waste the time in Barbados.

Now the question of nationalization. The Rt. Hon. Member for St. John, the former Prime Minister, made the definitive statement on this subject many years ago when he indicated his unwillingness to see public ownership of the electric company, and Government's policy has not changed since then. But, with the Hon. Member for St. Michael West, I agree that the matter must be constantly kept under review.

We reviewed it and our consideration was that it should become a local company, in terms of majority local ownership, that the Government should have a substantial share in it and should appoint directors, and that there should be no further conveying of shares in the company to other foreigners. So the foreign-owned shares in the Light and Power Company cannot be sold to other foreigners unless permission is given. They must be sold locally.
4.45 p.m.

The Telephone Company is not yet in the position of local ownership but it is the electric company of which we are talking.

The matter of public ownership is kept under review, but, Mr. Speaker, we are both labour parties and therefore you have to listen to both of us. When we talk about this subject you know we are not talking about it in this House on any ideological basis.

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot talk about it any more because time is against both sides. It is 4.45. This brings us to the end of Private Members' Business for today.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. SPEAKER: Government Business is the instant order of the day.

Hon. Del. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, I wish to reply to a few points made by some Hon. Members on this Resolution.

The Hon. Member for St. John did make the point that despite a number of acquisition being made the people are not being paid for their lands.

I wish to assure you and this Honourable Chamber that though it might be true that some people have not received compensation as quickly as one would wish, it is not because Government does not have the money, neither is it because Government is reluctant to pay them for their lands.

Most of these problems arise when persons are unable to produce the necessary titles, and without the production of these titles the compensation is not being paid.

I have had discussion with the A. G's Office, the Crown Solicitor, and I pointed out to him that this should not be any problem; it should not cause Government to withhold any compensation that is due to persons whose lands have been acquired.

I have also discussed with him the possibility of placing the compensation in the Treasury so that those persons could make a claim and have their money drawn out as soon as they were able to produce the title. So there is no question of Government refusing, or any slip-up on Government's part, as far as compensation is concerned.

Another thing is that we have found — and I have mentioned this before — that there are some persons who sent claims to properties which are not rightfully theirs.

I have come across one or two cases where we have had to delay payment because the persons who had the proper titles made subsequent claims, and in order to keep Government out of possible legal problems we have decided to make sure that all the documents are produced and are genuine before such payments are made.

The Hon. Member for St. John, I am sure, knows of one such person who was claiming lands that were not really belonging to him, and it was, in my opinion, a very wise decision to withhold such payment, otherwise Government could find itself paying two vendors for the same piece of land.

He did mention the point about expropriation and he did go on to say that if you take three or four years to settle, this is tantamount to expropriation.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to go on record as saying that the Democratic Labour Party acquired a piece of land from a gentleman by the name of Mr. Bowring in 1972, and when they went out of office in 1976 the man was not paid. The land was acquired at Bottom Bay, St. Philip.

If anyone is accused or can be accused of expropriation, I think the Hon. Member is in a better position to explain what that means.

As far as I am concerned, every effort is made by this Government to settle all outstanding acquisitions as quickly as possible. The allocation for this year is not yet exhausted and I am told that the records will reveal that these acquisitions have been processed extremely speedily indeed.

The other point that was made by Hon. Members is that compensation should be paid to persons before the land has been acquired

Let me point out that the normal procedure is that persons are notified of Government's intention to acquire the land, and from the time the section 3 notice is published those persons, from that time up to the actual date of compensation, are paid at no less, according to the Land Acquisition Act, than 6 per cent on their compensation.

There are other provisions in the Act which make it clear that the vendors in no way suffer as a result of any acquisition, and I do not know of anyone whose lands or property have been acquired who has suffered as a result of such acquisition. If the vendor is dissatisfied with the level of compensation, he can resort to the law courts for a hearing on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think that any new matters have been introduced in this debate. What we have heard today is a repeat of what we have heard on all Resolutions dealing with acquisitions. With that, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

THE CONSUMPTION TAX (AMENDMENT) (No. 2) ACT, 1982

Item No. 4 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Consumption Tax Act.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I regret the circumstances under which this Bill comes before the House, because earlier this year we did make comprehensive amendments, but it seems that the draughtsman misunderstood the instructions, and his error, my error, the error of the civil servants and the error of the House — all of us — the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central too, Sir — allowed Sections 7(b) and (h) of the old Consumption Tax Act to pass in a meaningless way.

What really happened is that Section (h), the present section, which is the one we dealt with a few months ago, was meant to be the reworded form of Section (b).

I knew at the time there was something wrong, Sir, but it was right after the Budget, notice was given the same night of the Budget, as I recall, and it got through, Sir.
4.55 p.m.

Also Section (a) is now redundant because there is a general power in the Second Schedule. The Second Schedule exempts goods imported by the Government — Section 7(a), these are exemptions from Consumption Tax — so I have decided to repeal Section (a) in that it gives the Minister unnecessary power.

The other part, Sir, relates to a different problem that was not observed at the time of the Budget.

Goods sometimes are imported into Barbados and they pay duty and Consumption Tax. They then go out of Barbados, either for repair or are re-exported, and then sometimes, Sir — if they go out for repair obviously, but even the re-exported goods — come back into Barbados and there is no provision at present to save them being charged the Consumption Tax again. When they come back in they do not have to pay Customs Duty but they have to pay Consumption Tax.

Accordingly, Sir, we would like to apply Section 106 of the Customs Act to the Consumption Tax Act to allow these re-imported goods, goods being imported into Barbados for the second time, not to have to pay the Consumption Tax twice, Sir. That is the burden of the Bill.

There is one other small thing, Sir. The Minister is given power to query or revoke Schedules, that is, to change the charges. I do not think that Hon. Members will have any serious quarrel about that. The power has always been there, but originally it was in the single because there was only one Schedule. Now there are two Schedules, it needs to be pluralised. It is really a very simple matter.

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

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

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

On motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Mr. SPEAKER, left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 inclusive were called and passed.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 6, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 6.

FINAL APPROPRIATION (1981-1982) ACT, 1982.

Order No. 6 was called — A bill to grant an additional sum of money out of the Consolidated Fund and appropriate the same for the service of the Island for the financial year ended 31st March, 1982.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the last occasion that there was an Appropriation Bill, we heard a great deal of vehemence, faithfully reproduced in the Press, about how sloppy and inefficient the Government was, how it did not know its business, how the final Appropriation Bill was three months late, despite the fact that it was pointed out to the Press — of course it was Mr. Martindale — only Mr. Aubrey Ward and his descendants can successfully point out anything to Mr. Martindale — despite the fact we pointed out that when we came into power there was a backlog of three Appropriation Bills that had not been passed, and the Press said not a word about it, I just decided that we would break all records and bring it six months earlier than usual. *(Applause.)*

I have decided to break the record, and this is the Appropriation Bill for the year just past. It is the year ending March 1982.

I would like to thank the Permanent Secretary, Finance (Acting), Mr. Griffith and the Chief Parliamentary Counsel and all concerned for their speed and expedition in this matter. I think that they would justly stunned by the accusations of sloppiness and ignorance by the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central. I think that the Hon. Member's remarks undoubtedly must have struck home.

I gave the instructions very shortly after the last debate. I gave the instructions, I think, on the 18th of

May, the Bill went to the Attorney General on the 21st, the Attorney-General finished it on the 28th and sent it back, I approved it on the 2nd June, it went to Cabinet on the 11th June and the rest of the time has been taken up in parliamentary process. So the Hon. Member has every conceivable date in this particular exercise in non-sloppiness.

5.05 p.m.

But I would not like the Hon. Member to feel too important with himself, because, quite honestly, the Government of Barbados ran with the Bill being late for last year and it will run with the Bill being early for this year, as if there had been no interruption other than the Hon. Member's vituperations, of the Hon. Member's fulminations — I will withdraw "vituperations" and substitute "fulminations" — to the even tenor of the stream of economic management in this Island.

Sir, it is very bad for me to go out of the island, especially to another West Indian island, and hear the praise that poor Barbados gets and then have to come back in here and see how misguided a shadow spokesman of finance we have in the House of Assembly. It is an embarrassment to leave Barbados and see the people look up to Barbados and then to have to come back here and see how people in the Opposition look up under themselves when they are dealing with Barbados and all its work.

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

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE: I beg to second that.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I would not at all be as ungracious as the Rt. Hon. Member.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, it has not been seconded. This man is there sitting down sleeping. He does not know what is going on.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand it was seconded by the Hon. Member for St. Lucy. *(Laughter.)*

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, I will not attempt to be as ungracious as the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister. I will say that I am very pleased to see this Final Appropriation Bill before this House at an early stage in this financial year, and if I have made any slight contribution from the Opposition benches in bringing this to the attention of Parliament — well he can say so as grudgingly as he likes.

I think that it is reasonable that the Staff of the Ministry of Finance, who would have done the preparation, should respond to parliamentary pressures, particularly when provisions of the Constitution and the Financial Administration and Audit Act are involved. I believe

they understand the role of Parliament in respect of the Constitution of Barbados.

Sir, you may recall that apart from this, there was one other complaint which I made which is very germane in respect of promises made on the Floor of Parliament, and I would hope that the Rt. Hon. Member for St. Thomas would recall that I reminded him of his 1977 promise to ensure that in the interest of the country and of proper parliamentary debate in respect of Budgets that the Economic Report be laid in Parliament well in advance of the Budget. The two complaints were made at the same time. I am satisfied that there was a reasonable response to this one, and I look forward to a response to the other complaint.

I deeply regret that the Hon. Member should be upset that we should try to get behind the veil of propaganda and seek the truth about the economic situation in Barbados. It is our job to do this and our job to try to help you to run the country. We do our best by making suggestions from this side, and where we see major deficiencies we point them out.

There is no point saying that by doing our duty we are running you down here in Barbados, and when you go elsewhere people, who are not quite *au fait* with the realities of the economic situation, but probably responding to your television performances and therefore they might still be in a state of intoxication, which you managed to inflict on the people of Barbados two years ago, praise you.

But the people of Barbados "done with that." They see you now for what you are. They have no confidence in you any longer. They no longer consider you any financial genius. In fact, they think of you as a bit of an economic disaster to the country.

So you have to bear these things in mind. We are doing our duty and we are trying to help. When I speak, I am trying to help. I do not want to see disruption, I do not want to see chaos, I do not want to see revolution and I do not want to see any social or economic disruption or destruction in Barbados. Therefore, I have a duty where I see deficiencies in the Government's development strategy to point them out, and that is all we try to do here from the Opposition benches and outside of Parliament, and we do no more. Thank you very much.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In winding up I would only thank the Hon. Member and tell a very short tale — not of two cities but of two meetings.

The Democratic Labour Party held two political meetings in two different parts of Barbados recently and at

one of them, at which the Leader of the Opposition was the principal speaker — the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central was a speaker — there were some statesmanlike speeches made.

The Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central took issue with me more in sorrow than in anger. I do not think he told the people in front of him that the people are not with the Government. He would say so in here for his own comfort, but he would not actually tell a big crowd that, because that might jar on the ears of some, but he invited me to defend the Barbados dollar, which we are doing; to run the country carefully, which we are doing; to take prudent measures for the economic governance of the country, which we are doing.

The Leader of the Opposition made a speech on some subject, it was the same speech that he is accustomed to making, whatever the subject.

But the tone of the meeting, for the benefit of the 350 people whom the police estimated attended it, was a sober and proper one.

Yet, another meeting now is held and I wish that the Hon. Member for St. Michael South Central could have been present at this other meeting, held in Westbury Road — 400 people attended, more than attended the big meeting.

At that meeting, far from making speeches telling the Government what to do for the good of the country, somebody got up and made a speech — I do not know if he is a political aspirant, he is the brother of one — I do not really believe he is a doctor — and announced that cane fires do no harm to the sugar crop; that the Government and the sugar producers were lying, when they told people that they must not burn canes; that the burning of canes was beneficial for the production of sugar in 1968, and that it was only a fiction that the burning of canes is damaging to sugar in 1982.

Let a little of the spirit that pervades at public meetings, when the Leader of the Opposition is the principal speaker, enter into some of the other catastrophic, cursing, ignorant meetings that are held by the side-kicks of the party, and their acolytes. Let a little of that spirit enter into them.

I do not normally move myself to great heights when I read the report of a political meeting held by the other side. In fact, when I get the verbatim reports from the Barbados Labour Party's own organisation, I do not even read them.

I read Vernon Smith. I will read what he says, but that is not for any political reason. The Hon. Leader

of the Opposition is too old and wise. I would not read his speeches. I might read them for the content, but I would not read them for economic reasons.
5.15 p.m.

But I was actually appalled to read this speech. Hon. Members will notice that I do not name the gentleman because I am saying this really as a warning, if this is the type of speech. It is the first time I have run across any report of a speech that he has made.

It really cannot do Barbados any good for anybody, even in Westbury Road, Parris Gap, where there cannot be much cane, to make an impassioned speech, backed up by the weight of professional status, to the effect that burning canes does no harm and that it is a wicked Labour Party Government plot to stop people burning canes. It cannot do people any good.

I enquired

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, Sir, I was looking at the Order Paper, I thought we passed the *Reports* stage and I thought we were doing the Appropriation Bill, the Final Appropriation Act.

We are getting a report on political meetings. I am very grateful for the information, but I do not think it is strictly what we are supposed to be discussing, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I was just waiting to see if the meeting had been held in here, in this Honourable Chamber.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Or if they had appropriated some funds at the meeting, Sir. I do not know what was going on.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I see here, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs, Land Development, Crop Research, Cane Variety Testing, Plant Propagation, Land and Water Use Research. All that is in this Bill, Sir. Nonetheless, ...

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. Earlier this year, when I attempted to do exactly what the Hon. Member is trying to do now, he rose on a point of order and pointed out that I could not refer to those heads because I would have been reflecting on a vote of the Honourable House — and that point of order was upheld.

Mr. SPEAKER. I do not know it would be upheld today.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I always said to my colleagues the boy can learn. I always said so.

The Hon. Members are, of course, quite right, Sir, but it is a more general point that I am making.

I would really very, very much hope that if we are going to have a debate on cane fires that we would have it within the framework of some technical knowledge, and that the country is not going to be dragged down by elements in a political party taking up the cudgel of cane fires, so to speak, taking up the box of matches and throwing them about. I would really very much hope that.

I think most of us do understand the destructiveness to the economy of cane fires, and the catastrophic effect it has had on the harvest this year.

I say this within the context of what the Hon. Member said, not to make it into a debate on agriculture, which, of course, will be against the Rules, Sir.

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

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

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

On the motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses one to four inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

The preamble was called and passed.

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

On the separate motions of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Item No. 7, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 7.

PESTICIDES CONTROL (AMENDMENT) ACT,
1982

Order No. 7 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Pesticides Control Act.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the amendment to this Act is just a simple amendment. What it seeks to do is to have a situation where the Chief Medical Officer does not have, of necessity, to attend the meeting of the Pesticides Control Board, but that the nominee of such an officer will be able to serve on the Board in that officer's place.

All the modern Acts coming down now are coming down in that way. In the past, the Acts were so drafted that the designated officer, *ex officio* officer, had to attend, because that person was so designated without any arrangement made for a nominee of such a person.

This is just a simple change in the Act in order to make provision whereby a nominee of the Chief Medical Officer can serve in place of the Chief Medical Officer.

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

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

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

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to His Honour the Speaker the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended for ten minutes.

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

The question that the House be suspended for ten minutes was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

5.35 p.m.

On Resumption:—

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now stand adjourned until 12 o'clock noon on Tuesday, July 27, 1982.

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

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

5.50 p.m.