
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 28th September, 1982.

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

PRESENT

His Honour W. C. B. HINDS, J.P., (Speaker); Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Mr. L. L. SISNETT; Hon. L. S. CRAIG, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House); Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, M.A., M.Sc. (Econ.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food and Consumer Affairs); Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE; Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER, (Minister of Education); Mr. J. G. ODLE, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees); Hon. V. L. JOHNSON, M.A., (Minister of Labour and Social Security); Mr. B. M. TAITT, B.A., (Hons.), M.A., LL.B. (Hons.), and Mr. A. TRUSS.

Prayers were taken by Archdeacon F. A. Cayless.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, Mr. P. M. GREAVES and Hon. H. B. St. JOHN entered the Chamber and took their seats.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, September 21, 1982.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Your Honour, I beg to move that the Minutes for September 21, 1982 be taken as read.

Mr. SPEAKER: If there are no observations by honourable Members, let those Minutes stand confirmed.

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

The Sewerage Regulations, 1982.

The Barbados Water Authority (In-House Installations) Regulations 1982.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay –

The Statement showing the sums advanced to the Postmaster General for the payment of Money Orders for the month of June, 1982.

The Statement showing the sums advanced to the Postmaster General for the payment of Money Orders for the month of July, 1982.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay The Tariff Book (Amendment) 1982.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I am commanded to lay the Report on Vital Statistics and Registrations for the year 1980.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN entered the Chamber and took his seat.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, and 42(5) be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting. There is no Private Members' Business or Questions, and therefore there is no assurance to be given from this side in relation to Private Members' Business.

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

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

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

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that Government Business be now taken. I therefore call Order No.1, which was earlier postponed for further consideration.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON SUGAR INDUSTRY ACT, 1982

Order No. 1 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to make new provisions for the development of the sugar industry and to consolidate certain enactments related thereto.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central was addressing the Chair. I do not now see the said honourable Member in his place. (A Pause) I learn that the said honourable Member had completed his address. Is there any other honourable Member who wishes to make a contribution to this debate?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, this Bill which seeks to reform the law relating to the sugar industry has so far had some very interesting debate. I have to join with those who indicated some disappointment that after this Bill had been trumpeted for some considerable time, with an indication from the Minister, in varying and sundry ways, that what the Bill would do when it eventually arrived on the floor of this Honourable House would be to revolutionise the sugar industry and indeed agriculture in this community in general, what in fact we have before us is something which could probably be described as "a consolidating Bill", except that in its effort to consolidate the legislation which governed the agricultural regime in Barbados during the past few years, it is open to question whether the Bill succeeds, and indeed whether the Bill is not in some ways retrogressive.

Enough has been said about the sugar industry as not to warrant my repetition of a number of points that have been made, but I believe that the question of agricultural development in Barbados requires some further debate and some further comment.
12.25 p.m.

I believe, before I move on from sugar, that the constant indication that at some point Barbados is going to be able to produce 150 000 tonnes of sugar in a given year does nothing for the serious examination of the industry as a whole.

Mr. Speaker, recently a Mr. Douglas Lynch prepared a paper on the sugar industry in this country in which he offered some suggestions and some observations concerning the development of the sugar industry. The one that I find of interest is the suggestion that instead of bringing what the Minister likes to call those 'marginal lands' into production – I believe it is fair to say that the Minister has on occasion indicated that it is necessary for all of those marginal lands to be in sugar production if we are to meet our target of 135 000 to 150 000 tonnes – Mr. Lynch's suggestion is that instead of our continuing disastrously to place those marginal lands into production, creating problems not only for the owners of those lands but for the industry as a whole – because the average price at which we produce one tonne of sugar continues in Barbados, like it does in the rest of the West Indies, to rise at a phenomenal rate – he suggested that a better policy might be to take all of those better producing lands, aim at a higher productivity level, a higher yield from the more productive lands, and to get a higher tonnage per acre from those areas by an intensification of the agricultural method we now use, and a more efficient deployment of the resources at our command.

Whether one agrees with him or not, one has to accept that it is a point of view that is worthy of serious examination.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for St. Thomas is on record, I believe somewhat at a varied view from that of the Minister responsible for Agriculture in making the point that Barbados cannot hope or strive for a certain production level, that is to say, to feed itself, and the impression one gets from his argument is that because we import certain wheat products and certain products such as rice and other carbohydrate products that we ought not to be striving to diversify our productive capacity to the extent that it would interfere with the lands now available for sugar.

If I understand his argument correctly, I wish to disagree with him profoundly. I feel that we have demonstrated over the last 25 years, notwithstanding the political rhetoric on both sides, that agricultural diversification is a possibility.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, that in the early Seventies a decided thrust was made in the area of milk production, in the area of chicken and other protein meat production, and a number of experiments were carried out in the area of nutrients for the animal and poultry production in Barbados indeed, for such innovations as feed lot development in the dairy and meat industry.

I also believe we initiated the thrust in the Black Belly sheep development in Barbados, which saw Barbados becoming a major producer of this fine animal

for Latin America and the Caribbean. I well remember that when one would go to international conferences from time to time, Ministers of Agriculture and other related fields would seek to discover how best they could get strains of Black Belly sheep from Barbados in order to improve and increase their respective flocks.

I am saying that, Mr. Speaker, not to demonstrate that there was an effective agricultural policy during our regime, not that so much, but to demonstrate that, generally speaking, in Barbados it is possible to have a diversification that will be effective in terms of (a) increasing the quality of food products which our people eat and (b) reducing the foreign exchange expenditure which we in Barbados spend as a matter of course on an annual basis, and I believe that the food import Bill in this country is now in excess of \$1 billion.

I say that Mr. Speaker, to indicate that an intensification of the diversification programme or approach to agricultural development is possible if some of those marginal lands with which people strive continuously to get a reasonable yield of sugar cane can be made available for other more pressing agricultural development needs.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, for example, that at one time a study of peanuts was commissioned for the Caribbean. It was recognised that a substantial quantity of this product, which is very high in protein, was in fact being imported into the region, and that apart from St. Kitts and, I believe Nevis, that there were not many other countries in the Caribbean that had approached peanut production in any scientific way.

An attempt was to be made, as far as I can remember, in the St. Philip or St. Lucy areas of Barbados, where I am told by those who are far senior to me in chronological age that high-quality peanuts used to be produced in St. Lucy and St. Philip.

Recently, Mr. Speaker, one heard evidence that one of the major plantations in the southern part of the country was in danger of closing, or in fact had closed. When one compares this information with the other information which is trumpeted from time to time about the return to agricultural production of certain lands, one has to ask the question, what are the experiments, where is the innovative thrust which the Ministry of Agriculture is putting before the population for the 21st century for the development of this country?

Mr. Speaker, there is another development which causes some concern, and I speak here of the Agricultural Development Corporation and the Barbados Marketing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, at the risk of being singular and alone in my criticism, I wish to state that contrary to the

published information which has been promulgated throughout Barbados in the last few weeks and months, the Barbados Marketing Corporation is in a worse state today than it has ever been, given the objects for which it was created. Not even under the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central did the corporation suffer to the extent it now suffers, even as it trumpets to the population that it is showing improvement and doing much better.

It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that the corporation is relying almost entirely on its duty free shop at the airport in order to keep itself alive. It is a fact that while the corporation is indicating to the population, and while some unsuspecting journalist picks up the information and repeats it *ad infinitum*, and indeed some editorialist seeks to point out the advantages which the Barbados Marketing Corporation has been bringing in the last few months, it is a fact that in recent times the corporation has not been even able to pay its legitimate bills.

12.35 p.m.

An attempt on the part of that corporation to re-introduce a policy, which, unfortunately, was emasculated during the period immediately preceding this regime, at the corporation, a policy in which an attempt to market the produce of the smaller producers in this country was set out and an attempt made to implement them, the corporation recently attempted to re-introduce that policy. But suffering as it does from a lack of financial means, while, at the same time, bragging that it does not require those financial needs, now finds itself in the very interesting position of not being able to ask the Government for a subvention, having trumpeted to the population that it had turned the corner.

It is my contention, Mr. Speaker, that the Barbados Marketing Corporation and the Agricultural Development Corporation were founded in the correct philosophical bases for the agricultural development of this country. To the extent that the various persons who had to administer their affairs were unable to grapple with the ramifications of the particular policy, it is proper that they should have been criticised.

But it is still correct to say that the small producer in this country will be unable to make any impact on the agricultural development of the country unless an agency, such as the Marketing Corporation, provides that small producer with an outlet, an outlet that is stable, an outlet that is consistent, for his or her produce, in order that such a small producer can plan his production properly.

Mr. Speaker, what is beginning to happen in this country is that a number of small farmers are finding themselves not only in economic straits, but they are also finding themselves in social difficulties.

This is what I mean, Mr. Speaker. Recently, the two feed plants in Barbados have been taking over, acquiring, a number of medium size and small farms in this country. They acquire them by a well-known method, which has been practised in some developed countries, where the farmer goes into debt for his feed over a period of time and at some point he is so indebted to the feed producer that the feed producers become partners with him, wittingly or unwittingly.

What has begun to happen in this country in the last few months is that persons with as many as a 1 000 chicks have found themselves having to put themselves in the hands of the feed plant. What that will lead to, Sir, is a situation where the poultry production in this country will soon be regulated, directed and owned by a very small number of persons in this community.

Now we have been talking for 40 years in this country about sharing the economic cake, about spreading the base from which the economic development of Barbados would proceed. It does not fall well for us to be able to say, after these 40 years of rhetoric, that small farmers are now having to sell out to larger farmers, and now those larger farmers are none other, in most cases, than the same corporations of which much was said during the '50s and the '60s about their having total control of the economic development and indeed the economy of this country.

An agricultural policy for Barbados, Sir, must be sensitive, not only to the rhetoric about profits which one reads from time to time in certain columns of the newspapers, but it must be sensitive to the needs of those who are willing to commit themselves to the noble profession of farming in this community.

There was a time, Mr. Speaker, when corn was grown in Barbados in large quantities, there was a time when cassava was grown in large quantities, and during those times — I remember those times, Mr. Speaker — we were able to have some innovation in the use of foods in Barbados, partly because there was nothing else available — at least, for some of us — but the point I am making, Sir, is not that food was hard to get sometime in those days — the point I am making is that during the 1960s and 70s there was a lot of talk about the use of indigenous production for the creation of proper based feeds for the development of our meat industry.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister of Agriculture, what has happened to all of that noble intention? Where have all of the plans for the creation of a proper base for the feeds which would be sold at reasonable cost to the farmers of Barbados?

Mr. Speaker, I can say categorically that Barbados Feeds Limited was not created to make large quantities

of money for any one individual, or indeed for the Government. Barbados Feeds Limited was created (a) to provide competition, I put it that way, but better put, to provide stability in the feed market. That was the primary reason, because at that time a particular monopolistic feed producer sought to dictate the entire agricultural policy of the entire community.

Barbados Feeds Limited was founded. It was anticipated that as a spin-off from the Flour Mill that ingredients and raw materials would have been made available to Barbados Feeds Limited and that contracts would be gone into with the producers of corn — maize, if you will — and other similar ingredients in Barbados and that the Ministry of Agriculture, as part of the scientific and technological developments in these fields, would be seeking to bring our production to a level where we would be able, successfully, to sell our product at a reasonable price — and still provide the basis for the farmer to live a decent life.

Mr. Speaker, it is not sufficient merely from time to time for persons to exhort the rest of the community to return to the land, to get back to agriculture. All of these are phrases which one hears from time to time, but to anyone who aspires to farming in Barbados — and I am not talking about the conglomerates, I am talking about the one man farm or two man farm — anyone who aspires to the difficulties with which they are visited from month to month, year to year, cannot in all conscience look forward to farming as a vocation or as a basis for developing a family.

It has taken something like seven years for us to develop the Springhall estates. And even as I speak Mr. Speaker, here today, it is open to question whether that project has got off the ground, whether that project is fulfilling its original objectives, and whether it is feasible in the long term to anticipate that Springhall and other similar projects will provide a few Barbadians who are committed to the soil with a livelihood and a status commensurate to what is decent and what is reasonable in this society.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps what we need in this country is an Agricultural Committee that is made up of members of both parties. Perhaps what we need, Sir, is to approach the development of agriculture in a non-partisan way, because, Mr. Speaker, there is no Barbados Labour Party way or Democratic Labour Party way for yams to grow. When yams are about to shoot out of the ground, they don't ask which party they belong to.

12.45 p.m.

What we need in this country is for there to be a lessening of the adverse criticism, which visits any attempt from time to time to get a new thrust in agriculture. And

where on the one hand, we have the Minister seeking to suggest — perhaps not this Minister, but I think “yes” this Minister — seeking to suggest that agricultural policy started in 1976, we on our side feel bound, Sir, to defend that, and while defending it to point out the number of inconsistencies and shortcomings on the other side — and the criticisms and the adversary relationship tend to obfuscate the real gains which have been made in agriculture in this country.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, when you find that the Minister of Finance, the honourable Member for St. Thomas, differs fundamentally in his approach to the subject from the Minister of Agriculture, the honourable Member for Christ Church East, the dichotomy and dilemma stretches even farther, and we have an incoherent policy.

The words of the Minister of Agriculture are coherent — that is a fact. But the policy of agriculture lacks coherence in its implementation. When one examines the performance of the agricultural sector in the last six years, one has to agree with the World Bank that the agricultural production in Barbados over the last six years has generally been below average and tended to be on the downward side.

Now, Sir, I do not know if the Minister of Agriculture, in his exuberance, will risk to suggest that my attempting to quote from the World Bank document is yet a pack of lies. I doubt that he will be moved to say that on this occasion. I believe that on the last occasion when I quoted from the document he felt that I was telling lies. I hope that they have set themselves the task of checking the document so that they will know that when we quote the document from this side, we know what we are speaking about.

Mr. Speaker, I have said before, and I will repeat, a good agricultural policy must have a number of aims. It must make sure that the agricultural productivity, through technical progress and the optimal use of available resources, is increased. Secondly, it must seek to ensure a fair standard of living for the agricultural community itself. Thirdly, Sir, it should seek to stabilize markets. Fourthly, it should seek to assure the availability of supplies. Finally, Sir, it should seek to ensure reasonable prices to the consumer.

I will, as I come to the end of this intervention, Sir, just like to touch on a policy statement made by the Prime Minister concerning import control. Economists all over the world will differ in their application of certain techniques. Economists all over the world will have views on the one hand which differ strenuously from opposite views on the other hand, while at the same time each economist has had a wealth of training and can point to a large scholarship in the field. So that a difference of approach to development is not something which will start with the Prime Minister or myself.

But what most economist do not have is the experience of presiding over a very small country, with a very decidedly small area of land, and a very highly intelligent population. Most economists around the world do not have the benefit of participating in what I choose to call the “Barbadian experience”. And for that reason, when we are looking at methods to be used in the development of this country, we have got to move away from classic dogma and take from that dogma and that teaching the best on either side and apply it, bearing in mind the experiences which we have in this particular community.

It is downright foolish in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, to say that you are going to use fiscal measures to control consumer spending in a society that have been trained psychologically to spend so long as the money is available. And for a society therefore that has a small number of persons capable of paying high tariff rates, that society will spend no less on paraphernalia as you increase the duty on that paraphernalia. All that will happen, Mr. Speaker, is that persons who cannot afford it will strive towards achieving it, and those who can afford it will use the importation more and more as a status symbol.

So whereas one might have been paying \$1 500 for a stereo, if the Government decides to put on a duty to make the stereo go to \$5 000, persons in Barbados, admittedly fewer persons, but persons in Barbados will still buy the stereo at \$5 000. The result is that your foreign exchange situation does not change.

Mr. Speaker, that argument is open to rebuttal, but.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Only one minute in which it can be rebutted.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: but, Sir, an import control policy, if it is properly administered in a society of this size, it has been demonstrated by experience that it will allow all the parties in the community to participate more or less equally in the activity, and as a result, Mr. Speaker, development continues and you do not have, for example, the large quantity of lay-offs which come as a result of the other measures which do not allow certain people to participate in the economic development of the country.

Mr. Speaker, I shall have to wait for another Bill to develop that particular thesis, since I acknowledge your indulging me in an extra minute over my time.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question.....

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to support this Bill, although I have a few questions about it, which I will have to ask the honourable Minister to answer for me.

I do not think that it would take long for anybody who can see to make the contrast between the Democratic Labour Party and the Barbados Labour Party since it came into power as far as agriculture is concerned. As we all know, the Barbados Labour Party went to the length and breadth of this country and appealed and asked all the people of this country to return to the land and return to agriculture. We could see from every side that a food shortage will be coming in the world and we tried to make sure that we would try to support ourselves. To compare even the poultry growers in 1976, at this stage they have increased about 200 per cent. I guess, Sir, drawing from the parish where I am from the parish of St. Lucy, in 1974, 1975, and 1976 we had about five people who were poultry growers down there. Today we have over sixteen different poultry growers down there, and all of them seem to be happy.

12.55 p.m.

One good thing I feel about, Mr. Speaker, is to know today that with the drive of the Barbados Labour Party the consumers are happy and the planters are happy also. I remember in the early seventies we had carrots thrown on the streets, we had potatoes and everything thrown all about the streets. The planters were complaining that it was costing them a fortune to grow things and then they could not get sales for them. I thank the Minister of Agriculture for his good wisdom. I think he banned all poultry products, the vegetables and all such things that used to come into this country in abundance and now the farmer and the consumer are getting a fair break.

I remember in the seventies one farmer complained to me that he had some beef cattle running to fat on him, and to get rid of those cattle he had to shoot those cows and bury them. There was no one to buy those cows from him, and I am very happy to know in this day that this Government has made it possible for all those cows we have around for sale today can find a market.

The last honourable Member who spoke spoke about the Springhall Project. I am not really too strong on this Springhall Project. This is my constituency, it was a plan from the Democratic Labour Party, and I differ a little with this side, because I definitely believe as a small farmer that the lots down there are too big for those people to handle. I always tell people that.

I believe they are doing a fantastic job, everything seems to be good, they have food in abundance down there, but I still agree that if each of those planters had about five acres to take care of they would do a better job, and it seems to me that more people would be involved instead of the 22. You could possibly have about 60 people where you would have more families. I would say up to now, however, that the Government of Barbados could feel very happy about the progress that is being made at Springhall.

Mr. Speaker, there is one question I would like to ask the honourable Minister about the sugar worker. Who is "a sugar worker?" I remember in the late sixties and the early seventies there were some people who worked very hard in the sugar industry and were not counted as sugar workers. I believe the day will come again when whichever Government is in power will have to bring some benefit again for sugar workers, to encourage them, because as we all know, in the days when we used to have back pay business we used to have a lot of people running from the trades and coming to work in the sugar industry. From the time, I think it was in the sixties, that this benefit was stopped, the people shied away a little from the industry.

I am just trying to ask the Minister to answer me on this, because I am a small farmer and there might be a few like myself, who do not have ten acres of land, who have people working for us. I remember in the early sixties when people could qualify for Provident Fund benefits those people could not qualify. They worked from December to December in the sugar industry and still could not qualify, because they were not working on a plantation with 100 or 50 acres or so. Those people were dedicated sugar workers and yet they could not qualify.

We know that the peasant holders in this country contribute a substantial amount to the sugar industry in this country, and it makes it very difficult for the small farmers to acquire labour, because when people know that they will be getting benefits through the sugar industry, and they are working for a small man with under ten acres, it means that they will not qualify under the Provident Fund because they were not at an established plantation. There are people I know who have worked and are now about 84 years of age who could not qualify under the Provident Fund Act because they were not at an established plantation.

In addition, people worked as workers in the plantations, funds were approved for them, and as soon as the funds got to the homes they were told that the person was at the undertaker's parlour and those funds are returned. I would also like the Minister to let me know what is happening with those funds.

This Bill is a very good improvement. It makes provision where the benefactor's wife and children can benefit, and I have always agreed that this was the best way out. If a man performs and does his duty and everything is passed, I do not see why that cheque should have to go back to headquarters, but they used to do it that way and I am glad to see that this Bill makes provision for that.

Mr. Speaker, there is another part here in Part VI, section 46(1), where sugar cane is being weighed for the purpose of sale, the seller or buyer or agent or either of them, may require that he be given a reasonable

opportunity of viewing the weighing of the sugar cane and of satisfying himself that the declared weight of the sugar cane corresponds with the indicated weight. This is a very good idea and I love this one, but I am sorry that most of us do not really know our rights.

I agree that some of the cane weighers can be very snobbish at times, you cannot even go close to them, but I am sure with this Bill here now anyone has a right to go to the cane factory, examine his weight and be justified and satisfied.

There is only one question I would like to ask the honourable Minister about something which happened during this year, 1982, where you go to the factory, you justify the weight, everything is well, you have five tonnes on your ticket, you pay the freighter at five tonnes, you pay the cane cutter at five tonnes, you pay the person who tied the canes at five tonnes, but when you go back to the factory the factory pays you then at 4¾ tons and that kind of thing. That is something that I would really like to get answered, why should that happen?

Those are the few questions that really bother me and I am sure the honourable Minister will answer me on them.

I would like to commend him. I say he has made a good start and I am sure that he will keep the right foot forward and that Barbados will go from strength to strength as far as food and agriculture are concerned.

Lastly, we were discussing the management side and the factory side, and this is a party with a difference, it takes care of everyone. This week it is one to take care of the workers and all of us who are small growers, to make sure that we are getting a fair share.

As I always say, the sugar workers are very happy with the strides of the Barbados Labour Party since it came into power, because I would say that approximately six years ago the wages of workers between men and women, you cannot even compare it to see the strides since the Barbados Labour Party came into power, the improvement that has been made as far as the workers are concerned.

So I would appeal to the Minister to continue in the way that he is going, there are people who are admiring him. And I will let you all know that the people have ploughed up all the wild crops in certain parts of this country and everything seems to be going very very good as far as agriculture in this country is concerned. It is our aim, once the Honourable Minister does his part to us, to support him by growing food.
1.05 p.m.

There is another small suggestion I would like to make. I believe that in the process of time we will have to look for some kind of outlet for this produce, and I

would appeal to him to look for a few dedicated people, even at the Port, people who know about agriculture, because, as you know, if you put sweet potatoes at the Port and it is nobody's business and everybody is just walking around callously looking at them, these potatoes eventually spoil. But if you get some dedicated person, someone who would know how hard it is to grow that food and not let it waste, I am sure he would do all in his power to get that produce out of the island, and it would encourage the small farmers also.

I do not forget the year 1976 when this party came into power and encouraged people to grow more yams. At the time when we grew this lot of yams, we had no sales and everything went completely out of gear. It was a sacrifice because it costs a lot of money to grow food. The consumers, I would say, really enjoyed it, but from that year the Barbados Labour Party went forward to make sure that everyone got a fair deal for his pursuit.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for allowing me to speak on this issue, and I would also commend the honourable Minister. He is doing a good job.

Thank you.

Mr. SPEAKER: You need not thank Mr. Speaker. It is your perfect right, and you have exercised your right.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the Bill that is before us has been put forward, as one of my colleagues has said, as a very revolutionary matter and the Minister himself had indicated that there was this big and very important Bill that was to come before Parliament which would include some very deep thinking about agriculture and sugar in this country.

We have been looking very carefully at this particular measure and we fail to see these very deep, moving and revolutionary trends inside this particular measure.

I would say, however, that the Bill is a little more thoughtful and a little better than the bowling of the honourable Member for Christ Church East. I saw him put up some hop and drops there, and I think he should really leave out cricket. That is not his line at all. I do not know what he was really up to, and as for the honourable member for St. Lucy he made a speech today, but I also saw him there bringing over his arm and being despatched to the boundary very quickly by the Young Socialists. I believe it was 1 for 36 he got or some such figure. Mr. Speaker, I notice you were not included on either team. I do not know if your better judgment prevailed.

Mr. SPEAKER: You see the judgment that is prevailing in this instance.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I wish to say a few words about this particular measure here, Mr. Speaker. The first

point I wish to make relates to small farmers. We hear a lot about small farmers and we understand that the Government now has two Directors on the Board of Barbados Sugar Factories Limited, and we have been told that these are supposed to represent small farmers.

Now the Government itself is a large farmer. The Government itself owns perhaps more land in this country than any other land owner. It has extensive lands under sugar cultivation. Now I want to know what manner of representation of small farmers the Government itself can represent in these kinds of circumstances.

I think it is time that we call a spade a spade, and it is time that all persons who are interested in the sugar industry be given some form of representation and some form of ownership in the resources of the sugar industry. And there is no way that the Government can say it can represent the small farmer.

What would be required would be for the small farmers to be enabled to share in the ownership of the different sugar companies which have been established and that they be entitled to some seat on the Board, either through cooperative arrangements or whatever may be the technique that may be devised. But to come and say that Government would represent the small farmers, without any kind of consultation with the small farmers themselves, is really a sham, it is really a farce, and I think it is time that we take these matters very seriously.

Now as far as representation of the Government is concerned, we will have to take into account whether the small farmer, and the interests of the small farmer, are really required for promoting agriculture in this country, or whether we are merely paying lip service to this.

A target of some 150 000 tonnes has been set as the sugar production which the Government would like to see in this country. It is impossible to achieve that kind of target without the wholehearted participation of the small farmer. I would think therefore that it is incumbent upon the Government to pay a little more attention to the problems and the needs of the small farmer within the context of the overall needs of the economy.

Let us make one thing clear, and I believe this view is shared by those on the Government side as well as we on the Opposition side. Sugar as an international crop is important to this country, and I daresay that those who have thought about it as a crop must realise that today it is the most economical crop that this country can produce, so far. I am not saying that other crops may not come up, but to date it is still the most economical crop that this country can produce.

For one thing, out of all of those agricultural products, that grass, the sugar cane, can produce more energy per acre of land than any of the other crops that you can think of. Whether it is milk production or any of the other agricultural crops that you can think of, the sugar cane, the grass is the one that can produce most on the least amount of land.

So in a land-starved country such as Barbados, the sugar cane would therefore identify itself as a main crop for production, and therefore it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that the factors and the circumstances combine in order that our sugar production can increase from year to year depending upon those factors and those resources.

One factor over which we have no control whatever is the weather, and the records show that when we get a good supply of rain, not too much and not too little, that we have a good crop; and when the rainfall is too much, as happened, I believe, last year at the reaping time, problems result.

We have heard a lot about agriculture and about how good the Government has been to the agriculturalists and to the sugar workers and so on. The sugar workers themselves will be able to appreciate that so I am not really going into that particular matter. I am not really going into that, I will look at the rural belt.

1.15 p.m.

But we know, somehow or another, all of the boasts of this Government seems somehow to go awry at some stage or another, and I would give a word of warning and advice to the Government. If it would stop boasting so much and get on with the business of this country, I think it would be better off for all concerned.

Only a few days ago, it was still being said, now, "things are bad in Barbados, but, you know, we are not as bad as our neighbours." I think it is that kind of boasting, that kind of superbia which does not augur well for the national status of this country, and I think those Government Ministers who speak on behalf of the Government should take this into account, because it affects our relations abroad.

There is another point which I wish to make as far as the sugar industry is concerned, and it relates to the financing of that industry. Most of the money for the financing of sugar comes through the Barbados National Bank — I believe a substantial part of it comes through the Barbados National Bank — and the Government is proposing to appoint an executive of the sugar interest, Mr. Neville Osborne, as the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Barbados National Bank.

I am going to make this statement again. I have the highest regard for Mr. Neville Osborne as an outstanding

Barbadian, an outstanding person in his own right, a man of the highest integrity. But I would say, at the same time, that for the Government to appoint him as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Barbados National Bank at a time when he is a top executive within the sugar industry, a sugar industry that is one of the major clients of the Barbados National Bank, may give the appearance of a conflict of interest. And in these matters we can perhaps go to that legal maxim, "not only must justice be done but that it must be seen to be done."

I have returned to this particular point because I believe it is important to underline it. When the Prime Minister makes his statement and Mr. Neville Osborne makes his statement, I would expect to hear that this potential conflict of interest would be removed and would not in fact be there.

I do not know who is the Deputy Chairman, maybe we will hear that Mr. Bert Reece is the Deputy Chairman. I really do not know if that is correct, so I make no comment on that. (*Asides*). I am hearing it. I do not know. I really do not know. I am not worried about anything.

Mr. Speaker, Part III of this particular Act refers to surplus sharing provisions. I do not think we have heard very much about this during the debate at all, and during the introduction this whole part seems to have been passed over very lightly.

We would really like to know what are the real implications of this particular section. Why is it put in here? There is no explanation. Is it a substitute for the processes of collective bargaining between the Sugar Producers and the Union which represent the sugar workers, the Barbados Workers' Union? Is this a device to by-pass those processes of collective bargaining or is it a device to make those processes more meaningful? What exactly is the purpose of this particular Part? We are forced to ask those questions.

I know if the Deputy Prime Minister had introduced this matter that it would have been explained fully, because when he is in Barbados, he is a competent Minister. But we do not see him in here too often. He is a very competent Minister. (*Asides*).

I am not excluding the Member for Christ Church East. He may be a competent Minister also. He may be, but on matters of agriculture he is afraid to speak out boldly, because he is afraid. As my colleague, the Member for St. Michael West has said, his views on agriculture and those of the Prime Minister do not exactly coincide, and he is afraid to speak out. You know, he used to speak more forthrightly from the backbenches, but since he has come on to the front benches he has become somewhat timid and so he does not go down these roads anymore.

But we will like to get some information, maybe in his reply, to give us an explanation as to the reasons why the Government has found it necessary to put this particular provision into the Bill — I am talking about Part III, particularly the sections dealing with surplus sharing provisions. I think it requires some explanation which is, in fact, part of the Second Reading debate and not really a part of the debate when we go into Committee.

There is a lot more we can say about the sugar, Mr. Speaker. Part IV deals with the Sugar Workers Provident Fund and appears merely to be largely a re-introduction of existing legislation relating to the Sugar Workers Provident Fund.

While on that, while the number of sugar workers who may benefit from this fund is declining, there are still some sugar workers, the older sugar workers who find it exceedingly difficult to get their due dessert under the provisions of the Sugar Workers Provident Fund. At a time when records were not kept as diligently as they should have been, these workers found it difficult to establish that they have qualified, even though they have spent their lifetime in the sugar industry. I hope that these matters will be looked at with due understanding and compassion.

I have a particular case. The person is now passed to the great beyond, but the survivors are still without any compensation or payment under this particular fund and I will certainly draw that to the attention of the Minister again to see if the matter can be resolved once and for all. 1.25 p.m.

I don't think, as I said, Mr. Speaker, that there is very much more, on this particular occasion, that I wish to say on this matter, except in respect of Part 2, 'Research and Development,' this particular principle here for the establishment of a, whatever it is called, Sugar Industry Research and Development Committee.

It appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that while it may be necessary to establish such a committee, the functions of the committee as set out in Clause 13 do appear to be a little hazy and imprecise. When it refers to assessing work programmes and results of organizations having research and development functions, to initiate and support applications to national or international agencies, and to consider applications for financial support from institutions outside of the sugar industry engaged in research and development activities in certain areas, it all seems to be up in the air.

I really would request the Minister to give some little more precise information as to how he expects this particular committee to function. Does it really have a vital role inside the sugar industry, and in terms of the

membership of this particular committee, will it be one for experts or will it be one on which generalists might have a place?

You see, it is all well and good to set up these establishments. But we have to be certain that when we set them up that they will actually do something that is beneficial for the particular industry, and that we can actually see the results.

In other words, we hope that it is not "window dressing", because it is known that other institutions have been set up in this country and the particular results or benefits from those committees and institutions do not seem to justify, on reflection, the effort and the time involved in their establishment.

I would like to underline one matter which was raised by my colleague, the Member for St. Michael West, and it is that he called for the establishment of a non-partisan group. I don't know if he is talking inside a Parliament, but I am saying that agricultural matters, like most other matters inside of Parliament, are only given a kind of "from time to time consideration." There is no specific body within this Parliament which gives on going consideration and examination to the major problems facing this country.

My colleague referred to agriculture today. Another colleague of mine, the Member for Christ Church South Central, referred to research and technology some days ago. I myself, on previous occasions have raised the question of foreign affairs and defence matters.

The fact is that as far as agriculture is concerned, and as far as the major matters and problems facing this country are concerned, this Parliament has a responsibility to give serious, on-going and in-depth consideration to these matters. And it is time that we take a serious look at how we do business in Parliament so that we can perhaps add a further depth to our examination and consideration of public affairs in this country.

Agriculture is one such area. We have had the abolition of a number of funds which have been established in this country over the years and not very much debate or discussion have taken place in this Parliament on it, because the opportunities which appear, and the opportunities which arise from time to time, do not really lend themselves to the kind of debate and the kind of examination that should go on in Parliament.

This is a much larger question, Mr. Speaker, which we would be addressing, I certainly would be addressing my mind to it, and we are hoping that this present Parliament will be able to address this problem and do something about it.

My colleague has just passed me a short note that in the United States there is an Agricultural Sub-Committee both in the Senate as well as in the House of Representatives. And we have to seriously reform this Westminster model that we are following and try and restructure our approach to problems, including agriculture, so that we can really get down to the basics as far as all of these matters are concerned.

We will be making the necessary representations on this matter. The Government came forward with some proposals and then dropped them, and it is now realized that we will have to look at this in some depth.

I think in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that this is not really an occasion for launching into an attack on the management of agriculture in this country. Sometimes when things go badly, we tend to blame the managers, the businessmen and so on. I believe that the sugar industry has within it some very practical, some very intelligent and some very outstanding farmers. Through thick and thin they have kept the industry going. They also have some who are not of that mettle. But we should not in our general condemnatory remarks wipe out the management of a whole industry as if they have no knowledge, no expertise and no deep interest in this country or in the development of that particular sector.

I would like to say that those interests in sugar, who have shown by their commitment that they are knowledgeable in the field of agriculture, should be given every encouragement to continue to make a contribution and it is our duty to ensure that they have the necessary understanding and the necessary resources in order to do that.

1.35 p.m.

We give them the assurance that when next the Government of Barbados is changed the agricultural sector in this country can rest assured that it will get most sympathetic understanding and encouraging responses from the Democratic Labour Party Government in the interest of developing this country.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I have listened now for two weeks to debates on agriculture. I have heard it re-asserted that the Barbados Marketing Corporation is at the worst pitch it ever has been, never mind that when we came into power in 1976 the accounts had not been satisfactory prepared during practically the whole of the currency of the reign over the BMC of the honourable Member for St. Michael West; never mind that the bank would not give an overdraft to the BMC unless so hedged about by signatures, as in my view — and I expressed it to the bank — as to compromise the very sovereignty of the Government of Barbados; never mind that the BMC was a running sore in

the side of the Ministry of Finance; never mind that people used to buy good vegetables from the BMC at run down prices, sell them at the hotels at high prices, and the ones they could not sell, when they were rotten, come back and re-sell to the BMC at more than they used to buy them from them.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West likes giving names. I will give them the name of a member of the Democratic Labour Party, on whose verandah I have seen him drinking a drink, who used to do that. Never mind all those things, Mr. Speaker. (Mr. B. M. TAITT: Raise the level of the debate). I am glad he calls on me to raise the level of the debate. The level of the debate undoubtedly has been low, and I will raise it.

The fact is that agricultural production in Barbados, in the same World Bank report to which the honourable Member referred, has increased by a margin of 10 per cent over the years, and that the only reason why it has not been increased by more is because sugar production itself has been weak in the last two years, and the production of ground provisions, of root crops, has fallen over the years. There is no doubt about it.

None of us who make pronouncements on this subject hide the fact that we are disappointed in the production of onions, and we are disappointed in the production of sugar and of root crops.

If these traditional areas have fallen, sugar, root crops and perhaps onions — they are not traditional but they have become well established — how wonderful it must be that in the rest of agriculture there has been still a sufficient increase to improve the overall agricultural index, Mr. Speaker.

We come in here and we hear about differences between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Finance. But I have never heard the Minister of Agriculture at Cabinet or elsewhere say, "The Ministry of Finance is holding me down," say, "Prime Minister, I do not agree with this," "Prime Minister, I do not agree with that." I have never heard him say that.

It is complete news to me to hear from members of the Opposition that there is a division in the agricultural policies of Government.

The sort of mischief making that is implicit in such statements, Mr. Speaker, may very well be one of the reasons why the Democratic Labour Party speaks with three or four voices on any subject whatsoever. If it is so rooted in people's minds that disunity is a way of life in any political party, naturally they will see disunity where none exists in their opponents, where they themselves perhaps are minor architects on disunity within their own ranks.

The speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael South, to which I have principally risen to reply, I cannot even say is a well meaning speech, Mr. Speaker. He says that the small farmers of Barbados have no real stake in the sugar industry. The Government holds shares, not on behalf of the big farmers and the big people, the Government holds shares in Barbados Sugar Factories Limited on behalf of a body of persons which is too inchoate to hold shares as individuals. That is what it really comes down to.

There is no basis on which the ten to twelve thousand, however many it is, small farmers in Barbados can be individual shareholders in an undertaking, no more than there is a basis in Communist countries for individuals being shareholders.

The Government owns shareholding on behalf of the people and we administer that shareholding on behalf of the small farmers, because our intention is to make Barbados Sugar Factories virtually a producers' co-operative. It is not intended to be a company to pay dividends to its shareholders, it is intended to be a company which shares its profits out in the form of prices to its suppliers. It is to be run for the benefit of suppliers of cane to the factory.

The big factories are individual shareholders and they receive the benefit directly in a cane price, the small farmers are shareholders through the Government and they also receive the same benefit, identical benefit, as the big farmers, namely in the form of a price.

How can it possibly be said that they are not getting the full benefit of the Government's shareholding in Barbados Sugar Factories? There is no benefit a big farmer gets and a small farmer does not get, everybody gets according to the amount of sugar he produces, so how meaningful is it to drag a red herring across the trail, and I mean a red herring, to talk about the farmers are not really shareholders? They get it in the price, they get a support price, they get whatever price is going.

It is not even a case where you say, 'ah, well the Government will get a profit and spend it wisely or unwisely for the benefit of the people in whose name it owns the shares.' It is not even a case like that. That is true in the case, perhaps, of the national insurance and the electric company. In the case of Barbados Sugar Factories the benefits are passed on directly to the people in whose name we hold the shares. So I think the honourable Member for St. Michael South has made a most misplaced comment on the entire matter. (Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: There are differences between the small owner and the big owner).

The honourable Member is saying that there are differences between the small owner and the big owner.

There are differences between the honourable Member for St. Michael North West and the honourable Member for St. Michael West. One is short and one is tall. There are differences between the big owner and the small owner. One is big and one is small. There are differences between Drax Hall and Hillbury, St. George. The difference is that Drax Hall is 1 000 acres and Hillbury is 25, and it is only on the basis of those differences that a differential is made between payments for sugar.

1.45 p.m.

This Bill now before the House, Mr. Speaker, in fact no matter how much criticism may be offered, and we are going through a phase when everything is criticised, whether it is criticisable or not, this Bill is the first Bill which is genuinely offering a stake in the industry to the workers.

I have spoken of the small farmers because they were referred to, now we speak about the workers in the industry.

Thirty years ago legislation then introduced, introduced the "piece rate system," so to that extent workers benefited from production. Were it not for the piece rate system, you would never have had a pan boiler in 1980 earning something like \$18,000 for less than five months' work.

We are now piecing out something more. We are piecing out the bonus payments so that the workers will not have to negotiate, struggle and fight. You will not have the bitter clashes in the industry that has led to nothing but harm in the end — to all concerned, but the workers will have a right to a share in profits of the industry. The industry will become a profit sharing industry, the first in Barbados.

If Cave Shepherd had big sales, the workers cannot ask — they do get a bonus, — but they cannot ask to see the balance sheet and call for a percentage of the big sales. And there are many, many industries in Barbados where, of course, they get neither bonus nor percentage.

This Bill is making the sugar industry a profit-sharing industry. The General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, that distinguished Director of the Barbados National Bank, sometimes calls for some system of profit sharing in industry. It is only the traditional clouds that have been drawn over the eyes of all concerned in sugar that has prevented the Barbados Workers' Union from acknowledging that this is the first profit sharing industry in Barbados.

The second argument that is therefore quite misplaced is that of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, because I have never yet heard of a profit-

sharing scheme which says the workers can share in the profits, but they must make no allowances for losses. I have never heard that in any of the countries which have profit-sharing schemes.

In Grenada I believe eleven workers of Bata Limited are now being given a profit-sharing scheme, and the *Caribbean News Agency* has not allowed us to forget it. Every other day in the *Advocate* and on the wires of CANA there used to be something about Bata workers in Grenada, the eleven workers.

But the 4,000 sugar workers of Barbados are now being given a profit-sharing scheme of much more potential value than the petty scheme in Grenada, and not a word has appeared about it. Apparently all the comment has to be in terms of the ignorant thinking of the members of the Opposition — and I do not mean ignorant there as a term of abuse, I mean it as a term of description of their arguments in this debate.

There can be no profits unless losses are allowed for. It stands to ordinary reason, Mr. Speaker, and if this had been accepted at an earlier stage, perhaps you would not have the sugar industry in the state that it is in today, for let us not forget that with all the talk about getting something for the workers out of the levy, in the end the workers have had amounts of money that have added up to more than all the money that was in the sugar levies, because the Government has had to support the payment of a bonus in 1981, and recently has had to support the payment of wages in 1982, because the credit advanced by the Barbados National Bank, which it had no chance of getting back without Government assistance, is what went to pay the wage increase in 1982.

I say, without any fear of contradiction, that the accumulated sugar levies do not amount to what the workers got over and above the negotiated wages of two years ago in the last two years of heavy depression in sugar. In the end, although I am not saying they have done well, the workers in the sugar industry have benefited more in the last two years from the results of sales, such as they are, and the support by the Government, than the whole of the ownership structure of the industry put together, including the Government itself.

In the future it will be systematised, but profit-sharing depends on accurate accounts conducted on sound accounting principles, and that is why a formula has been inserted into this Act, based on the best accounting principles, to make sure that the workers get their fair share, and that the employers remain able to carry on business and employ the workers.

What shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and thereby lose his soul? What shall it profit a

sugar worker if he gained the whole of the benefit of the crop in one year and thereby lose his job? What can it benefit the sugar workers to close the industry down?

I say, Mr. Speaker, that if the conduct of industrial relations remains as it has been in the past that the Barbados sugar industry cannot survive without this Bill.

A great deal has been said about the World Bank Memorandum. I yesterday gave instructions to ask the World Bank for permission to publish, certainly the section of the Memorandum dealing with the study of labour and employment in Barbados. I think that very important to publish before any further untruths are told about the World Bank dictating this, that and the other about industrial relations in Barbados.

I know, Mr. Speaker, even if the honourable Members present in the House do not, how honourable Members on the other side got a copy of the World Bank Report. Their communist friends in Grenada gave it to them. I know the very name of the person who obtained the report. But that is all right, we have nothing to hide. We are only too happy, once we get the permission of the bank, to show at page 14 that even the Minister of Finance is fallable, even he can forget things sometimes although I do not believe I have forgotten this one — I think it was added after I saw the draft.

Anyhow, the final point I will deal with, Mr. Speaker, is the continued reference by the honourable Member for St. Michael South to Mr. Neville Osborne and the Barbados National Bank.

I do not think there is a conflict of interest between the honourable Member and his profession as a teacher at the Community College because he is a known opponent of the Government. I believe he can be objective. He teaches Barbadian history, and yet he insists that Mr. Neville Osborne cannot be seen to be objective.

But it starts on a fundamental mistake. The mistake is in thinking that a big customer of a bank is not a suitable person to be the bank's director. If the honourable Member knew anything about banking, he would know that banks go for their biggest customers to be directors.

It is not only in Japan. Chase Manhattan Bank, what did it come into operation to finance? What was it bought to finance? It was bought to finance the Standard Oil Company. And who is it's director today? Mr. David Rockefeller, great grandson of John D. Rockefeller, founder of the Standard Oil Company. And I have never heard anybody say that Rockefeller should not be Chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank, because he owns Esso and Chase Manhattan, or he owns, it must be Mobil,

I think. One of them owns Esso and one owns Mobil. I have never heard it suggested. That is the whole point.
1.55 p.m.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation. First of all I never said that Mr. Neville Osborne cannot be objective or cannot be seen to be objective. I never said that. In fact, I was high in praise for his integrity.

But as far as the Barbados National Bank is concerned, the honourable Member himself will recall the support from over here when it was set up and that it was out of the Barbados Savings Bank and the savings of small Barbadians and the charge is that you are turning it over to the big sugar interests and something has to wrong with that.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the honourable Member is demonstrating his ignorance of banking and of the Barbados National Bank yet further.

The funds that go to the sugar interests are not derived from the Saving Bank's funds. The Saving Bank's funds went into the commercial sector and they are lent to the Agriculture Section only at prime rate as any other lenders.

The funds for the Agriculture Section are derived from different sources, from the funds of the Sugar Industry Agricultural Bank and from the Central Bank. It may be one bank, but it has different sections.

The honourable Member knows perfectly well that we do not intend to run the Barbados National Bank as the Barbados Development Bank was run in the last three years before the change of Government. The honourable Member's experiences with banking and development banking are unfortunate — the Alleyne Mercantile Bank and the Bernstein regime at the BDB, when out of 13 loans made to individuals 11 were made to members of the Democratic Labour Party, including four Members of the House at present. (I am not sure about Burger Bee and its connection with any honourable Member, I am not sure about) — Four Members of the House at present, their brothers, their sisters and actual members were beneficiaries out of over 80 per cent of the loans.

With that background, I can understand how the hon. Member may be doubtful, may question the integrity of banking in Barbados. But this is banking from this side.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order. I think the honourable Member is seriously misleading himself to say that 80 per cent of the loans of the Barbados Development Bank were loaned out to Members of the Democratic Labour Party who are Members of the House.

(Asides) You said 80 per cent of the Barbados Development Bank's loans.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member probably has the figures. He knows it is 84 per cent. I am sorry if I have made an error. (Asides). I do not want to read out the individual names. You want me to get the names and read them out? I am not even counting Bath as a loan to the honourable Member for St. John. I am not counting that. I am counting the loans made to the three Franklins, Edwards, to the honourable Member for St. Michael South. Hear the loans I am counting (Asides). The honourable Member for St. Joseph got one.

Mr. SPEAKER: We must have some order.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: But, Mr. Speaker, I am being interrupted and I would like to finish my speech. I should make it clear in response to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central that obviously 80 per cent of all loans made by the BDB were not made as I suggested. I am narrowing the period to a period of about two and a half years. It was after the Bath loan, for about a period of two and a half years. It was a very limited portfolio. If the honourable Member would like to get a copy of the portfolio, I will send it to him.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do deplore the continued reflection to Mr. Osborne's abilities to chair the bank. I regret that it should be said, and I regret that it should be said by the honourable Member for St. Michael South, whose reputation is such that people accept his condemnations.

You cannot dismiss what the honourable Member for St. Michael South says as he is known as a decent young man. (Asides). (He can read that out). He is known as a decent young man, and his accusations do not carry the reputation of accusations made by certain others of his colleagues. When he says something, people take it seriously.

If Mr. Neville Osborne was attacked by one or two other persons on the bench, Mr. Osborne would take it as a compliment, and so would the general public, but when he is attacked by the honourable Member for St. Michael South, it is a matter of regret that he should so mislead himself.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation. Again, I have not attacked Mr. Neville Osborne, and you keep repeating that. I have spoken, as I have said already,

on the integrity of Mr. Neville Osborne. If there is an attack, it might be on the person who appoints. It might be on the person who appoints.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If the honourable Member is withdrawing his remarks of attack on Mr. Neville Osborne, all of us will be glad, I am sure.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, obviously I am going to support this Bill, and there are my remarks.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3 o'clock this afternoon.

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division and Mr. SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.

2.05 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. I am advised that there are no replies to Questions and there is no Private Members' Business on the Order Paper. We therefore go on to Government Business.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am much indebted to all honourable Members who spoke on this measure, and in particular Sir, to the right honourable Prime Minister, whose intervention, a little before lunch, served to remind this House that we are discussing the Second Reading of the Sugar Industry Bill and we are not really dealing with Barbados Marketing Corporation or the misguided licensing and price control policies of the Democratic Labour Party in the period of 1971 and 1976.

I do not propose, Mr. Speaker, to be side-tracked by the intervention of the honourable Member for St. Michael West in relation to Barbados Marketing Corporation. He uttered certain headline catching expressions about the Barbados Marketing Corporation, to the effect that they are in a worse financial position than they have ever been and that they are not able to pay their creditors.

I just want to set the record straight by letting this Honourable House know that the Barbados Marketing Corporation has at this point in time, Sir, at the end of September, paid their bills until the end of August. They run thirty days behind in payment which is better than most corporations in Bridgetown can boast. We are operating below the level set for the overdraft and to date

the Marketing Corporation has several modest achievements and successes to its credit since the new Board took over a little over a year ago.

I just want to set the record straight, because I fear that tomorrow we may have an eye-catching headline to the effect that, "The Barbados Marketing Corporation is in the worse trouble ever — Taitt." That would be the plight in the face of the facts, to mislead the entire country and to serve to discredit the organization and its leadership.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the sugar industry Bill itself, I think it must be said.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation. The honourable Member obviously did not understand the point I made, and I wish to restate it. The Barbados Marketing Corporation today is in worse shape than it has ever been. The Barbados Marketing Corporation has to rely — and this is the important point that was made — on its takings from the duty free shop at the airport. The Minister would have to allude to that if he is going to give the kind of information he just gave to cast the kind of shadow on the point I made.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, there is really nothing of significance in that point. I may put it in context by referring to the fact that members of the Young Socialists on Sunday, after a thorough thrashing at the hands of the Parliamentary party, said that they might have beaten us had it not been for one Clyde Griffith. Mr. Speaker, he is a member of the team. So how do they mean they would have beaten us if he was not a member of the team.

Part of the operation of the Barbados Marketing Corporation is the duty free shop at the airport. So if the duty free shop plays the role like a good batsman, makes a contribution to the revenue, makes runs, what argument is there to say that the Barbados Marketing Corporation would have even been worse had it not been for the duty free shop?

It is a fact, Mr. Speaker, that the duty free shop does make a significant contribution to the revenue of the Barbados Marketing Corporation. But that is part of its operation; that is what it is there for.

It is also true, Mr. Speaker, that the Barbados Marketing Corporation is, to a large extent, apart from its commercial operation, there to give services to the farmers of this country — and not at an economic rate. In short the services have got to be subsidized, so some arm of the BMC has got to subsidize it or else the taxpayers will have to do that.

But right now, Mr. Speaker, the BMC is operating without a Government subvention. No money was put in the last Estimates, and deliberately so, and they are operating successfully within the boundaries that they have set themselves.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, to continue in that vein would really be to miss the essential point. It has nothing to do with the Sugar Industry Bill which is currently under discussion.

A lot of ill-informed comments were made about the sugar industry and about the Bill. To some extent I take responsibility for that, Mr. Speaker, because I always felt that if we were to have a well-informed and constructive debate, it was necessary for us to circulate a fact sheet about the industry, accompanying the legislation. I was prepared to speak on the Second Reading in my opening speech today rather than last week, and to that extent I did not get the opportunity to circulate the fact sheet.

So the absence of the fact sheet, Mr. Speaker, has led to the first criticism made by the Opposition, namely that the Bill was not comprehensive enough and that it did not address its mind to several of the initiatives needed in the sugar industry and, in particular, to the plight of the so-called small farmer. I take it that by "small farmer" we are talking about those who have lots of under twenty-five acres. (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have a little order, please.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Other criticism, Sir, was that the legislation has tended to circumscribe the area of collective bargaining, that it is "anti-worker", to use the expression of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, and that it is merely a consolidating exercise that contains nothing new or different than what existed in the past.

Let me begin by saying, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill under discussion should not be seen in isolation. I believe I made that point particularly clear at the very outset of my presentation last week. It is just one of several initiatives currently being taken to modernise and improve the functioning and the viability of the sugar industry.

If we see the Bill under discussion by itself, Mr. Speaker, we are bound to make the criticism that it does not address several other issues that need to be addressed in the industry. But the truth is, Sir, that these other initiatives are taking place, and it would not be necessary — indeed it would be absolutely unwise — to reduce every initiative in the sugar industry to a legislative formula.

Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that every aspect of the sugar industry could be reduced to legislation. Be we would end up with a Bill as large as the Bible itself, and I have no doubt that it would take as long as the Bible to prepare, however long that is. The fact that you don't know and I don't know, Mr. Speaker, means that it was very long indeed. (*Laughter*)

Apart from this Bill, Mr. Speaker, which addresses the whole question of research and development activities in the sugar industry, it seeks to put it on a proper foundation and ensure that research and development activity has steady financial support.

3.10 p.m.

The Bill also seeks to introduce a financial surplus formula for the operations of the sugar industry, and prescribes the manner of its distribution. In addition, Sir, the Bill consolidates and updates a number of existing Acts relating to the sugar industry.

But, Sir, a lot has been taking place in the sugar industry in the last two years, which has got to be alluded to, if we are to fully appreciate the extent to which multiple initiatives are being taken in the sugar industry at this point in time.

The first matter that I would like to refer to is the two price reforms which have recently been introduced in the industry, the first since the 1940s. We have, as from last crop, addressed the problem of extraneous matter, the whole question of too much dirt and trash accompanying the cane. This problem has assumed particular significance as a result of increased mechanisation in the sugar industry, and as a result, too, of the fact that there is decreasing reliance on hand harvesting.

Many countries that have reached this stage, having a large acreage reaped by harvesters, mechanical means, have had to address the problem of extraneous matter in the industry, but we have only last year addressed our minds to that particular problem.

We instituted a system of sampling for extraneous matter and we have related the results of our samples to cane prices in a manner which is appropriate to the structure and the size of our sugar industry.

The net effect of that, Mr. Speaker, is to make every producer of canes responsible for extraneous matter sent to the mill, and a discount is given for extraneous matter, or put differently, there is a reward for clean canes. This is an important departure from the past when those producing dirty canes were subsidised by the producers of clean canes, and clearly that was an inequitable and unjust situation. That price formula relating to the adjustment for extraneous matter has addressed this particular problem of inequity.

Now, the second matter that has been taking place and is of considerable importance in the sugar industry, relates to the introduction of a cane pricing formula which was mentioned briefly in the course of the enabling legislation for the bonds, which, in effect, ensures that producers of cane in Barbados are rewarded as much for what they produce as for what it cost them to produce what they produce.

In short, Sir, the formula takes into account the ecological factors in Barbados, it recognises that there is a high rainfall area and a low rainfall area, and provided the producers in a low rainfall area can demonstrate that they are efficient, they are compensated for their cost of production in a low rainfall area.

The previous system that existed has tended to reward inefficiency in high rainfall zones and to punish efficiency in low rainfall zones. So, again, we have addressed another illustration of inequity in the sugar industry by these two formulae which we have introduced over the last year.

I should mention, Sir, that this cane pricing formula, which is likely to be in effect for many years unless it is changed with the consent of the Government, which is directly linked to the price support formula which we have introduced and given legislative effect to a week or so ago, is designed to ensure that the marginal lands in Barbados, the marginal sugar estates falling mostly within the south and the south eastern corner of Barbados, will be able to continue in production, because, in effect, it distributes income from the high rainfall area to the low rainfall area based on efficiency of production.

The other measure, Sir, which must be borne in mind when we are looking at the sugar industry Bill is the price-support formula itself, which we dealt with last week, and which in effect has given all producers of cane in Barbados an additional \$20 per tonne of cane over and above what they would have got in the marketplace.

As we have pointed out, Sir, that formula was designed not only to stabilise the position in the sugar industry, but also to ensure that we have an increase in production. The House will remember that it was clearly pointed out that it is in the form of a loan which can be converted into a grant, provided certain production targets are met over the next three to four years.

I have mentioned these matters because I want to convey the clear understanding to the House that the Sugar Industry Bill must not be seen in isolation. If we are to understand its full significance and impact, it must be read side by side with other multiple initiatives which are being taken in relation to correcting inequities and inefficiency in the Barbados sugar industry.

I turn now, Mr. Speaker, to the second criticism which was made by almost all the speakers on the other side, namely that not enough attention has been paid to the so-called small producers. It is conceded that small producers in Barbados account for something like 15 per cent of sugar production.

3.20 p.m.

In truth and in fact, Mr. Speaker, a new chapter of assistance has been open for the small producers in Barbados, and the Opposition could only have been making the point which they had been making on the basis of a lack of information as to precisely what has been happening in relation to small sugar farmers and sugar producers in Barbados.

I want to emphasise, before I deal with the specific initiatives which have been taken in relation to small producers, that general legislation is really an inefficient instrument to deal with the diverse situations which exists in the Barbados Sugar Industry. It would be unwise, almost impossible, to reduce every initiative which the Government and the industry are taking to a legislative formula. That would be unwise.

Now the first thing I wish to mention, with respect to small farmers in the industry, is the existence of a tractor cultivation scheme which concerns itself with ploughing, rotavation and farrowing. This used to operate out of the Ministry of Agriculture in Graeme Hall, and which has been transferred to the Agricultural Development Corporation.

It is only an accident, Mr. Speaker, that the Agricultural Development Corporation headquarters happen to be in Christ Church East, but the scheme operates there, as I shall demonstrate in a minute, and services the whole of the south-eastern and southern corner of Barbados stretching from St. John in the East-North-East right down to small holdings near the Garrison in Christ Church West.

So the fact that it was located in Coverley in Christ Church East has nothing to do with the geographical spread of the service which is offered by the tractor cultivation scheme. And the reason why it was transferred from the Ministry to a para-statal organisation, namely, the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation, is because civil servants' rules and procedures applied when it was operated under the Ministry and there was not enough flexibility and operational leverage available to the Ministry when it was headquartered in Graeme Hall.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the evidence is that after a few short months it is a more efficient and a more effective service working out of the Barbados Agricultural Development Corporation.

In addition to that service, Sir, farmers are allowed to call in private operators of tractors and have upwards of 50 per cent of the service provided by those private operators financed by Government. So you can recover 50 per cent of your cost of farrowing, rotavating or ploughing. That is the first service which is offered to the small farmer.

I want to turn, Sir, to the Smallholder Mechanisation Fund at the Barbados National Bank. A sum of \$1.5 million was taken from the accumulated levies and placed with the Barbados National Bank to lend out to farmers with an acreage of under 25 acres for the benefit of purchasing equipment such as trucks, tractors, loaders etc. To date, I am advised that some \$300 000 of this \$1.5 million in the fund has been disbursed.

Now I would just pause here to make the point that the impression was given in the course of the debate, by the Democratic Labour Party spokesman on the other side, that somehow the "big sugar barons", I think that was the expression repeatedly used, are the ones who have benefited from the levy funds. But this \$1.5 million which is financing the Smallholders Mechanisation Scheme was taken from the said levy funds for the benefit of the so-called small farmers in Barbados.

Next, Sir, there is a Smallholders Pilot Mechanisation Scheme which operates out of the Agricultural Development Corporation. Again, Sir, \$1 million out of the levy funds was set aside to start a small holders' mechanisation assistance scheme concerned with reaping and transportation of small holders' canes.

This scheme came into being in the last crop, the 1982 reaping season. We benefited from the assistance of the Food and Agricultural Organisation which provided us with a field engineer for three months. I think the evidence is that that scheme has been off to a good start and can justly be recorded as a success. The scheme will continue over the next crop and hopefully for many crops to come.

I need to mention too, Sir, that as part of the agreement by Government to purchase shares in Barbados Sugar Factories Limited for small holders — not for large holders and sugar barons, but for small holders — out of the accumulated levies, Government extracted from Barbados Sugar Factories Limited a commitment that \$1 million will be used over the next five years to serve small holders across the board. It is expected, Sir, that services ranging from bulk purchasing of fertilisers to crop insurance, mechanical reaping and loading will be provided as a result of this commitment with Barbados Sugar Factories Limited that was given to Government in relation to assisting the small farmers.

The problem with small farmers, Mr. Speaker, is that they lack organisation, and problems differ from one part of the country to another, and at the end of the day Government has got to be concerned with providing the small farmers with a service which, though useful to them, is economically sensible to provide. In short, the assistance must make economic sense.

I need to mention too, Sir, continuing with small farmer assistance, that Barbados Sugar Factories Limited appointed a Small Holders Affairs Officer at the rank of a senior person, and that person, as we all know, is Trevor Rudder.

In the first year on the job he has initiated a corporate loading and transportation scheme which addressed the problems of loading and transportation in the east of Barbados, the south and the east, particularly in St. Philip, and he is working on starting a similar scheme in St. Peter, St. Lucy and St. James in the reaping season ahead.

The total amount put into Barbados Sugar Factories Limited out of the accumulated levies for small farmers is \$3.7 million. This was designed, Sir, to make small sugar farmers in Barbados shareholders of Barbados Sugar Factories Limited.

3.30 p.m.

The whole notion of the small man, Mr. Speaker, it is so emotive and emotional that some misguided politicians believe that it appeals to the man in the street. But, Mr. Speaker, no man in the street is flattered when he is referred to as "a small man", because every man likes to think of himself as "a big man", but we politicians make the great mistake that this appeals to the small and wins his votes or somehow provides him with any support.

I have learnt from experience, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of the so-called small men are offended when they are regarded and referred to as small men. But that is one of the myths of Barbadian politics, Sir, that you are on a good wicket when you are seen or heard defending the position of the small man. That is only by the way.

The position is that Government has ensured that all small producers in Barbados are hereafter shareholders of Barbados Sugar Factories Limited. In 1980, the Barbados Sugar Factories Limited paid dividends, and the small farmers in Barbados did not qualify because there were not members of Barbados Sugar Factories Limited. But they are members today, and if dividends are paid in three years or four years from now, all the small producers in Barbados can look forward to sharing in that dividends pay-out.

So it is not true, Mr. Speaker, that no attention has been paid to the position of the small farmer in relation to the reorganisation of the sugar industry. As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, it would be unwise to reduce every initiative being taken in the sugar industry to a legislative formula, because legislation, in some circumstances, can be a cumbersome, rigid and ineffective method of dealing with certain problems and, in my view, it would be a mistake to reduce every area of activity and every initiative in the sugar industry to legislation.

In economic terms, Mr. Speaker, we may say that the investment made by the Barbados Sugar Factories Limited for the smallholders in Barbados is an infinite annuity. By that I mean that the present value of the investment is dependent on the future dividends' rates.

Before I pass on, Mr. Speaker, and move away from the identification of the several steps that have been taken in relation to the small sugar farmers in Barbados, I just want to mention that \$1.26 million of the accumulated levy funds have been earmarked for the Tenancies Transfer Scheme. That sum, Sir, will be used to meet the cost of surveying, planning and conveying the titles for some 4 000 plantation tenantry houseplots.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in the course of 1981 we made sure that those who were living on plantation lands, tenantry lands, for more than five years will be able to get the conveyance for those lands for a maximum of \$300 (*Asides*).

Yes, it needs to be stated for the records that the Democratic Labour Party in Parliament voted against that progressive and far reaching social bit of legislation. That needed to be recorded, because some historian of the future may start his research in 1981 after the elections and not before the elections, so quite by accident, Mr. Speaker, he might not come across the fact that the Democratic Labour Party in Parliament voted against that bit of legislation.

And they want to know how the sugar workers across this country think of the Barbados Labour Party? The Barbados Labour Party today has the same strength today to rule Barbados as it did in 1951. All the sugar belts in Barbados are represented by the Barbados Labour Party, and that is how the sugar workers think about us.

You may be mistaken about what we are doing, you might care not to understand what we are doing for the workers in this country, but the workers out there, and particularly the sugar workers, know. (*Asides*). The Deputy Prime Minister, Sir, has pointed out that the Member for St. Michael South Central, even though he has country roots, he poses as a town man.

Now, Sir, I want to address the criticism that this Bill before the House is an anti-worker piece of legislation. I want to make the point, Sir, that at a very early stage in the preparation of this legislation the right honourable Prime Minister and Member for St. Thomas had consultation with the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union. He told him what was being proposed and explained it to him, and up to now, today, we have not had a word from him saying that the Bill is anti-worker or anything of the sort. But, as the Prime Minister himself has pointed out, Sir, the Bill does something for the sugar workers of this country which has not been done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, whenever there is a so-called windfall in the industry, when the prices on the world market are higher than were anticipated and there is some extra income to the owners of the industry, the sugar workers in this country have had to make an enormous fight in order to share in a part of that surplus income. It happened in 1957. They had a strike in the industry, and you will remember, Mr. Speaker, that the then Barbados Labour Party Government had to set up a tribunal under Lewis, a St. Lucian, in order to arbitrate the matter. It has happened, Mr. Speaker, throughout the 60s, and even as recently as two years ago we have had that problem in the industry.

What this Bill is saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the sugar workers' wages and salaries must be a first charge on the industry, come off the top. It is like when you are cooking soup and you take off the top broth — off the top — and that is so whether you have a windfall or not.

The sugar workers' wages and salaries must be the first charge on the industry, good times or bad times. But if you are experiencing good times, Mr. Speaker, and you have some surplus revenue, we have put it in legislative form what is to go to the sugar workers.

So in bad times or average times they will have their routine wage negotiations every two years, but as soon as there is surplus revenue, the workers will be able to look to the legislation and say give me a percentage of that, because the Barbados Labour Party Government has ensured that I do not have to go on strike to get it — I have to get it as a right, because that is the law of the land. Could that be a piece of anti-worker legislation, Mr. Speaker.

3.40 p.m.

As far as the point has been made, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill circumscribes collective bargaining, nothing could be further from the truth, Mr. Speaker, because it in no way interferes with the right of Frank Walcott, or whoever be his successors, on behalf of the workers of the Barbados Workers Union every two years, or however longer or shorter they determine, to call on the sugar

producers to sit down and negotiate wages and salaries for sugar workers.

The Bill does not in any way interfere with that right at all. It only says that if there is a surplus arising from a windfall, that rather than the sugar producers and the Barbados Workers Union having to walk up to Bay Street to get the Prime Minister to come out on Sundays and determine how it has got to be distributed, we will put the distribution in a statutory formula to ensure that that will be part of the law of the land. That is all, Mr. Speaker, that we have done.

In short, Mr. Speaker, it is a modern and a progressive concept of profit sharing. So with all of this talk we have heard from the Opposition about being anti-worker, do they have in mind something that can better it Mr. Speaker? Let us hear. That is why when they go into rural Barbados where the Barbados sugar workers are, they cannot get a seat, Mr. Speaker, because the workers know who are their friends. They know it is the Barbados Labour Party's Administration, not the Democratic Labour Party. (*Asides*) That is a special case, Mr. Speaker. St. Philip is a special case, which makes the point, Mr. Speaker. (*Asides*)

Mr. Speaker, let us be serious once again, and let us make the following points. The target of 150 000 tonnes, which was identified in the McGregor Report, and which has been accepted by the Government as the level of production to which we should aspire, will not be realizable if two man-made problems in the industry are not addressed. The first one, Mr. Speaker, is the problem of cane fires, and the second one, Mr. Speaker, is the problem of the late start of the sugar reaping season.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the reason why we have had late starts to the reaping season over recent years is to be found in two factors. In the first place, the factories have not always been ready by the end of January and in the second place, Sir, we have had delays resulting from the fact that the workers' representative, the Barbados Workers Union, often found it convenient to start the negotiations after Christmas, in January, to put pressure on the sugar producers, run the start of the reaping season into February or early March, but knowing fully well that with every passing day after January the sugar producers are under pressure, and growing pressure, to settle. It is made worse, Mr. Speaker, if there is a question of a wrangle over bonus payments resulting from a windfall.

So hopefully, Mr. Speaker, with one aspect out of the way and reduced to a statutory formula, namely of the question of what part of the surplus profits should go to the workers in the event of a windfall, we are hoping, Mr. Speaker, that this man-made problem of starting the crop long after January will be corrected in the future.

We are also hoping, Mr. Speaker, that the area of friction in the industry between capital and labour will be considerably reduced as the result of this legislation. But having said that, Mr. Speaker, I also want to make the point that there is need for much more dialogue between the representatives of the workers and the representatives of the sugar industry with a view to ensuring that some concrete issues are addressed, and also with a view to ensuring, Mr. Speaker, that the morale in the industry improve and industrial relationships are put on a much better footing.

I can think, Mr. Speaker, of several concrete issues in the sugar industry that need to be addressed. There is the problem, Mr. Speaker, of idle lands, even on some plantations (The ADC is not bad in that regard, our record is very much improved.) Can we not arrive at some formula, Mr. Speaker, where on some plantations, if not all, some of the labourers who have an interest are allowed, with the assistance of the mechanical equipment on the plantations, very much under-utilized, to grow certain crops for their own benefit and at the same time continue working on the plantation? Have we done all that we could do, Mr. Speaker, to improve the facilities of the workers on the plantations?

I could continue, Mr. Speaker, but I just want to indicate that there are several concrete issues in the sugar industry that need to be addressed and can only be addressed by representatives of labour and representatives of capital in the industry sitting together and having a continuing dialogue.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, Sir, made the point that the revaluation and depreciation provisions as set out in the bill are too vague, Sir, and that we are in danger of having them abused by the owners of industry to the disadvantage of the workers. To put it in a nutshell, that may be regarded, Sir, as the nature of the submission which he was making.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the whole question of revaluation of assets in the sugar industry is a very complicated exercise, because it has got not only to do with the factory assets, but also to do with the large plantations and the thousands of small lots producing sugar across the country.

In the past, Sir, for the purpose of the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement which was in existence between 1951 and 1974, this exercise used to be done by a reputable team of auditors, based on sampling across the industry. The same formula, the same methodology, was employed in relation to the requirements under the ACP — EEC sugar arrangement. And it is proposed, Sir, that the same methodology will continue to be employed under this Act.

Where, however, we felt there was an omission, was that the Minister of Finance, or the Minister of Agriculture for that matter, did not have any power to determine how the audit should go for revaluation purposes.

3.50 p.m.

But in the circulated amendments you will see, Mr. Speaker, that in 17(e) of the Bill we have immediately after the word "made" will be inserted "in a manner prescribed by the Minister of Finance." So that a weakness, which was perhaps highlighted by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, the absence of control at a governmental level, has been addressed, and provision is made for that in the amendments which have been circulated.

I do not think we need to fear that the assets in the industry will be valued high for some purposes and not for others. Mr. Speaker, you may value your house 100 per cent beyond what it is worth in the hope that if a buyer comes along he will give you the high valuation rather than the realistic valuation as the cost price, but in the meanwhile you will have to pay taxes and insurance, and in systems where they have both central Government taxes and rates on houses, all of that you will have to pay at the inflated valuation, and then there will be no guarantee that a prospective purchaser will be so stupid as to give you other than a realistic market valuation.

So it will not make sense to think that we are likely to get high valuations and revaluations in the assets of the sugar industry because of the fact that controls were minimal in the Bill. In any event, Mr. Speaker, simply to assume that would be to reflect on the integrity of the professional public accountants who have always done this exercise and who will continue to be in charge of this exercise of valuation and revaluation of assets. I think we need have no fear in relation to that matter.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I seek your guidance on this. I am wondering if the member has unlimited time. We on this side are listening very attentively to him, and we would like to hear him, because he is making the points which he perhaps should have made in his introduction, but I am seeking your guidance as to whether he has unlimited time or whether it is half an hour he should be speaking for. My understanding is that it should be half an hour, but I am seeking your guidance on that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: I know that the honourable Member for St. Michael South is so familiar with the Standing Orders that he wants to be heard. The honourable Member may continue.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I knew that once again they were wrong, Sir.

I just want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the question of cane fires, which I do not want specifically to address on this occasion — I think that a great deal has been said about cane fires recently — remains a matter of the greatest importance, the correction of cane fires, that is, to the future and prosperity of the sugar industry.

I am simply calling upon the industry to ensure that with respect to next year crop we have a revision of the insurance structure, the cane fires insurance structure, so as to ensure that there is no incentive whatever for farmers and owners to burn their canes.

I feel that we should immediately start dialogue between the Sugar Producers and the Barbados Workers' Union on the question of increasing the differential in reward for the workers for green canes as opposed to burnt canes. At present there is a differential, but the differential is not big enough, and it can only be widened with the consent and the approval of the workers' representatives. That is another specific and concrete illustration of the need for continual dialogue between the Barbados Workers' Union as representatives of the workers and the sugar producers in this country.

Many other issues relating to the re-organisation and the improved efficiency of the sugar industry are under consideration and discussion, and I hope that the sugar producers will recognise that there are new challenges and that they need to be in the forefront putting their house in order.

The first evidence that we are likely to get of their seriousness and commitment to re-organising themselves is likely to come about in a day or two when the Annual General Meeting of the sugar producers takes place and the whole question of the composition of the governing council will be on the agenda.

I hope they recognise that the country is looking to them to make sure that some of the bright, energetic young people in the industry, who do not necessarily share all of their views but who certainly have larger energy to bring at this stage of their lives, the country is looking to some of those younger people to get a position in the leadership of the sugar producers of this country.

As far as the Government is concerned, I want the sugar producers to know that the Government is dead serious with respect to the re-organisation of the industry, and I hope that it can come about as a true consent, that is as a result of discussion and agreement among all the parties. But if there is any resistance, because it has operated too much in the past like a privileged organisation, the Government will have to take certain steps to make sure that necessary reforms are introduced and effected in the Barbados sugar industry and in its leadership.

I just want, Mr. Speaker, at this point to conclude by saying that this legislation under discussion ought not to be seen in isolation. I want to say with all the emphasis at my command, that far from Government not paying any attention to the small sugar producers in this country, Government has, over the last two years, given them a new deal, which they have never had before, through a series of measures.
4.00 p.m.

I want to say further that this legislation does not trespass at all on the right of the workers to bargain with the employers and the owners of industry, and cannot be seen in any light whatever as anti-worker.

I repeat, Sir, that it has new provisions, in so far as it seeks to put research and development activity on a new footing and in so far as it addresses the question of profit-sharing.

I never said that it would be a new Act with respect to the whole of agriculture in Barbados or anything of the sort. But I did indicate months ago that it was an important piece of legislation which we were contemplating, and I stick by that view. This is a very important piece of legislation in the sugar industry from which we are looking, not by itself but in conjunction with other measures, for far-reaching results, and it is at this point that I conclude my submission.

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

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

Part I, as amended, was called and passed.

Part II, as amended was called.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Part II, as amended, stand part.

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

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, we are dealing with this matter in parts in order to facilitate the further passage of the Bill, and this Part deals with the substitution of the previous levy system by a 1.2 per cent levy on the ex-factory proceeds of sugar cane processing establishments.

The honourable Minister of Agriculture was very careful to point out that before the formal collapse of the levy funds which this Part deals with, and it has been

reflected in the Schedules later on, that there was some \$1.5 million for a mechanisation scheme, \$1.6 million for a pilot scheme, and \$3.7 million for share holding in Barbados Sugar Factories Limited by the small farmers.

What he did not say, Sir, was that, according to the same process of distribution, the total sum available, as estimated by the McGregor submission, was \$24.5 million, that in the very report it states that the \$3.7 million would help to alleviate the chronic working capital shortage of Barbados Sugar Factories Limited, and that the trade-off would be that the factory-company would agree to spend \$1 million on small holder services within the next five years.

He did not say, Sir, that \$13.6 million of that money was earmarked for the Sugar Industry Capital Investment Fund. I am dealing with the question of the levies; the \$1.2 million replaces the others, and it is part of the Schedule, and this part of the Bill deals with the question of the levy.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You want to change it from 1.2 per cent?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The point is that what you are telling us in Committee would more aptly have been told on Second Reading.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: We can do it on the Schedule of the Bill or do it now, because the Schedule provides for the collapse of the levies.

There is just one further point I want to make, Sir, with your indulgence. It is that, apart from the \$13.6 million and the \$3.7 million, there is another \$2.8 million allocated to carry over stock financing.

So the Minister must not convey the impression that any substantial proportion of money as a consequence of the collapse or the abolition of these levies went to the small cane farmers in this country; it went as a non-refundable gift to Barbados Sugar Factories Limited, and, Sir up to this day one cannot get a statement from any Minister as to exactly how much money

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I must draw to your attention

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. An honourable Member has risen on a point of order.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is making reference to the McGregor Report; he is making reference to statements that Ministers should have made, and that has nothing

to do with Part II, and I submit to you that the honourable member is completely out of order and is attempting again to make a Second Reading speech.

All that he has to say about the McGregor Report, all about the levy and everything and the statements that Ministers should have made should have been made in the Second Reading. That is my submission, Mr. Chairman. I am not going to sit down and let him get away with it at all today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has spoken, and I must say that he is correct in that your contribution is definitely that of a Second Reading speech. I have to point out to you (Asides)

Order! Will honourable Members please conduct themselves in a manner suitable to Parliament?

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central will not be allowed to make a Second Reading Speech at this stage.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I do appreciate your ruling.

I want to say that one fully supports the principle of setting up research in the area of the sugar industry, but at the same time we would like an explanation of the surreptitious nature by which these funds were passed on elsewhere.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member made a speech on that, and I think in evaluating it, one must make it very clear that the honourable Member should know that Barbados Sugar Factories Limited is probably one of the most genuine cooperatives in existence in Barbados.
4.10 p.m.

Whatever money goes into Sugar Factories Limited to make it look more efficient goes back to all the growers in the form of enhanced payments for their cane, and all the people who send canes to the factories are paid in accordance with the formula embodied in this Bill. He is making a non-point.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Part II, as amended, stand part.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot hear that.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am not on a point. I am speaking. I am entitled to speak 15 minutes on each occasion.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has spoken and the question has been duly put.

Part II, as amended, was passed.

Part III, as amended, was called.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Part III, as amended, stand part.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir, I have to move very fast. There are one or two comments I would like to make here and there are as follows, Sir.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let me inform.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am speaking specifically, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Do not put words in my mouth. We are in Part III.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Part III, Sir. I am dealing with that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Any honourable Member addressing his remarks to Part III, please let us know the clause that he is specifically referring to.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: As I go along?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Yes, please. I do not intend that you waste the time of the House.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I would never do a thing like that.

Mr. Chairman, the way in which this Part is set out, in my view, Sir, will make it very difficult for the workers in the industry to benefit at times of surplus and.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What clause?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: In Clause 17(2). Clause 17(2) sets out the information required to be submitted in Section 2(a). Then when you go on to Section 2(b) you get certain exclusions, but also the inclusion there of lands and buildings, which will form part of the process....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Excluding plantation tenancies, then.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes. That is excluded, but included, because I presume that they will be sold off. It will include land and buildings, which would be taken into consideration when depreciation is considered over the years, particularly in relation to lands.

The next section, Sir, deals with machinery and equipment, and that sets out the method of depreciation as exists under the current Income Tax Act.

Then, Sir, before any surplus is considered, under the next section, the 1.2 per cent levy would be taken off. Then, Sir, we come to the problem, under 3, of revaluation of assets and so on, which was adverted to, and which was somewhat ameliorated by the amendment. I am grateful that the Minister took the point that I made in my Second Reading speech and that aspect has been dealt with to some extent.

But then, Sir, when you look at the way in which the normal rate of return would be calculated — I am now at 19(1) — and when you look further down to the provision for the carrying forward of the deficits, it is my considered judgment that when you take all these factors into consideration that surpluses would be a rare event in the sugar industry. And when you have arrived at the surplus by this formula and then you proceed to distribute according to the subsequent clauses, then you will find that the workers will probably be worst off under this arrangement than they were under the principle of collective bargaining.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I take it that you are under 20(3).

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, 20(3) (a), dealing with distribution. That is the point I am trying to get across, that the way in which the surplus is calculated, and the elements that go into the formulation of what constitutes a surplus, when taken in conjunction with the provisions of this Part that I have identified specifically, Sir, going from clause to clause, that conjunction of circumstances, bearing in mind the present state of the sugar industry and the projected state of the sugar industry, I do not think that in the event of a surplus, let us say in four or five years time, there will be any money around for the workers in the industry. That is my own feeling.

And, Sir, I say this. That being the case, the very factor of confrontation, which the honourable Minister is trying to avoid by determining the surplus in this manner and distributing that surplus, would probably be accentuated, because in the bi-annual negotiations.....

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I am really sorry to be interrupting the honourable Member, but this is precisely the submission he made in the course of his Second Reading speech. Should a Member repeat a Second Reading speech in Committee? The very words that he used last Tuesday night, he is now using in Committee stage. The Rules do not permit that. He is not addressing any particular clause. He is just repeating himself hoping that the Press will pick him up — grandstanding again, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has so far said that in his opinion there will be no surplus. That is all he has said so far.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Sir, I appreciate that honourable Members are afraid of the fact that the case they have put up is being demolished so effectively. I am saying that.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Put the question.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, in Part III there is reference here to the accredited representatives of the sugar workers, in Clause 18(2), page 12, and there is another reference to it in Clause 19(2).

I see the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, what is that document he is reading there, 'Horizons'. He is reading there the DLP's 'Horizons'? That is required reading for the honourable Member for St. Michael South East. Very, very good. Learn the.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is part of your contribution to this?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: That is educational, Democratic Labour Party Information, Educational.
4.20 p.m.

But I wonder if the Minister can tell us whether this particular part or the whole Bill was sent to the accredited representatives of the sugar workers, particularly the Barbados Workers Union, for their comments and observations. The Part does refer to them in a number of places.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: We have already addressed that matter and I thought that I had made it clear. The right honourable Prime Minister did discuss, a long time ago, Sir, the contents and provisions of this Bill on more than one occasion, as I understand it, with Mr. Frank Walcott, as the representative of the sugar workers.

Part III, as amended, was passed.

Part IV, as amended, was called and passed.

Part V was called.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to move that Part V, as amended, stand part.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The question is that Part V.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Part 5, Clause 43 — appeal.

Sir, I notice that what has crept into a lot of legislation in Barbados is that in relation to persons who are aggrieved — I guess, within the area of administrative law, I do not know the correct term — that very frequently the legislation more or less limits their right of appeal to a Judge in Chambers; that is, that they do not have full access to the full judicial system.

As a matter of fact, Sir, my own recollection is that the only situation that has come before this Honourable House was where a member of the Bar Association, if he was aggrieved by any administrative act, any action taken against him, the lawyers made sure that they had the right of appeal, right to the Privy Council.

Now I have raised this matter before, you may recall, in a Bill dealing with surveyors and one dealing with other matters. It is also in the General Medical Council Act and I think in the General Nursing Council legislation.

I feel it is time, Sir, that we should not restrict persons who have a grievance which is taken before the courts. I feel that that person should have access to the full judicial system.

I must say this, this particular provision here conforms with what has been the pattern of legislation being brought before Parliament. I, myself, have always felt that there should be no such limitations, because sometimes, Sir, the grievances that arise out of this and similar areas of judicial activity can be as severe and can be as damaging, Sir, to the person as in other civil suits and sometimes in other criminal suits.

For example, Sir, let's say that a doctor was struck off the Register. That could be as damaging to him, Sir, as if he was probably guilty of some other offence or some other judgment had been lodged against him. Yet if he had lost the case in a civil court, he can fight his case in the Privy Council; but if he loses his case before the General Medical Council, he can only apply to a Judge in Chambers.

This has been the pattern that is right through this part of legislation. I believe the lawyers refer to it as administrative law. I think the former Member for St. Philip North used to use the term "administrative law" or a very similar term like that. I think that this kind of thing should be looked at to see whether or not you are not limiting the right of recourse of the subject to the entire judicial process in the country.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, this clause reads as follows:

"A person who is aggrieved by the refusal of a permit or approval of the Minister under Section 41, may within seven days of being notified of the decision, appeal to a Judge in Chambers whose decision is final."

As I understand it, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central feels that in case the judge gives the decision and the aggrieved person is not satisfied, he should have the right to go up to the Privy Council.

I think we are dealing with something like 7 000 sugar workers. Can you imagine that some 7 000 sugar workers are not satisfied with a decision by a judge? You know that it would take the Privy Council almost twenty years, I believe, to deal with 7 000 workers? You must have some form of respect for the judiciary. All this is saying is that the decision of the judge is final. You can have more than one aggrieved person, there are some 7 000 workers.

What I believe you would like to say is that there shall be an industrial court. That is what you want to say, but you know you cannot say that because the Workers Union is not in favour of an industrial court. That is what you would like to say, but you dare not say it. If they were to have an industrial court, there would be no need, really, for a trade union. Or you would have the same problems that you are having in Trinidad here in Barbados. So I don't see.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. This particular clause, Sir, deals with the question of export control. So I don't know what the honourable Member is talking about, and I am addressing myself to a general principle that has crept into administrative law in Barbados. I think that the opportunity arises here, and you know members can have views one way or another. But the honourable Member certainly clearly does not understand what the clause is all about.

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

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I appreciate that the honourable Member for St. James North has spoken, Sir. Even though the electorate has made sure that we have no spokesman of the Barbados Workers' Union, in Parliament, the Member for St. Michael South Central is in effect the spokesman for the Barbados Workers' Union. I did not know that until the honourable Member for St. James North had spoken.

With respect to the specific point which has been raised, it is a matter of judgment, Sir, as to the point of finality in the judicial system.

Clearly, if a man is charged with riding a bicycle without a bell or something of the sort, some very modest contravention of the Road Traffic Act, it is not to be expected, Sir, that that man should be able to appeal his case to the divisional court, to the Court of Appeal and to the Privy Council, up to the last tribunal

of appeal, because that would be an absolute waste of time.

So you have to have different cut-off points, Sir, because you cannot have a matter under appeal all the time.

Whether the particular question of whether an export permit is granted or not, is one of those matters as important as a man's professional reputation, whether as a barrister, if he is struck off he should be allowed to carry the matter up to the Court of Appeal, this is a question of judgment, and we can have differences of opinion.

I do not think that, in relation to the public matter that is addressed here in the clause under discussion, any injustice will be done in having the matter determined with finality by a Judge in Chambers. But I can well see, Sir, that there could be certain circumstances, talking broadly now, when, say, it would be necessary not to restrict any aggrieved party, Sir, to have this matter dealt with only by one court.

4.30 p.m.

The question that Part V stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Part VI as amended was called.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to move that Part VI, as amended, stand part.

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

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, in Part VI, Clause 51, I note that the Minister responsible for agriculture may make Regulations giving effect to the provisions of this Act.

There seems to be a growing tendency in legislation coming before Parliament, that Regulations, which a Minister is empowered to make, are no longer required to be subject to approval by Parliament. There is no requirement for instance, that Regulations made by the Minister under this section should be laid in Parliament.

I wonder if the Government has any particular reason why there is no requirement that Regulations should be laid in Parliament and be subject to either negative or affirmative resolution, as the case may be.

It seems to me that we could avoid any tendency or direction towards circumventing or avoiding the need for Parliament to be part of any activity in relation to subsidiary orders made by Ministers, so I would just like to find out if there is any reason for the exclusion of the need for parliamentary approval of Regulations made by the Minister.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I, myself Mr. Chairman, know of no particular reason why no provision has been made here for the Regulations which would fall to be made by the Minister of Agriculture to be laid in Parliament.

I would say, however, that there is a very explicit tendency, in so far as it may be necessary to have speed and flexibility in administering a particular area, not to have the provision that every Regulation which is made, and sometimes has to be made effective at very short notice, to be brought to Parliament. I think, perhaps, that that is the only consideration. But in so far as the trend may be undesirable, I take note of that.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, I understand the answer given by the Minister. In my view, it is no satisfactory explanation of what we consider to be the requirement that Parliament should be involved in these matters. I do not think that the reason given in order to have speed and flexibility in dealing with these matters, — may be a reason for excluding the parliamentary supervision, because there is the procedure which is available on either the affirmative or negative resolution, as the case may be, which does not impinge on the facility of flexibility.

So unless there is some very good reason for excluding the parliamentary supervision, I would suggest that serious consideration could be given to amending this section so as to provide for the continual supervision by Parliament in all the work over which Ministers have control.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I just want to say, Mr. Chairman that there are several other techniques available to the Opposition, and indeed to Parliament. For example, a specific Question could be put down and asked of the Minister, or alternatively a substantive resolution may be brought if indeed there is any concern resulting from the operation of the particular Regulations he has in mind.

The question that Part VI, as amended, stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

The First Schedule was called.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to move that the First Schedule be the First Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

The Second Schedule was called.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: I beg to move that the Second Schedule be the Second Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

On the motion of Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, 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.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a third time.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, speaking on the Third Reading, the motion that was just made, we on this side, while we appreciate the position of the Minister in respect of Clause 51 and the making of Regulations, we are concerned that there is no provision in this Bill for

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, if the honourable Member would kindly give way, I believe it would be unprecedented if the honourable Member is allowed to speak on this occasion. I have never heard of a Third Reading speech in Parliament. I may be wrong, but I have never heard it. I seek the advice of Your Honour and the Clerk on this occasion. You may be right, Sir, but I have never seen it. *(A Pause)*

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us hear the honourable Member.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes. I was making the point, Mr. Speaker, that we are concerned on this side about the role of Parliament in terms of the Regulations which the Minister responsible for Agriculture may make pursuant to Clause 51. Clause 51 does give him the authority to make Regulations, but it does not.....

Mr. SPEAKER: What I am afraid of is this: the honourable Member cannot make a Second Reading speech at Third Reading, and I rule that that is what the honourable Member seeks to do.

The question that the Bill be read a third time was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
4.40 p.m.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, the Bill was passed.

RESUMPTION OF DEBATE ON THE COMPANIES ACT, 1982

Order No. 2 was called — To move the resumption of debate on the Second Reading of a Bill to revise and amend the law relating to companies and to provide for related and consequential matters.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, I had concluded my speech on the last occasion, but in view of the fact that it was a very late hour, and that we had given the assurance to the other side that the debate would not have continued, I had formally moved that further consideration be postponed.

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

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

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, this Bill seeks fundamentally to change and revise the laws relating to companies and for registration and incorporation of companies in Barbados.

This is the kind of Bill that we certainly would not oppose. Indeed, I assume that it is a Bill that the honourable Leader of the House or the mover of the Bill would want to see pursued in Select Committee rather than in Committee of the whole House.

I do not think it is a matter of any great urgency, but it is a far-reaching Bill, because it seeks to deal with companies in a way far different than has been dealt with previously.

One concern of mine is that you find a number of little people forming private companies, previously and still with small capital, but now with a nominal share capital hardly less nowadays than \$200 000, but the amount of capital put into the companies bears no relation to the nominal share capital. The problem there is that these small companies are going to be required by this Act to have fairly expensive audit services.

I heard the honourable mover saying "no", but this is my understanding of the Act, that every company is going to have to have an auditor appointed to carry out a comprehensive audit.

What is more, it appears to give the auditors a kind of power that they had not had previously, and they themselves seem to be in a position to determine the kind of qualifications that an auditor should have. In other words, it appears to me that the small man who sets himself up as an auditor in carrying out some audit services over the years will have no place in this Act.

Sir, I think these are things we should look at. This legislation is not a matter that has come about overnight. I recall, that, in fact in 1968, the then Attorney General, Mr. F. G. Smith, appointed a Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Justice Denys Williams — I believe the honourable Member for Christ Church West was also a member of the Committee at that time — and from then until now the question of revising the laws relating to companies was carried out, and, as a result of this, we find this Act.

One other concern of ours is that from time to time we pass legislation in here and we give the Registry additional functions to carry out. This Act will give them

more functions still, and the Registry is finding it difficult to cope with their expanded duties over a period of time.

I believe, Sir, that the question of how this Act is to be administered and by whom it is to be administered, again should be looked at even before it is passed by this Chamber, before this Act is proclaimed. I can see this Act taking quite a long time before it really comes into effect.

These are some of the little points that I think I should draw to the attention of this Chamber. By and large, we do not oppose this Act. For one thing, as I said earlier, it has come about as a result of action taken by us when we were the Government, but I hope the Government would accede to the request of this side and send it to a Select Committee.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, I can assure the honourable Member that it is not going to a Select Committee. Let us get that out of the way immediately.

Secondly, notice of this Bill was given I think on the 15th June. We gave the Opposition one month, and on the 13th July, the Deputy Prime Minister addressed the Chamber on the Second Reading. Further consideration was asked for, so that when we went into the summer recess you would have had enough time to sit down at the Academy and discuss it in detail. We came back in, I sought from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the honourable Member for St. Michael West at that time, who was here — the honourable Member for St. Michael South went out of the country — and he said he would like to have one week. This is now three weeks.

We have to get on with this business, and I cannot give you any more time. The whole position is that even if you look at it, you would not be able to understand it, so what is the sense of delaying all the time? This is not your bag, this type of Bill. You started off by saying you wanted it to go to Select Committee. Why? To spend more time there? You would not know what is in it anyhow.

You had from the 13th June until this evening, and you are still appealing for light. You are not in this type of Bill. There is no Select Committee on this. It is going to have its passage today. This is September.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for St. James North seems to be very excited about suggesting that we want time for this Bill. I never heard myself, sitting here on the backbench, any proposal from the honourable Member for St. Michael North that further consideration of this Bill be postponed.

4.50 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Just on a point of elucidation. You were not in these discussions. I do not deal with you in matters of this nature. I deal with the Leader of the Opposition or his deputy, and we discussed what we were going to do in connection with it.

The Member for St. Michael North did not ask for a postponement, but he indicated that he want it to go to a Select Committee, and we cannot allow it to go to a Select Committee. This was here since June and this is September.

Mr. M. A. KING: I do not understand what the honourable Member is complaining about. The fact that he does not deal with me in these matters is totally unimportant. My point which I made, and which is a clear one, is that there was no proposal from anyone on this side of the floor of this House that there should be any postponement of this Bill, and, as far as I am concerned, we on this side are making our contribution on this Second Reading of the Bill at this time.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member for St. Michael North made an essential point in the course of his short address, which I will take up and proceed from there. He made the point that the Registration Office, as it stands today, is not equipped to deal with the administration of this new companies law.

Only last week, when the right honourable Member for St. Thomas introduced the new Securities and Exchange Bill, he made the point that it was of a general effort on the part of Government to upgrade the laws dealing with the economic system, and he made reference to the Companies Act.

We on this side recognise that there has to be legislation passed upgrading the economic institutions. The honourable Member for St. Michael South made the point that the measures which were now before the House, in the form of the Companies Act and the Stock Exchange Bill, were matters which sort of underpinned and modernised the capitalist structure as we have it in this country today.

Now, modernisation of the Companies Act has proceeded against a background of that kind of philosophy. What we say is that if you are operating in the capitalist framework, in which we are operating today, it would be necessary within that context, if you want to preserve and modernise that system, to ensure that the legislation which is necessary for underpinning that system is modernised.

This Companies Bill which we have before us has to be seen against that background. And if you are looking at it from the point of view of perfecting the mechanism of the capitalist structure as we know it, then

we understand why a Companies Bill of this form is before this Honourable Chamber.

But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that what we have to be concerned about is not so much a modernisation of a system which we have inherited, and used, and sort of manipulated over the years; we have to be concerned about developing in this country a kind of system which is going to provide for the advancement at all levels of all people within the community, particularly those at the lower end of the socio-economic ladder, who are least able to benefit from measures of this sort.

When we look at this Companies Bill, which has come before Parliament in the form in which it has come, against this background of which I have spoken, we see in that law itself there are no expensive or exhaustive provisions, or any provisions of substance, for that matter, which deals with the problems and the rights of the workers in relation to their activities in Companies.

The traditional system is recognised and under-pinned. The adversary system, which we have become accustomed to in our practice of Government enchaind in the law Courts, is preserved in this country; because the rights of employees must be articulated and ventilated even after the passing of this Bill and sought to be made right by the activity of institutions like workers organisations, who have, at every stage of the way, to confront the owners of businesses in this industry, so to speak, to get some preservation and opinion of the rights of workers.

Welcome provisions is made in the law, of course, in relation to the protection of the rights of minority shareholders, shareholders who can be at the whims and fancies of the large vested interest who have control, and who can exercise control, over Companies.

But we would like to see from this side that, where attempts are being made to modernise laws of this kind, we go beyond the effort to protect the rights of shareholders only, because they are not shareholders only contributing towards the development and the advancement and the profits, in the final analysis, which companies make.

Employees have a very large role to play in that. Capital is important; the work of labour is equally important as well. And what is, to some extent distressing, when you look at the development of the system as we know it, is that even in the context where attempts are made from time to time to give some token recognition of the rights to workers, for instance, in the various profit sharing schemes which we have from time to time offered by companies to employees; in those schemes, themselves, we find that the employees, so to speak, are at the mercy of the company because the little

recognition that is given to him in the profit sharing schemes, which I have seen existing from time to time, give him no right to demand.

The profit-sharing schemes largely are schemes which are at the discretion of the employer, and if in one year the employer, for instance, does not find it necessary to make any concession to the worker by virtue of sharing in the profits in that year, then the worker has no right to demand.

We would like to see a situation developing in this country where the worker has an equal right, so to speak, with the investor to share and to demand a share in the profits which companies make. So we would want to see, for instance, a greater form of control being given to workers in any attempts to modernise companies' law as we know it.

We would like to see in the overall result greater recognition and emphasis being placed on the quality of interest and right of contribution made by labour as well as by capital.

There has been a number of experiments in the development of systems which would provide for greater worker participation in industry but the unfortunate thing about some of those developments is that, although recognition is given to the rights of workers to participate, participation in many cases is not as effective as one would like to see.

There have been experiments in the capitalist structure in the form of profit-sharing. There have experiments in the socialist systems in relation to giving concession to workers in relation to the clout, so to speak, which they exercise in their companies. I believe that the Yugoslavs, are perhaps the most progressive of the socialist countries recognising the rights of employees to participate in the overall control, direction, and sharing in the profits of the companies for which they work. But the unfortunate thing in most of these experiments is that just an elite group of workers tend to be the ones who have influences and say in what is going on.

5.00 p.m.

So in the final analysis, what we want to see is that the total environment be created where the worker is recognised and the worth of the worker is recognised in all these areas — where his participation is meaningful, where he has a right to demand a share of the profits and where he has a right to demand in sharing the fruits of his labour; and we have to get away from the idea that once the workman goes to work for a company and his work life is over, that there, for all times, his interest in what he has contributed to the company ceases, almost as if it were, cut-off by ability.

So that in modernising companies' law, as we know it, in the system in which we function and against the background in which we operate, I would like to express the hope, Mr. Speaker, that attempts should be made to deal with the problems of the small man, so to speak, by Government, for instance, paying more attention to the development of the co-operative movement. The same way that we can think in terms of companies law to facilitate, so to speak, the participation by business and industry in the development of the system which we operate, it would be good also, Mr. Speaker, if, at the same time, we take steps of modernising, upgrading and giving some direction to the co-operative movement where, by virtue of the participation by a lot of small people in industry and business activity, greater depth could be given to their contribution and to the society in which they live in, and greater recognition could be given to the worth which people at this end of the socio-economic ladder are entitled to in a community like ours.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this Bill.....
The honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It appears as though this is a three minute bill. It is a very thick Bill and members may be groping around for something to say on the Bill. But I will start with the Explanatory Summary, Mr. Speaker, which states in the very first paragraph, "Over the years the local Act has been amended from time to time but no comprehensive rethinking has ever been attempted. Revision and reform are, therefore, long overdue."

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that those two sentences in the very first paragraph may give to the unwary reader the impression that it is only now that some consideration, some comprehensive rethinking is being undertaken in respect of the Companies Act. One may get the impression that it is only with the present Administration that the need for reconsideration, revision and for upgrading of this particular piece of legislation really started.

I am glad that my colleague, the Member for St. Michael North, did set the record straight by indicating that it was way back in the 1960s at least — I cannot speak before that time, because I am not familiar with the pre-history — but the committee to examine the existing companies legislation was set up either in 1967 or in 1968 to look at this old matter and to come up with some proposals for a new Companies Act.

It has been a long drawn-out process not because the persons on that committee were not highly competent persons and very dedicated persons, but because of the very complex nature of the problems which had to be considered in any modern Companies Act.

Those who have studied these matters will tell you that it is not a very simple matter to deal with companies, especially when we come to this legal fiction that a company has personality. It has "personality", and out of that flows a number of concepts and may I say a number of problems as well.

The complexities are also entangled and may be inured in the whole history and development of the several Companies Acts in Britain, and we do follow the British legal system. I believe that there may be at least three or four major pieces of legislation in Britain relating to companies in 1948, I believe another one in the 1960s and about two in the 1970s. And I know consideration has been given to the consolidation of the legislation in Britain to update the whole area of companies legislation. Whether that new Companies Act in Britain has seen the light of day yet, I am not certain.

Now when we look at it and realize also that the situation became even more complexed with the entry of Britain into the European Economic Community, and you had to try to coordinate or harmonize the companies legislation arising out of the old Roman system and those coming out of the British kind of system, we can see the complexities involved in this.

Now, on top of it all, what we are trying to do against that kind of background — British modified in recent times to the European traditions coming out of France, Belgium, Spain and Italy and so on — is to reconcile all of that, or put it within the framework of the Canadian traditions now, which is another kind of offshoot of the North American influence. We can well understand why this particular measure has taken so long to see the light of day.

And there is just one more strand I have not referred to. That is the efforts within the Caribbean itself, on a Caribbean-wide basis, to try to ensure that there is some correspondence in companies legislation both within the several territories which may be part of CARICOM. 5.10 p.m.

I think it would be wrong if the impression were given that it is only now that this kind of rethinking is being put into the Companies Act. There are a number of substantial points which need to be made on this particular piece of legislation.

There are indeed some changes in relation to the incorporation of companies, the formation and operation of companies. In terms of the operations or the activities of these insider interests, or however they may be styled — Clause 308 deals with this — I must say that some of the penalties that I see in the modern legislation does appear to be somewhat draconian. We have dealt with a number of them already today, and some of the fines and

periods of imprisonment do appear to me to be a bit draconian.

But apart from all that we have to deal with the whole matter that a piece of modern companies legislation will be only as effective as the machinery which may be in place to make it work, and all down the years there has been a fairly steady series of complaints that the machinery to make companies legislation work effectively is not really in place.

We have always been told that we have to wait for a new Registration Office, or whatever it is, but I would like to give a word of advice to the Government: there is no point in rushing this Bill through, in trying to get it on the Statute Book, then to proclaim it and to bring it into force, unless the necessary machinery is in place in order for it to be serviced effectively or efficiently. I think this is a matter to which the Government should give great concern.

We are ready, within the Select Committee which my colleague has made reference to, to give detailed examination to the provisions of this Bill. There is no point rushing it, Mr. Speaker, because if, from 1968 until 1975, it took a Committee in the Democratic Labour Party's time some seven years or so before they could come up with any concrete proposals, and within the time of the Barbados Labour Party, in addition to those seven or so years there is now another six years, it does indicate that this is a very complex matter.

We have had so far virtually 13 years or so that the committee has been examining this measure, and I think it is really unfair to accuse the member for St. Michael North of having enough time to study it. It has only now been a couple of months that the matter has been effectively before Parliament, when you take the recess out of that. Now we are talking about almost 13 years that a committee of experts has been looking at this matter, and Parliament, made up of all honourable Members

Mr. SPEAKER: Is this a Second Reading motion we are debating?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: It certainly is, and I am going to finish shortly too, Mr. Speaker.

I am saying that if the matter goes before a Select Committee, it would give

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no such motion before the House.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, but I can advert to that; the matter has been raised.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no such motion before the House.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We are saying, Mr. Speaker that there is a need for this Parliament to proceed with all deliberate speed on this particular matter, and I think we should be given adequate time, within committee, in order to consider this matter. I hope the Government benches will be reasonable on this particular matter. We are willing to make our contribution during the Committee stage on the Bill, and I do hope that the urgings of this side will be taken into account.

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive were called and passed.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We are willing to have the matter debated in Parts, provided we are given adequate time. It is a very thick Bill and many clauses in the Parts, so we should be given adequate time with each Part to give consideration to the several clauses.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I assure you of that.

Part I was called and passed.

5.20 p.m.

Parts II, III, IV and V were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

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

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

RESOLUTION TO LEASE LAND TO MR. TEE'S DONUTS (BARBADOS) LIMITED

Order No. 6 was called – To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the lease of a parcel of land at Wildey in the parish of Saint Michael to Mr. Tee's Donuts (Barbados) Limited, for the purpose of erecting a

doughnut shop, an ice-cream supermarket and for related matters.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this Resolution is set out in the Addendum. It seeks to give parliamentary approval to a lease to Mr. Tee's Donuts (Barbados) Limited. It is an area of land situated in Wildey, St. Michael, and the company wishes to use this land in order to erect a building to facilitate business there.

The rental fee is \$3 000 per year, which is renewable every three years. The lease is for 15 years in the first instance with an option to renew after the expiration of that 15 years. As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Government has decided to grant this lease, and hence the Resolution that is now before the House.

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 STATUTORY BOARDS (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) ACT, 1982

Order No. 3 was called – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend certain enactments relating to Statutory Boards.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the proposed legislation would have the effect of establishing complete uniformity in the matter of the recruitment of personnel with respect to statutory boards. The Statutory Boards Services Commission currently has within its domain only two statutory boards, namely the Child Care Board and the National Assistance Board, and appointments of staff to these boards require the approval of the Statutory Boards Services Commission.
5.30 p.m.

The work that this board has to do in this area, Mr. Speaker, is miniscule, and, consequently, for the past six years or so, the Board has met once a month to participate earth-shaking decisions as approving acting appointment of a maid.

Clearly its function is virtually unnecessary, and, in many respects, operates as an obstacle to the smooth and efficient execution of the work of the Child Care National Assistance Board.

We often find that by the time the Statutory Board Services Commission is in a position to call a meeting and make an appointment, the period of the acting appointment has already expired.

The Bill therefore proposes the repeal of the Statutory Boards Services Commission Act and seeks to consolidate within its Schedule all of the other consequential changes as a result of the abolition of the Statutory Boards Services Commission.

The Child Care Act is amended to empower that body to carry out the functions of the Statutory Boards Services Commission and the National Assistance Act is likewise recommended.

Also, the Statutory Boards Pensions Act is amended with a view to confirm the powers exercised under that Act to the Child Care National Assistance Board.

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

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

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

On motion of Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, 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 and 2 were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported to Mr. SPEAKER the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On separate motions of Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, Item No. 4.

REGISTRATION OFFICE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1982

Order No. 4 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Registration Office Act, Cap. 33.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the office of "Notary Public", which is the office known in the civil rather than the common law is a well-known one in many countries, certainly in all countries that have the Roman Law, and also in the United States, and there are many documents which are required to be tested by a Notary. The phrase, I believe is that the general accent of the law of nations is given to a Notary attestation.

There is only one notary public in Barbados, and that is the Registrar; so a great number of documents that have to be notarised, as opposed to merely sworn before a Justice of the Peace, have to be taken to the Registrar, and to nobody else, to have his signature and his official notarial seal.

The Government has considered widening the area from which notaries public can be appointed, because the area is a very limited one at the moment — a constituency has one elector so to speak; but on reflection we have decided that both Government revenue and the needs of the public can best be protected by allowing the Assistant Registrars to carry out the functions of "notary".

The constituency, Mr. Speaker, I beg your pardon, is now a constituency of two, because the Deputy Registrar is one. But in addition to the two Assistant Registrars, we propose to appoint as notaries, so that there will be four persons with notarial seals in the Registry who can notarise documents.

We think it quite important to maintain the authority of the Registry in the Supreme Court of Barbados behind the office of notary, and that is why we are not going outside the officials of the Supreme Court Registry.
5.40 p.m.

We hope, Sir, perhaps honourable Members who are in day to day practice at the Bar, especially those of my learned friends opposite who have an expectation of many years more in that position, we hope that they can perhaps contribute and indicate any difficulties that they may have had with notarising, any suggestions which they may make that the Government can adopt for the future.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I second that, Sir. I just would like to make a comment to support this in relation to members of the public who serve as the Justices of the Peace.

I believe, Sir, that a person serving in such a capacity should use their office in respect of their duty to serve the

public with all the dignity there is added to that of being notary public or a Justice of the Peace. But I have had repeated complaints, and only quite recently on a call-in programme on Rediffusion I heard of complaints made where, Sir, old age pensioners, particularly, were complaining of Justices of the Peace charging them a fee to sign their old age pension cards or a document.

I believe that that is an injustice inflicted upon these old people, and I am satisfied beyond a shadow of a doubt — I have checked this and I have asked all the appropriate authorities — that it is wrong and it is illegal, and, more so, I think it is inhuman to look at a poor old age pensioner and, as a man who serves as a Justice of the Peace, charge that old age pensioner a fee to sign his or her pension.

I want to make this very, very clear to all of the Justices of the Peace that we have in this country. Any time at all I miss and have enough information, I don't care who they are, that they have charged anyone at all, furthermore an old age pensioner, adding burden on that individual who served their country and now must depend on a simple signature and be charged a fee, I am going to find my way with that Justice of the Peace to whatever authority or authorities there are in this country and have them removed once and for all from the service, and, furthermore, highlight it.

I think it is an injustice and it is inhuman and everything that you can think about to charge people for a duty which you are to perform at a civic level, and, in particular, Sir, to old age pensioners. I hope the Justices of the Peace get my message quite clearly, Sir.

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 were called and passed.

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

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

FISCAL INCENTIVES (AMENDMENT) ACT, CAP. 71A

Order No. 5 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Fiscal Incentives Act, Cap. 71A.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, this is a short Bill. At the 17th meeting of the Caricom Council of Ministers, it was drawn to the attention of the Council that the Fiscal Incentives Act contained a prohibition against granting fiscal incentives for the manufacture of nails within the Caribbean Economic Community.

It was felt the reasons for the prohibiting of the manufacture of nails were no longer valid in view of the fact that a number of the countries had reached the stage where it would be beneficial for them to manufacture galvanized nails.

So the purpose of the amendment is to carry out the decision of the 17th Council of Ministers Meeting of Trade and Industry whereby the Act will be amended to include in the Act, after the word "nails", "other than galvanized nails". So galvanized nails can now be granted fiscal incentives in any member territories.

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

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

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.
5.50 p.m.

Clause 3 was called and passed.

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

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

THE BANKING (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1982

Order No. 7 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Banking Act.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is one of the budgetary measures. It has not yet come into force because, of course, the Budget was delivered after January 1 this year. It was originally intended to come into force this year. If you recall, Sir, it was mentioned during 1981, as part of the intention of the Government.

This increases the fees for banks which operate in Barbados from \$25 000 to \$50 000 for the Head Office of the branch and a further fee of \$2 500 in respect of each branch, where previously it was only \$1 000.

The banking business in Barbados, Sir, is not shrinking in terms of the volume of deposits or advances, it is however shrinking in terms of the number of branches. There has been some consolidation, and somewhat less competition, since the Barbados National Bank came into being.

The Barbados National Bank, itself, appears, in terms of business it does and the advances which it makes, to be the third largest of the banks now operating in Barbados, but it is very close to one of the other longer established Canadian banks, and in the few years of its operation it does appear to have become a settled institution.

Of course, it has a great number of problems, and there has been much criticism of the bank — I have had a few words to say about this, and members of the public and members of the House of Assembly — but, when I analyse the whole picture of the bank, I think it is now emerging that its months of difficulty were no more than that.

There was some mismanagement, some mistaken decisions were taken. Unfortunately, Civil Service attitudes towards security of tenure tended to prevail in the Barbados National Bank rather than commercial attitudes so that the persons in managerial positions, whose competence has been tried and proven to be lacking, were put into other less demanding managerial positions, rather than having their hands shaken and told to seek positions elsewhere more in consonance with their abilities.

We have, however, during the last three months, reduced the staff of the bank, not yet by the full 10 per cent but by a substantial number. A number of posts have been abolished, a new Board will take office on Thursday afternoon.

I see it announced in the Press that I will be making an address. I will be addressing a few words to members of the Board, not making a general address on the banking system.

We are in negotiation with a potential Managing Director, and the Board, I believe, is giving most careful consideration to personnel problems.

Numbers of persons employed in the upper ranks of the bank have been asked whether they consider they have a future in the Barbados National Bank, and a few

of them have understood the point that was being made and have tendered their resignations, subject to satisfactory conditions on all sides.

I am happy to say that I think the bank is emerging from its difficulties, and, unless there is some sudden setback, I am fairly confident the bank can expect to show a different picture this year, in terms of general financial performance, from its performance in earlier years.

The other banks in Barbados show all the indications that one would expect from a fiercely competitive industry. The largest bank is not the most profitable — it employs the largest number of people and pays the best salaries. Perhaps that is why it is a little less profitable than some of the other banks. The American banks are the smallest, but the most efficient, one will deduce.

The system, as a whole, appears to be a sound banking system as one could ask for. It has responded very well to Government's applications from time to time, Government's, not directions, but to Government's views, and if the same integrity and honesty prevails in the off-shore banking sector as prevails in the domestic banking sector, we can look forward quite confidently to the future.

6.00 p.m.

This Bill now before the House is not the only taxation measure proposed for banks, since we are charging a tax on the gross assets of the banks as measured by their loans.

We are preparing the details of this tax now, Mr. Speaker, and one thing that we are doing is allowing a differential, because we are going to allow banks to deduct their foreign liabilities from the gross assets, and we are going to give a greater concession with that than with their domestic liabilities. So if a bank borrows money abroad to bring into Barbados, the amount of that money that it borrows abroad to bring into Barbados will be deducted from its taxable assets when the "assets tax" comes into force. We think it important to give an incentive to bring money into the island.

There is a certain amount of loose talk, Sir, about the value of the Barbados dollar. I would like to say that, as far as the foreign reserves of the island are concerned, and as far as the published accounts of the banking system are concerned, I am very happy to observe that there is no speculation in the banking system, there does not appear to be any hint of speculation, nor indeed does the level of foreign reserves give rise, at the moment, to any alarm as to people's immediate perception of the position of the dollar.

Indeed I must say that the economy is undoubtedly going through recession, government revenue, as we will hear later on this evening, is in a very bad way, indeed a very, very bad way, but the reserves last week reached the highest point for some time — partly because, of course, the decisions to import are not being taken as they were at an earlier stage — and last week the Central Bank redeemed a good deal of foreign currency that was in circulation in Barbados and our foreign reserves went up to almost two months' supply of imports.

This situation of course will not perhaps survive the pay-out of civil servants' salaries and could never survive any attempt to reflate the economy, but at least it does show a certain soundness of our currency and a certain measure of confidence in the system and in the management of the economy that still exists in the commercial sector, and in the banking sector in particular.

In conclusion, Sir, I would like to thank the banking sector, the overseas banks, for their co-operation with what I would call, even at this stage, after six years, the new Government.

We have never had demands for Letters of Comfort, we have never had refusals by banks to issue overdrafts, unless they got letters personally signed by a Minister, to Statutory Corporations. We have not had that since 1977 when, following it, I wrote a letter paying off all the money the Government owed that bank and giving it a problem of what to do with a few million dollars for which it had no immediate use. We have not had that again.

Barclays Bank, when an application was made to it to finance one of the sugar loans, replied at once and started negotiations within a few hours. Other banks have on occasions responded with similar expedition to Government initiatives.

Indeed, I do not want to be invidious, but I should single out Barclays Bank for co-operation with the Government in more than one way within the last two months. In respect of one of the smaller domestic airlines of Barbados, we have been able to come to an amicable agreement with Barclays Bank for the future operations of that company, with the bank accepting that the Government was not to be a milch cow, so to speak, and that all parties concerned must carry some of the weight of loss, or as the case may be, the burden of the future in respect of the joint venture which we can now expect to enter into.

These fees are not onerous, Mr. Speaker, but they represent a contribution towards the cost of the Central Bank in running the Bank Inspection System and supervising banking in Barbados. They are expressed in money

terms, and therefore can be expected to rise every two years or so. No bank has made objections to paying the new fees next year when they fall due, Mr. Speaker, and, as I said, with the other banking taxes the banks have been extremely co-operative.

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

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

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

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

Clauses 1 and 2 were called and passed.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 8.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 8.
6.10 p.m.

PROFESSION, TRADE AND BUSINESS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1982

Order No. 8 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Profession, Trade and Business Registration Act, Cap. 373.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir some difficulty has been met in collecting the Registration Profession Fees during the month of January and the Registrar has requested that a little more latitude be allowed. The opportunity has therefore been taken to give this latitude at the same time as the Budgetary Proposals to change the list on the Schedules and to make one or two changes in the system of taxation to come before the House.

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

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I beg to second that.

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called and passed.

Clause 2 was called.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, when the Prime Minister was introducing this Bill, he said that there is some difficulty in collecting the fees. Perhaps it was because he did not have his papers in order, I do not know, but I did not get the nature of the difficulty. I have some difficulty in understanding what that difficulty is. I wonder if he can explain what is that difficulty.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Try under Clause 4.

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

Clause 3 was called and passed.

Clause 4 was called.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am just holding here until he is ready to find out what the difficulty is, because looking at Cap. 373 and seeing what the clause says, I find it a little difficult to understand what the difficulty is. I think it is the kind of Bill in which persons are going to ask what the amendment has done, and one would like to be in a position to say what exactly has happened.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Registrar had some difficulties. It is not so much collecting the fees, it is collecting the names. The difficulty is in collecting the names, Sir, and getting them published on time. It relates to publication.

If you read Section 14 of the Act, the Act says that "the Registrar shall publish or cause to be published in the month of January a separate list of persons who have on the 31st of January". That is virtually impossible, because it would mean that you have to get it printed in the afternoon on the 31st, after the Registry closes for taking money at 3 o'clock, and you would have to get it published by four. That is virtually impossible, so they are asking for a little more time, Sir.

It is the collection of names. The Chief Labour Officer has up to the end of April — and has never published. I do not think the Minister of Labour is paying attention, but the Chief Labour Officer, so far as I

know, has never had them gazetted. I do not think he has to gazette them, they are probably published in such form as the Minister desires, which may mean that they are printed in a departmental circular.

The Minister will know that this is a matter of controversy, that the honourable Member for St. Michael West loves so much, between the Ministry of Finance and other Ministries. This is a matter of controversy, but friendly controversy, Sir.

It was intended that the Minister of Labour's publication would serve as a guide to artisans and other persons offering a service to the public on the basis of self-employment. It has not really worked out that way. We are working towards it, Sir.

The question that Clause 4 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Clause 5 was called and passed.

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.
6.20 p.m.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 9.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 9.

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (GENERAL) ORDER, 1982

Order No. 9 was called — To move the passing of the Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) Order, 1982.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: This Order, Sir, is one of these matters which comes before the House when there is so much to be said that really one does well by saying very little. It is possible to go over all the arguments over the last nine months, that have been canvassed so extensively by the Opposition, as to the recession in Barbados. It is possible to review the entire economy, to recite the speech made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas, then Leader of the Opposition, on June 22, 1976, and given such publicity as I read it. I can recall the overtone phrases rolling out to the support and acclaim of Mr. Frank Walcott and Mr. Evelyn Greaves, now Senator Greaves, and former Senator Walcott. We can go through all that.

We can have our say about the responsibility of the Barbados Workers Union and the irresponsibility of the National Union of Public Workers. We can utter a few words on the Barbados Union of Teachers, which has never agreed with anybody, about anything, at anytime, anywhere.

We can question the motives of those who put advertisements in the papers saying that the cost of living has gone up by 31 per cent, when they don't need to make a calculation to see how much it has gone up by, since the base month is March 1980 and, therefore, at whatever point it stood in March 1982 is automatically the amount by which it went up, 24 per cent.

We can do all these things. We can wonder at the arguments of those, who, in a meeting, solemnly refused in 1980 to take the income tax cuts into account in estimating the needs of the public service for wage increases, and now in 1982 trumpet and belabour the National Insurance increases as causes for a different attitude towards wage increases.

All this we can do, Mr. Speaker, and I think that in outline, in three or four minutes, I have set out every speech that everybody is going to make in here on this, this evening, including myself. All of this we can do, but in the end we come down to the fact that Barbados cannot afford Civil Service wage increases of more than \$25 a week or \$108 a month.

It applies to you and me, Mr. Speaker, and honourable Members opposite, as it applies to every civil service, for a Bill will be coming to increase Parliamentary salaries by the exact amount for everybody as civil servants have got. It applies to the judges. It will apply to the statutory corporations.

And if private industry feels that it is able to pay more, in a time of recession, than increases which average around 10 percent a year, then the government will not be responsible for any difficulties into which private industry falls.

There is nothing more certain, Mr. Speaker, than that countries can be ruined by excessive wage settlements in the public sector and in the private sector.

I do not want to belabour the problems and difficulties of a country in which I spent a great deal of my adult life and for which I still have a high regard, nor do I want to attack the trade union system in any country. But there can be little doubt that the problems of Great Britain, which have reduced Britain's wealth in Western Europe from the position of being the best-off country after Sweden and Switzerland to being one of the worst-off countries in Western Europe, has been excessive wage settlements in the public sector, which has made it

impossible for the British Government to mobilise fiscal surpluses sufficient to maintain programmes and public works to alleviate unemployment and to update the infra-structure of Great Britain.

There is little doubt that Japan, a far off country for which we know nothing, except that it appears to be the most successful economy in the world, has made itself a greater economic power than the Soviet Union, for remember the Soviet Union, for most of recent history, has been the world's No. 2 economic power. Japan is second now only to the United States in economic strength, although it has a population of less than half that of the Soviet Union, partly because its workers are devoted to work ethics, they do not see capitalism as a dirty word.

There is little doubt that even the honourable Member for St. Michael South did not intend the public to look favourably upon the Stock Exchange Bill when he commented, in his opening sentence, that this is a necessary instrument of capitalism in Barbados. But in Japan, no such abuse of the capitalist system is uttered by the workers. They understand that, in the long run, a worker's real wage rises and falls with the profitability of the enterprise in which he is engaged – and they adjust their wage demands to the conditions of the country, especially to its import earnings, and certainly to its productivity.
6.30 p.m.

In Singapore workers "held strain" – to use the popular Barbadian expression – for many many years, adopting extremely modest wage increases, especially in the public sector, until that happy island reached the stage where the Government was able to say, 'we are now economically strong enough, we do not intend to be a country of cheap labour any more, we are going to raise all wages 20 per cent and shift our economic direction now that we have built a secure base?

I would like to think that in Barbados we will reach that stage of economic understanding, moral commitment and social awareness as to be able to grasp that we are all in the same boat – there is nowhere any of us can go.

We can flee the country to better ourselves, but we tend to return to Barbados, or to associate ourselves with Barbados, even if we go abroad to live. I am not the only Member of the House, Mr. Speaker, who has spent more than ten years away from Barbados studying and working, building a career outside Barbados, but with an intention of eventually returning.

The kind of commitment that ties Barbados' sons and daughters to our island will undoubtedly be in danger of destruction if a continual attitude of confrontation

is adopted between union and employer, between Public Officer and Government, even between Opposition and Government, or union and Government, which, sometimes, all too sadly, appear to be the same thing.

It is not as if we do not have examples other than those which I have recited. Around us in the Caribbean we have seen a country, which had twice our per capita income twenty years ago, give way, fall down, abandon itself to confrontations of the worse sort, and collapse, so that it became a by-word, not just in the Caribbean but in the world, for mismanagement.

I need hardly remind honourable Members, Mr. Speaker, of the situation when, in the aftermath of a great election victory in the CARICOM country of which I am speaking, the Government cynically signed an agreement with the International Monetary Fund to devalue its currency to impose some measure of sacrifice on its population, and immediately gave a 30 per cent increase in salaries to public officers.

That country, even with the reduction in inflation that it has seen over the last year and a half, with the pumping into the economy of many hundreds of millions of dollars from abroad, with the improvement in management witnessed by the introduction of controls and by the encouragement of investment from abroad, that country now has 25 per cent unemployment and it remains persistently, at that level.

In Barbados, we charted a course in 1976 of improving the management of the country, generally, abandoning the idea that unemployment could be cured by employing the unemployed in Government or statutory corporations, substituting investment for consumption, imposing, even at that stage, an idea of wage restraint.

We suffered — the St. Michael South Central by-election will testify how we suffered — when our support fell back at levels in the country at large below those we enjoyed in 1961, but we fought through with the sacrifices which, as a new Government, we were able to demand of the country.

In 1978 there was a modest public sector wage increase, there were modest increases in the private sector, generally. Between 1978 and 1980, unemployment was reduced by 30 per cent of the unemployed. It fell from over 15 per cent to between 10 per cent and 11 per cent. The first beneficiaries of economic development of the island in those years were the unemployed.

For what it is worth, Mr. Speaker, authorities abroad consider that most countries in the Caribbean understate unemployment, where Barbados overstates it.

The document, which I now believe to be genuinely available to Members on the opposite side, will indicate the World Bank's analysis of the position of labour and employment in Barbados, and we do enjoy and enviable employment situation — and unlike other honourable Members of the House, I have pleasure in making the document a document of the House when permission is granted by its authors.

If I remember correctly, the World Bank suggests that if we apply the same criteria as used to be applied in Barbados in the past, and as is applied in most other countries, we will find that our unemployment, far from being in double figures, has run in the last few years between 6.7 per cent to 8.8 per cent — I think they are the figures — of the work force.

Be that as it may, we prefer to err in the direction of seeing the problem beat. We accept that our criteria mean that although a greater proportion of our adults are at work than are at work in the United States or in Western Europe, that there is still substantial unemployment in the island.

I say to the House, Mr. Speaker, that this unemployment will grow worse if there is not wage restraint in the country.

Wage increases can be accommodated only in a particular number of ways. You can be irresponsible, you can give trade unions whatever they ask for, and you can devalue the currency. That is the system employed, more or less universally, throughout South America. Do not waste time arguing with the unions about a wage increase, give them a 30 per cent wage increase and then devalue the currency by 50 per cent. I believe this has recently been done in Mexico.

In Argentina, I believe that some employers have to improve wages every week, since the bus fares change between the morning and the evening sometimes in Buenos Aires. A man does not know at the beginning of the week whether he will be able to catch the bus home the following week on his salary. You can adopt that.

In Jamaica, inflation was such in the years of disturbance that wage increases meant nothing. The cynicism — and I am sorry to be critical of the political party with which my party is still in fraternal association, and of people with whom I enjoy good relations and always have — they have always had my goodwill and I am sorry to be critical of them, but in Jamaica the cynicism which accompanied the agreement with the International Monetary Fund carried over into wage negotiations, and this has happened in many, many other countries.

Some of our brethren in the Caribbean have had economic destruction without even the benefit of the

wage increases. In the case of another of our brethren in the Caribbean, they have the wage increases and can measure in the cost of services, the cost of acquiring a house, the cost of acquiring a motor vehicle, the effect of the wage increases on inflation. For a return to be seen, Mr. Speaker, somebody has to pay for the wage increases. 6.40 p.m.

If an employer seeks to absorb wage increases, he must either pass them on in higher prices, which means more inflation, or if he cannot do that, whether by reason, control, competition, or whatever, he is not going to take them out of his pocket — he passes it on in unemployment.

That is why I say, unless there is a measure of wage restraint in the country, inevitably the very fine employment record that has been built up over the last four years will be dislocated.

In the Public Service this is as true as it is anywhere else. There have been some layoffs in Government. The numbers are to be measured in tens and twenties rather than in hundreds. At the Civil Aviation Department there were 26 persons who, in fact, find that their employment has come to an end because of the long period of expansion at the airport new terminal, rebuilding of the runways, conversion of old terminal into Caricargo shed — has come to an end.

Among the security guards, there is some shrink in the services — perhaps we have had to withdraw guards from schools — and I think that the net number laid off is either 14 or 17, because of the original.....(*Asides*) The honourable Member is saying 52; I believe it is 37, but of the original numbers laid off, a number has been re-employed. In any case, there is a reserve of security guards who were used when temporary guards were needed. We always keep a reserve. You get a sudden emergency like the Post Office. 12 security guards to provide a 24-hour service with three guards on every site, that sort of thing. That is a mobile moving service.

At MTW, I cannot recall the numbers, but the numbers at MTW fluctuate, and it is hardly even true to say that there are even layoffs at MTW. A few may have been laid off.

I told the unions, when I met them about this matter, that the alternative to the proposals, which are embodied in the Resolution, will be, not layoffs of tens and twenties, but layoffs perhaps involving the shutting down of whole areas of Government services, because the Government can afford an increase, any increase, only if it makes special arrangements, either by reducing the number of people to be paid or by raising money specifically for the purpose.

Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, a prudent Government, if it sought to meet the demands of the National Union of Public Workers and pay a wage increase at the bottom of over 30 per cent — and they have never come down — would be able to do so only by closing down the School Meals Service, the Security Guard Service, reducing the number of school teachers, in all probability reducing at MTW by 400 to 500 people, perhaps two-thirds of the cantonnier force, perhaps a third of the force used on the maintenance of the highway. There is no way that the Government could say a 30 per cent increase without cutbacks at that level, not filling the places in the Police Force which we have voted. I have had to warn about all of these things.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is an unfortunate thing, but cutbacks in the Government Service are more easily made at the bottom. You can save more at the top, but the difficulty and the resistance to sending home six Permanent Secretaries, abolishing the newly created rank of Deputy Permanent Secretary, reducing the number of Senior Administrative Officers, closing down the whole concept of 'special projects,' closing down all the project teams and removing all the project managers would be very difficult to carry out.

These people have friends overseas, the projects are overseas-funded, and the first thing is, when you say you are going to close down a project office, they get IDB and the World Bank and the CDB to say they are going to cut off the funds if you close down the offices.

But all these things are within the contemplation of paying a 30 per cent increase such as the National Union of Public Workers has asked for.

Mr. Speaker, there are certain economic fallacies that I hear being repeated every day. You hear people say you must pay people more money because prices have gone up.

We have little control over prices. In 1974, when prices went up 40 per cent, a lot of it was due to the Government. In 1982, now that inflation, in the last couple of months, is running at less than 10 per cent, nobody is going to praise the Government; they are only going to say that 9 per cent is too much.

As a matter of fact, there are even those who say that we are not making enough effort in Barbados to control inflation and that we could have our inflation down to American levels if we had been more rigid with wages in the last two years.

There is no rule, Mr. Speaker, that something can be got for nothing. All wage increases have to be earned. There is just no room in an economic system to argue

that people must get wage increases, and that the Government, or the employers, must find money from somewhere. That is the way to ruin.

I return once more to the Japanese example. The Japanese are the by-word in the modern world for their success. I can hardly think of any consumer artifact, which is made by the Japanese and which is made by other people, where the Japanese do not make it better and sell it cheaper.

You buy Japanese cars, you buy Japanese hi-fi equipment, you buy Japanese business machines or machines that contain Japanese parts. If we used to buy ships, we probably would buy Japanese ships. Television sets are hardly made now in the United States – certainly Black and White sets aren't, and colour television sets are hardly made in the United States unless there is a Japanese input. Japanese companies are buying American names to get into the market, but the American companies are glad to accept the Japanese technology.

Japan is a country with no foreign exchange problems. Its banks can charge interest of no more than 6 per cent. Even in these times of high interest, there can be a massive constant outflow of funds from Japan. Every day money leaves Japan to be invested in other countries, because there is a 10 per cent gap between interest rates in Japan and interest rates in the rest of the world, and they can finance all of it by the sale of motor cars, electronic equipment and exports generally – a country that imports every drop of oil and every piece of steel which it uses; a successful economy.

And the Prime Minister of Japan, a man of infinite experience – I believe he was Minister of Education during the war; he must be almost the only survivor in a Democratic Government who can remember what it was like to be elected when Hitler was also an elected official – and he, presiding over the most successful economy in the world, has had to warn his civil servants that they cannot have pay increases; that the country's fiscal deficit is beyond what the country can stand – and that is in a country with no foreign exchange problems. He is talking about the effect on investment in the country, of the Government's fiscal deficit.

Now this also exists in Barbados. The Government is in a position of fiscal deficit. So far this year, we are running a serious Current Account deficit. The revenue is not living up to expectations. We are not collecting, in Customs Duties, even now in the Stamp Duty tax and in Consumption Taxes, anything as much as we had expected.

6.50 p.m.

Capital Expenditure has been cut to the bone. I think it is a mistake. I think we must revive the capital

programme very soon. When the road works, the Oistins Scheme comes to an end, as far as I am concerned the Government must have construction programmes in place to absorb the labour and to maintain some level of economic activity in the country consonant with our needs.

But Current Expenditure is proving intractable and inflexible. All the departments have been placed under heavy manners – but I still get a demand from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for six more doctors, for what purpose, I find it hard to understand.

We have high levels of health care. Those who read the World Bank reports, and who read other reports, will note that the Caribbean countries are being advised not to spend any more money on Health, that it is now becoming counter-productive. (*Asides*) Perhaps not the World Bank.

Current Expenditure is running at a level approximately \$40 million a month, even without the salaries increase, and this is an unsupportable level when we bear in mind the revenue.

The Government can barely afford the increases embodied in these Civil Establishment Orders. Indeed, we cannot afford it at all. In real terms, it should be going into investment. It should be going into enterprise to restore economic activity. We should not have to be taking up the National Insurance money, by way of borrowing, to pay civil servants. We should be allowing it to be lent out for productive purposes, to expand our productive base, to give more employment and raise the level of economic activity to the country.

But we have a swollen Civil Service to support, and Government is not as hard-hearted as some. We are resolved that there should be some increase to help persons at the bottom of the Civil Service status.

To such persons, the increase is not unreasonable. The lowest paid person will be regraded. People who now get \$116 a week will be regraded, and with the increase will get over \$150 a week.

I had a study carried out by the Statistics section in the Price Control Department of typical baskets, not only of food but food and services, and I am assured that over the two years, March 1980 to March 1982, the cost of the increase in the monthly basket of goods, including such things as medical fees and the like, comes to just under \$500 – I cannot remember the exact figure, but \$478, or the like – for the lowest paid persons. Therefore, the increase which they will receive will meet the increase cost of food and services over the period.

For better-off persons, the increases, will be less than the increase in the cost of living over the period. In fact, when you consider that the cost of living figures are based on a limited basket, the amount less can be measured. It is not a great deal less. It is the difference between \$472 and \$478 and \$432, approximately \$40 per month. That, undoubtedly, will have to be a sacrifice which all of us make for the financial solvency of the country.

It has been measured, Mr. Speaker, and I will not like to pretend that a gap is not there for the better-off. Nonetheless, it is also appropriate to point out that the better-off Income Tax relief net from insurance contributions, on average far, far exceeds the sacrifice which they are being asked to make on their 1980 position.

It is only fair to the Government to say that whatever the unions may have sought to ignore in 1980 is a very real factor in the pockets of most of us. And none of us in the House of Assembly, bearing in mind the Income Tax relief which we had got, should complain that our standard of living has dropped over the last two years.

But even if it had, Mr. Speaker, economics is like that. The standard of living in the United States has been dropping now for three years. The standard of living in Great Britain has probably fallen, with perhaps an up here and an up there, over the 10 years now passed; and we hardly want to talk about the standard of living in Jamaica, which has seen something like, I think it is a 40 per cent loss in purchasing power over a decade.

There is no immutable rule which says that everybody must get better off every year. And the Government that tries to fool the people, or, worst still, an Opposition that tries to fool the people, and tell them that, is doing a great disservice to the public which it should be educating and assisting.

The whole world is crying out for recession. In the whole world the voices of the unemployed are being heard. In Barbados, I say without fear of contradiction, that the recession has affected us less than it has affected the United States, Great Britain or our principal trading partners.

Our currency maintains the same value as it had seven years ago, when it was attached to the U.S. dollar at a reasonably high rate of exchange. We have not had to go through the trauma of devaluation and, given prudent financial policies and responsibilities on the part of those who have the ear of the media and of the public, we will not have to go through that trauma either.

We have not had to go through the trauma of mass unemployment. Unemployment today is no higher than it was two or three years ago. There is no talk in Barbados of going back to the record levels of unemployment, not known for a generation, such as are now afflicting Canada, Western Europe, the United States and virtually every Third World country that you care to name.

We have had to fight and exercise greater responsibility in Government to achieve this limiting of the recession. Some irresponsibility in the past weeks, lawless elements in our society, irresponsibility, perhaps, at management levels in tourism, coupled with the recession in the countries from where our tourists come, have dealt our tourist industry severe blows. Yet, we are not facing foreign exchange problems and a level which a 10 per cent drop in the number of tourists would possibly give.

We have pulled ourselves together in other sectors in the economy, even although sugar may have been no help, and maintained a healthy export profile in our manufacturing industry, and moderation in our imports, without any great number of import restrictions, to keep ourselves above the red line on our balance of payments — for Mr. Speaker, of all the constraints which affect an economy such as ours, the balance of payments is the major constraint.
7.00 p.m.

I used to be very impressed with the irresponsible words of the Leader of the Opposition, and I do not mean favourably impressed, when he demonstrated his undoubted ability to touch a cord of response in the public five years ago when he was telling the public, "When I was Prime Minister you never heard anything about balance of payments from me. But now the other side is in, all you can hear is balance of payments." He did not perhaps realize that that was a very grave reflection on him — the public was confused.

They did not understand the importance of the payments balance, the foreign reserves, to the economic health of an open economy such as that of Barbados. They believed, and perhaps still believe, that problems of inflation can be dealt with by price control and by wage increases. They did not understand that, no matter how much you pay a Barbadian, he cannot buy a motor car with Barbadian dollars, or even a pound of rice.

You can have one million Barbadian dollars in your pocket, it will not buy you a pound of rice anywhere, because not one grain of rice is grown in Barbados. You can't buy a piece of salt fish with a Barbadian dollar.

Somebody has to take your dollar and change it into a Guyana, Trinidad or American dollar — a yen, a pound, a mark, before you can eat bread or eat rice in this country.

And that is a disservice which the Leader of the Opposition did in the three years, only three years, where he had to manage a country with an independent currency — in not telling the public of the importance of the foreign exchange constraint. In the last analysis it is the most important constraint which we have to face.

Twenty five million dollars or \$50 million may not break the foreign reserves. (*Aside*) As the honourable Member for St. Philip South said, even \$40 million is no big thing. (*Laughter*). But you know, \$25 million or \$40 million when you don't have it, is a lot. I don't want to be tedious and repeat the clichés that have entertained a hundred years of listeners to Tales of Charles Dickens. I remember what Mr. McCall would say — annual expenditure 20 pounds; annual income, 20 pounds and 6 pence; result-happiness. Annual expenditure, 20 pounds; annual income, 19 shillings and 6 pence; result-misery.

When the \$25 million dollars goes into the pockets of the public officers, a very little of it will come out in tax, they will spend it. The people who they spend it with will spend it with yet other people. The income will be multiplied. There will be some deflation in the economy. There will be some recovery of economic activity. There will be more imports, not only by the public servants themselves but by the persons on whom the money is spent in the first instance.

If Barbados had abundant foreign reserves, we would be able, perhaps, to enjoy wage increases that might, viewed objectively, be a little irresponsible in terms of the increase in productivity or the other measures that are used as suggested restraints on wage levels. But if you have neither the increase in productivity, nor the foreign reserves to sustain a spending spree, you simply cannot give the increases.

There is another equation which the amateur economist do not always pursue, and it relates to the means by which Government deficits are financed. If you print money without any backing, inevitably this is going to feed, in the last analysis, into a foreign exchange crisis. Money has to be printed; the Central Bank has to hold Treasury Bills for the Government — it has been doing so since it opened. The highest proportion of Treasury Bills, I believe, ever held, *vis-à-vis* the reserves and the Government expenditure generally, was in 1974. If "printing money" is a valid phrase, then printing was at its height in 1974.

But whenever it was at its height, there can be no argument that it feeds into the reserves. You live basically

on a closed system with only a certain number of variables. If you increase one, you have to decrease the other. It is like the earth. Rain does not come from out of space to fall on the earth, it comes from the earth itself. It comes up off the sea, it falls on the land and it runs back into the sea in the form of a river. It is a closed equal system, and in Barbados we have a closed economic system as all countries.

Ours is more open than most, more open to pressure. But, in fact, it is a system where, unlike that of virtually the only country that can print money and have it accepted, that is the United States, we cannot print money without inevitable catastrophic results for the foreign reserves. If we do not have money to pay abroad, we could as well shut up shop.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I say to the country: no matter how you argue about a detail here, there, and everywhere; no matter how every special pleader puts his case; no matter how often I am told that it is undesirable to legislate wages — and I put that argument better than any other honourable Member on the other side has ever been able to put it; I hope that I don't hear from the honourable Member for St. Michael North, because I can remind him as well — no matter what you say, no matter what you say about the cost of living, trade union activity, harmony in industrial bargaining, no matter what you say, in the last analysis, if you give the public too much, we will run out of foreign exchange and have to devalue the dollar so as to prevent everybody from buying abroad and plunging the country into the chaos of some of our brethren.

If you wish the Barbados dollar to be devalued to the level, first of Trinidad, second, of the E.C., a third in Guyana, give the N.U.P.W. whatever it wants. (*Asides*) I hear an honourable Member opposite saying that they should get 80 per cent. I am sure I did not hear that. You did not give them 80 per cent when you put the cost of living up 87 per cent. I am addressing my remarks, through you, Sir, to the honourable Member for St. Michael West, who resided over the greatest increase in the cost of living that any Minister responsible for Prices has ever presided over, even exceeding Jamaica's, in the Commonwealth, and even then, despite his pride in the achievement, he did not offer the workers an 80 per cent increase.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that the only way of staving off the direst and the most desperate economic consequences, if you were to pay civil servants what the National Union of Public Workers ask, would be to lay off a quarter of the civil servants, as was done in Guyana, and I believe that over the last few months something like 17 000 people have lost their work.

7.10 p.m.

We have a clear choice: maintain Barbados among the first six of the developing countries in terms of the national wealth, expenditure on health, expenditure on education, public development, per capita income, admiration and praise by overseas countries for economic management — who will they single out? Singapore in Asia, Barbados in the Americas, perhaps the two most praised small countries in the world — (*Asides*) (A prophet is not without honour save in his own country) — you have the choice, entrust the management of the economy to wise and prudent policies dictated by Barbadian necessities, and by the necessity of trimming your sails before the current of international wind, or pursue a policy of irresponsibility, pursue a policy of weakness, pursue a policy of confrontation, attempt to achieve power and authority by appealing to the worse instincts in mankind.

You have your examples before you. You have your examples of countries where Governments have been responsive but strong, have been compassionate but sensible, and you have your examples of countries where Governments have been fearful and weak, have indeed, perhaps, considered themselves compassionate, but in the last analysis have been cruel to their people, by pursuing false policies destined to lead to nothing but economic destruction.

The Government, Mr. Speaker, has led Barbados up many a hill. The worse that has been said about us is that we pursue policies which, because of the openness of the economy, will lead to great heights, but will be interrupted by occasional pauses. It is possible to pursue policies that would allow for a higher level of unemployment, less development of income, less money overall, but equally, perhaps slightly less vulnerability to recession.

But I see, Mr. Speaker, that the countries which pursue the policies of weakness, even at the time of their greatest bounteousness, do not come near the achievements and the economic strength of Barbados at the time of its greatest weakness.

I see policies of price control, which, inevitably, lead to unemployment and to shortages pursued in other countries, but their prices are higher than others despite the controls. I see the control prices in some of our CARICOM brethren, in the eastern Caribbean, of common foods that in Barbados cost \$3 a pound, \$2.80 a pound, I see them costing \$8, \$12 a pound controlled in E.C. dollars. Look at the price of cheese, common foods, corned beef in other countries. I cannot take that as a policy.

I see other countries pursuing policies of unlimited wage increase, and I see 25 per cent of the work force, work forces that are proportionately of much smaller proportions than in Barbados, unable to work, turning to crime, drugs and to the underworld. I see rich countries, one or two in the Caribbean, and not only within

CARICOM; I see countries with abundant oil wells in the Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico, collapse under a weight of debt.

All of these policies are possible, if the Opposition has a say because by their deeds shall we know them, and they were not all that far off that in 1976 when we had to take the reins of the economy of this country in a strong hand.

Therefore I say, Mr. Speaker, that you have to judge the arguments of the Opposition by their achievement when they had the opportunity to put their views into practice. You cannot even say that they have been an irresponsible Opposition, speaking one thing but likely to do another when they are in power. They are an honest and sincere Opposition, they tell you foolishness and they do foolishness when you give them the chance. And they did foolishness, and will continue to offer to do foolishness.

The Civil Establishment (General) Order, which is the one that we are now discussing, sets out the salary scales for members of the Public Service in the First Schedule. These are the established civil servants. It sets out the offices in the First Schedule and the salary scales in the Second Schedule, and it has other Schedules dealing with other persons in the Public Service.

Now, I want to say something about this. Opportunity has been taken to make changes in the entire salary scale. Virtually all the salary points have been renamed or renumbered.

Housing Allowances are going to be abolished in the Public Service by this Civil Establishment Order. I see honourable Members sitting up in surprise, it tells you how much they know about the subject there are going to discuss today. Housing Allowances, which were pensionable and taxable, are now incorporated into the salaries, so that the level of salary of any public officer can be seen by reference to Schedule B showing the fixed salary points, the Z scales and the other scales.

The fixed salary points will no longer be called A, B, C, D and so on, and it will be very difficult to make comparisons between them, because in some of those salary scales some people got Housing Allowances and others didn't. There was a whole abundance of anomalies. Some friend manages to get the Order made and new posts created, and suddenly this post had a housing allowance and others did not, and so it used to go.

The public will now be able to see that the top civil servant, who will get just under \$4 000 a month under this new Act, in fact gets almost the same as Ministers of Government. I think the differential is less than \$100 a

month. I think there are very few Ministers who actually know what their salaries are, but the top civil servants will now get \$47 052 a year at S.1, and at S.2, the next grade, \$44 688.

It will be possible to be promoted from Grade S.2 to S.1 after ten years' service, that is for Permanent Secretaries. A Permanent Secretary with ten years' service will now automatically be promoted to the top grade, irrespective of which post he holds.

7.20 p.m.

I think there was a certain invidiousness in having "A" posts and "B" posts, because you might have to have a very good man at MTW at one time. Well that is a "B" post. There was some difficulty about appointing people who have held a top post to inferior posts, because the system did not really allow of it.

S.3, corresponding to the old Grade "C" will be held by a number of officers. Very generally speaking, that is a position to which project managers are appointed, persons who go out and organise the big projects which we see all around Government, but there are a few other officers in that grade, and in particular deputy professional officers, that is, the Deputy Solicitor General, the Deputy Chief Parliamentary Council and so on. A number of positions such as that are appointed in S.3.

S.4 embraces a great number of Heads of Department; S. 5 Deputy Permanent Secretary. I hope I have got it all right. I think I may have.

The posts of Assistant Secretary and Senior Assistant Secretary have been abolished. Senior Assistant Secretaries will now be known as Senior Administrative Officers.

All the former SAS's have either been appointed Senior Administrative Officers or, on promotion, they have been appointed to Deputy Permanent Secretaries. The post of Assistant Secretary, a very misleading post, will now be known as Administrative Officer I, and the old Administrative Officer's post is known as Administrative Officer II, if I remember correctly.

I worked out these things and, in some cases, imposed them on the service. It does not mean that I can remember them all, and I am obliged to honourable Members opposite who have done their homework for obliging me with the careful attention which they have paid to my work in reforming the Civil Service over the last two years. This has been in operation for a little time, but this is the first Civil Establishment Order which has the new "S" points in the scale.

There are still some anomalies which need to be straightened out. In the "Z" posts there were previously a number of posts which carried different salary levels. I considered this an unnecessary anomaly and I have therefore arranged a single salary level for every "Z" post, subject, of course, to the promotional posts which carry increments.

Honourable Members will notice that there are many fewer incremental posts at the present time, because, in many cases, some promotion will still be possible, but the main promotional points have been gathered together at the new "Z" 30, "Z" 25 and so on.

At the bottom of the scale, the minimum salary has now been raised to \$8 064 per annum, which works out to \$155 per week. When one remembers that at the beginning of 1976 a maid in Government service was getting \$42 a week, and one realises that from the 1st April, 1982, she will get almost four times that, \$155 per week, you can see the size of the revolution in raising living standards that has been wrought in these six years.

The difference between the worst paid officer and the best paid officer in Government will now be less than six to one. In the Soviet Union, the average range between a top manager in a factory or an establishment and the bottom paid worker is something like 17 to 1. In Cuba, it is over 20 to 1. In Barbados a Minister of Government is getting, approximately, only six times as much as those lowly paid officers who look after the offices, make the tea, carry messages and so on. In terms of income distribution, one of the most democratic countries in the world, one of the countries in the world, where the range between those that are considered well paid and those that are considered not well paid is at its narrowest.

And if there is one thing about which I will always be proud when I lay down the Seals of Office, it will be that, notwithstanding the accusation about the Barbados Labour Party Government, notwithstanding the innuendos that have been heaped upon our heads for being a party running the interests of the better off in society, we have achieved levels of equalisation in this country, of economic opportunity, never before achieved in a developing country.

We cannot afford a substantial increase at this time, but we have not had to sacrifice the principles of equality by which our party stands, and upon which our social democratic faith is built.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of these Orders, but I do not intend to speak at length on any other of them. This speech will serve, in general terms, all the matters which remain on the Order Paper, and which

the Government intends to finish in this session, because there are some matters on the Order Paper which will necessarily be left over.

With those necessarily few words, Mr. Speaker, I now beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that further consideration be postponed until 8.15 this evening.

Mr. SPEAKER: It is the pleasure of this Honourable House that further consideration be postponed until 8.15 this evening.

This sitting now stands suspended until 8.15 p.m. 7.30 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

The question is that this Resolution.....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the question is that the matter that we are considering is a most important and a most crucial one. It relates to the negotiations of wages and salaries for the public servants in this country, and the workers in the Public Service constitute the most important part of the total labour force in Barbados. To that extent, any matter relating to their wages and salaries must be one of prime consideration, and one that must be approached with all seriousness.

The workers in the Public Service constitute a most substantial part of our labour force, and the wages and salaries that they earn not only satisfy their own individual wants and needs and the wants and needs of their families, but they also provide a source for the generation of economic activity in this country. They provide, as it were, the grists for the wheels. They provide some kind of resource for the mills and the tills (*Asides*). (Well I have heard your Prime Minister say that he can call them "an army of occupation", too, so if that is the view, I am not concerned with any army of occupation. I am dealing with the Public Servants of this country.)

Mr. Speaker, they provide the purchasing power with satisfies their own needs and wants and the needs and wants of their families, and, at the same time, they provide the economic grists to the mills.....(*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Address the Chair.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, to the mills and tills of business, of commerce and of industry.

Therefore, this whole question, Mr. Speaker, of negotiations must therefore be approached in a statesman-like manner, must be approached with due understanding and consideration, and must be approached from the point of view of a complete overview of what has gone on and the present state of the industrial relations in this country. Let no one under-estimate the importance of what has gone on and the importance of the point at which Barbados finds itself in relation to the industrial climate in this country at the present moment.

It is therefore necessary for this matter to be approached in all seriousness and with due consideration, for we must understand that when we talk about the wages and salaries of some 16, 000 or so persons in the Public Service – I am not certain what that number is, because we bear of movements in and out, on and off, as the case may be – it must be a matter of major importance. And it is necessary in this case for all who negotiate on behalf of the workers of this country, the public workers of this country, that would be the Unions which represents the public workers, and those who negotiate on behalf of the Government, and the Government, itself, to conduct those negotiations in all good faith taking into account all of the prevailing circumstances.

Now a lot of talk has been issued concerning the whole state of the economy in this country, the state of the regional economies and the state of the world. And we have a kind of neo-conservative thinking emerging in different countries, but all tending towards the same general thrust, where the neo-conservatives advance the arguments that it is the workers and the unions who are responsible for the problems within their several economies, and that it is therefore necessary, according to this neo-conservative, economic, political and social thinking, to haul in the reins; as it were, to undo all of the advances which resulted from the Keynesian revolution in economics, and then construct a kind of new thinking based on the inequalities of man, based on the need to provide capital, based on the need to ensure that the captains of industry are provided with the necessary funds and resources whereby they can generate what they call "economic activity", and then you will get this trickle down of the benefits from the activity among the business and captains of the industry to the workers.

It is largely a monetarist approach to politics and economics. A small volume, I believe, was produced sometime in the mid '70s called "Wealth and Poverty". and that tried to popularised the kind of more esoteric economic thinking that was going in place like the University of Chicago, where Friedman and the other conservative economists were trying to work out a kind of new economic theory.

Now we have got to be very careful that when these theories, worked out for economies which are highly de-

veloped and highly sophisticated, a kind of response to the economies of Britain, Canada, the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States, that we do not come and take these over, lock, stock and barrel, and apply them to a country where the situations are entirely different and where the persons who have devised these theories have no kind of appreciation for the problems of a small country that is independent and that is also trying, at the same time, to bring about the kind of social and economic revolution for those who have been deprived and underprivileged, from the time that very first slave boat left Africa and brought our people to this country, to try to erase, to try to modify and to try to create an entirely new kind of social and economic relationship in this country.

8.25 p.m.

Those kinds of philosophies for the advanced industrialised countries, we cannot apply in this country in that kind of uncritical way. And I would like to warn the members of the Government, as they sit and consider the grave problems facing this country, that they must not be carried away by words, or they must not be carried away by the rhetoric of spokesmen from their side; they must not say or approach the throne with some kind of awe.

I was listening to the television news — I believe it must be the television news last night; — I am not certain of this — CBC, I believe — and there was one Minister apparently who was going to have a meeting with the Prime Minister sometime this morning, and you know the kind of way in which he was speaking about that — “I hope you would pray for me. I want to improve this Labour Office and I want a few more Labour Officers, and I hope you will pray for me; hope the Prime Minister listens to me.” That kind of attitude — this kind of bending a crooked-knee approach. That can’t work. Any serious Minister in this country who approaches, must come like a man.

I know the honourable Member for St. James North. He gets up in here and says what he wants to say. Whether the position is popular or unpopular, he says it. I have heard him myself, and I was amazed at his line of argument; but I understand his courage. And he said, “Me — I am not coming in here to defend any Prime Minister driving any nee-nee car. I will come in here if he has a proper car, but a little Cadillac Seville that was built on a Monday — I am not going to come in here and defend him on that kind of thing.” (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: I suppose that is \$25 a week talk.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, \$25.00 a week talk.
(*Laughter*)

But that is the position, Mr. Speaker. We have got to respect people in positions, and we have got, at the same time, to listen to the arguments advanced, and to see how those arguments will tend to advance this country, will tend to raise those who are below the poverty line, raise them up, and bring about more equality, a greater level of economic activity in this country.

In considering this matter, we have got to look at the background to these negotiations. I know that all these matters have been glossed over; not very much has been said about that. We have been taken on a tour from Barbados to Japan to Singapore, all over the world, and what I warned about earlier today, we had a classic example of this kind of boasting, which I do not think augurs very well for this country.

We have to look at the background to these negotiations. And I want to make it clear that when we speak from the Opposition benches, we do not have to ask anyone, certainly I don’t have to ask anyone if what I say is pleasing to them or not. We express our views forthrightly. We do not have, Mr. Speaker, to ask anyone or seek their approval of what we say. We examine the matter and we speak as that examination declares or determines. And if what we say from over here is not pleasing to the Prime Minister, that is the Prime Minister’s business. That is his business. (*Aside*) We see eye to eye on most matters. (*Asides*)

Mr. Speaker, negotiations with the public servants in this country are based on two year agreements. Over the years successive Governments have tried to arrive at some kind of conclusion with these workers, have tried to understand what their particular positions are, and to reach some kind of compromise.

Now in this particular case, we have got to ask ourselves this question: “has the Government negotiated in all good faith, and to the fullest extent possible, with the unions in this country in respect of the wages and salaries for public servants for the years 1982/83 and 1983/84?” You can ask the question that way. If each one of you over there is satisfied that you have used all possible avenues and opportunities to explore an agreement and to reach an agreement, then if you put that information on the table of this House you will get the support of the Opposition. (*Aside*) (Are you admitting that you have not achieved that? You will wait and hear what I have to say).

Mr. Speaker, the negotiations with the unions — I suppose, I am not certain, the Government itself will say when these have started — but even before those negotiations were started, the Government was saying that it cannot and will not pay anything at all, no increase

would be given to the public servants of this country. That was the position of the Government — not a cent, because we cannot afford it. That was the opening position of a Government that is interested, it says, in the welfare of the people of this country.

The unions, I believe, particularly the National Union of Public Workers, which may be the union which has the most of the public servants among its membership, advanced a proposition, proposing 25 per cent on the top salaries and 39 per cent on the bottom salaries. I believe those proposals were advanced sometime in January or so of this year. The Government's response — "we can pay nothing."

8.35 p.m.

Now, obviously, if you are negotiating in good faith and your opening position is, "we can pay nothing", and "we are going to pay nothing", I do not know how you can say that that is negotiating in good faith. Quite naturally, it had the effect of causing a little consternation among the unions, some frustration, and a great deal of bitterness. I mean, the unions laid their cards on the table, and the Government says, "not one cent".

The unions, however, pressed on; and in terms of the negotiations, other positions were advanced and they had virtually to pull the Government by the scruff of its neck around the negotiating table to get the Government to sit down to talk to the unions about a wage increase that was vital for the workers of this country, the servants of the Government, in these very difficult economic circumstances to maintain body and soul together, and in order to try to stem the tide of rising inflation and all the economic woes that Barbados has experienced over the years.

The Government finally offered \$25 a week, or \$108 a month, for the year 1982-83. Now note what I have said, that the agreements arising out of salary negotiations are in respect of two years, and the two years are 1982-83 and 1983-84. Now here are serious unions led by serious officials, persons dedicated towards the welfare and well-being of their members and also of the larger society — because the unions in this country are responsible organisations and they realise, as much as Government realises, or should realise, that their welfare and well being are both intimately bound up with the welfare and well being of this country; that is a fact — and the attitude towards the unions has ranged from one of scathing criticism to a little plaudit and a little praise here and there when it suits the needs and the political requirements of the Government.

Up to now in this particular debate we have heard nothing about the second year of that two year agree-

ment, and we have heard nothing from the Government as to what is to happen in respect of the year 1983-84.

All along we have had two year agreements, and when the union put forward proposals for the second year based, I believe, on a proposal of 9 per cent at the top on the top salaries, approximately 9 per cent on the top salaries, and 14 per cent at the bottom, we have had a kind of a deafening silence from the Government about that year two.

All the unions have said, as I understand it, and as we understand it on this side — and if we are in error on this particular matter you can set the record straight — is that for that second year they want 9 per cent on the top and 14 per cent on the bottom. Those salaries, approximately, have been proposed at least by the National Union of Public Workers and the other unions which have been negotiating with them as the basis for that second year, and all they have asked the Government to do is to sit down around the table and negotiate for that second year.

The position advanced by the unions for negotiation purposes is a very reasonable position. They have said, "let us sit down around the table and talk about the second year." Agreements have been traditionally and customarily for two years. What has happened with the second year? These are our proposals. We have seen that particular position, "they have said you are offering \$25 per week, we are prepared to accept that on condition that something is also negotiated for the second year, and that as a basis for that negotiation we put forward 9 per cent on top salaries and 14 per cent at the bottom. Let us sit down and talk about it."

And this Government that says that it has the greatest respect for the workers of this country, for the principles of collective bargaining, for the rights of the workers; a socialist Government, it says.

Only last Sunday there was a cricket match between the parliamentarians and a group called the Young Socialists, and a Minister of Government — he was a Minister of Sport, now he is a "Community" man — I do not know whether he scored one or nought, I heard he had a little tip, ran down the wicket and pulled a muscle, and that was the end of him. Retired hurt, run out. That is how they wrote it down in the book.

8.45 p.m.

Now I know that that Minister is genuinely interested in the welfare of the workers of this country, and how could he play with the Young Socialists just hours before coming into Parliament and support a measure that basically is anti-worker? You know, it is

time that we seriously examine what is going on in this country and that we not only listen to words, but we judge the actions of the Government of this country.

This Government has been silent on this two-year position, and we believe that there must be some statement, and we are calling upon the Government to say something about that second year.

We heard the Prime Minister earlier this evening state that we do not want the divisions that occurred in places like Jamaica to happen here, not those kinds of divisions. But it is one thing to say it; it is something else to take the necessary steps and the actions in order to ensure that relations between and among the unions, and relations among the different sectors of this country, are kept at as harmonious a level as possible.

We do not only want rhetoric on this, we want some positive steps; and we are saying that the measure which should have been taken, or which can be taken, is to say something positive about that second year.

I am certain that advice to this effect would have been tendered to the Minister of Finance and Prime Minister, that it is a reasonable position to say something about year two, but so far we have only had, as I have termed it, this 'deafening silence'.

Let us not misunderstand the situation. Let the people of Barbados — the employers and the workers, the self-employed and the small business people, the public workers of this country and other workers — all understand that absolutely no agreement, as far as we can understand it, has been reached between the Government and the unions on this particular matter. Absolutely no agreement has been reached.

What the Government is proposing to do at this particular juncture is to ensure that the salaries and wages for public workers of this country are legislated by Parliament. And note how these Civil Establishment Orders have been worded, or the Resolutions, to the effect that these Orders and these Resolutions give effect, not to an agreement, but to a decision by the Government of this country on these matters.

Now we have got to say these things whether they please or whether they hurt. These are the facts and we are committed from our position, on behalf of the people of this country, to speak about matters as they are, Mr. Speaker. And that is the position. No agreement has been reached between the Government and the public workers of this country through the accredited representatives of the workers.

And we have to hear about the history of negotiations in this country! We have got to hear about

the history of negotiations, whether it is the first, second or third time, because what was said on June 22, 1976 cannot be wiped out from history. It is part of history, and it is part of a position by an Opposition of the day to the Government of the day to go back to the negotiating table in order to try to reach agreement with the unions at that particular time.

Mr. Speaker, the present position in this country must be viewed against the economic situation in this country. It must be viewed against the economic situation prevailing in this country. That is a truism, and we agree with the Prime Minister when he says that if you are earning only \$X it would be foolish to pay out \$X + 1. The economic situation in this country is bad, and this has nothing to do with any preaching of doom and gloom. We have got to be realistic about the situation, and we were telling the Government this for a long time. We were telling the people of this country this for a long time.

I, myself, recall when I said that this country was going through an economic crisis there was a big debate in this Parliament that the word "crisis" was extravagant, that it was not aptly descriptive of the economy of this country. I have lived to see each one of them on that front bench refer to the economy of this country as being in crisis. It only means that the Opposition is more perceptive about the economic situation of this country than the Government itself. That is one conclusion.

The other conclusion, which I really would not like to draw, is that the Government itself realises, and has realised for several years, that Barbados has been going downhill economically, but that they have been "jawboning" and saying that things are better than they actually were. I would like to draw that latter conclusion. But when we look at all of the economic indicators and take them all together, one cannot but come to the conclusion that things have been improving, but, in fact, things have been getting worse, whether we like it or not.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes when I hear how this Government, this "Great Combination," is supposed to have rescued this economy from the doldrums, we sometimes wonder whether due respect is being paid to the actual statistics and published information, because it is a fact that, far from being in any economic doldrums when we laid down the reins of power in 1976, inflation had been brought down to a level of about 3.9 per cent by that September when we laid down office. I say 3.9 per cent, my colleague says 2.9 per cent, but the fact is that it was down there, and what happened in the subsequent years was that inflation started to climb, and has continued to climb, under this "Great Combination" that tells the people that things are getting better. That is a fact (*Aside:—* And they believed it too). I will admit

that. That is why you are over there. They believed you. 8.55 p.m.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the present negotiations must also be viewed against the attitude of the Government towards the workers of this country. I know the Prime Minister likes to hear his own words, even when he is telling us, "the most you can say in this debate is what I said on June 22nd, 1976". But I am afraid you will have to hear them again, because there are indelible words — and, as he has said, there were well put in 1976. When the Honourable House was discussing the General Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (General) Order of 1976, he said, "We believe that the sacrifice, which the public servants are being asked to make, is too great, and the way in which they have been asked to make it is also too great". Now that is in 1976. You hear the words, "the sacrifice....."

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order. Will the honourable Member agree that in 1976 the Government was proposing to give them a 35 per cent wage increase to cope with inflation whose estimates varied between 87 per cent and 98 per cent?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Those are your statistics. What I know you were telling the Government at that time was that they should be getting over 80 per cent. The workers should be paid over 80 per cent.

I will continue. I am quoting the Member for St. Thomas, the honourable Prime Minister "I believe we should go back to the bargaining tables on this matter. I believe the operation of the Orders should be suspended." These were the words in 1976. And you know something, Mr. Speaker? I can look around there. I do not know whether there are any trade unionists.....
(Asides).

You are leaving. Gerry is taking him away on an important matter like this? I do not believe that the Prime Minister is really running away. He introduces a measure in the dead of night, introduces this very important matter in the dead of night, and is now.... I do not believe it, he is coming back. He has just put down one despatch box to take up another one. That is what I believe. The Prime Minister must not run away from these things. He must sit down and hear. We sit down and listen, when he talks.
(Asides).

We were told, "we believe that the sacrifice which public servants are being asked to make is too great." And the Prime Minister walks through the door and away from the debate, walking away from a national issue, that is what is happening in this country. Here it is we have been going from 12 o'clock today, and there are some hours set out for normal debating time, and it is time that the Government pay some respect.

The position of the Speaker is most important. He has to sit and listen to the debate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please! Carry on with the debate and do not involve the Speaker in your debate.
(Laughter).

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I have no intention of....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Speaker will take care of himself.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I know you can take care of yourself, Mr. Speaker. I know you can take care of yourself.

I would like to know what would happen now if we walked out of in here right now. Look at them on the Government Benches — two, four, six Members on the Government benches. That is the kind of respect that they have for Parliament and for the important matter that we are discussing here and are saying, "look in the Gallery and see if there are any trade unionists out there."

Something is wrong in this country and we had better understand it. We want a more serious approach to the problems of Parliament on the part of the Government benches.

We believe that is what was said, that the sacrifice which the public servants are being asked to make is too great and the way in which they are being asked to make it is also too great. That was the honourable Member for St. Thomas. And he added "I believe that we can go back to the bargaining table on this matter and I believe the operation of the Order should be suspended".

But, Mr. Speaker, would you recall that the Government of the day, the Democratic Labour Party Government of the day, had already had at least 21 meetings with the unions on the particular matter of wages and salaries at that time? But the then Barbados Labour Party Opposition was urging the Government to go back to the bargaining table when the Government was offering at least 38 per cent increase on the prevailing salaries.

Now I want the Government to tell this Honourable Chamber how many meetings they have had with the unions on this particular matter. I am satisfied that my information may be incorrect, but it may be that they have had only about four or five meetings....(three negotiating sessions) — and after three negotiating sessions they have come in here with legislation to legislate salaries. Can each Member over there in his heart of hearts, I ask the Member for St. Michael South East, I ask the Member for the City, I ask the honourable Member for Christ Church East, I ask the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, those are the ones on the Front bench now, I ask you in your heart of

hearts, do you believe that you should come to this Parliament to legislate salaries only after three or four or five meetings with the unions? If you can say, "yes", then I want each one of you to get up in this Honourable Chamber and say so.

We on this side do not believe that you have exhausted the negotiation process. I do not believe that you are negotiating in good faith when only after that small number of meetings you can come in here.
9.05 p.m.

The next position that we could reach in this whole matter of arriving at the wages and salaries of workers in this country is that we do not need to negotiate at all. Let the grand wizard, the grand vizier, come in and say, "I have been elected by the people. We have a mandate. I have decided that this is it." You heard how it is said, "\$25.00 a week is what this country can afford". Who said so? *(Aside)* He is the judge of that. Well, you are prepared to say that, but we believe that there should be mechanisms set up in this country apart from being an elected member to say that this country can only afford X or Y. Who is to say that it should not be \$28 or \$22? But the grand vizier would say that it is \$25 and that is it, and that is what it should be.

We do not want that in this country and I want to warn each one of you. You may believe that you have a position to defend, but the position that I believe you should be defending is the position of Barbados and the position of each and every Barbadian, and the rights and liberties of all those Barbadians.

No one person in this country should have the power and authority simply to get up and say, after three meetings, or after four meetings, "I have decided that this is the end of the negotiating process and that this is what it is." The Democratic Labour Party had twenty-one meetings and you criticised us and told us go back to the bargaining table, and now on this particular occasion..... *(Asides)*.

Now how are we going to settle this matter on that kind of basis? I believe that something is radically wrong on this particular occasion with the methods that have been used, and with the procedures that have been used, and with the decisions that have been arrived at.

I believe that something is radically wrong, and I cannot, in all conscience, stand up here and say that after five meetings or four meetings that the negotiating process has been exhausted when the unions, in public communications, have been asking the Government to come and negotiate their position further in respect of year two; a very reasonable position, but it appears that in this matter the Government is most unreasonable.

And if the honourable Member for St. Lucy, and if the honourable Member for St. Michael Central, and the Member for St. Michael North East from the back bench, can remain silent on these issues and in the presence of themselves and their God say that I believe that the Government has exhausted the negotiating process, let each one of them get up and say like Martin Luther, on the steps of the cathedral at Wurtemberg — "*Hic sto*" — here I stand. Let them get up and say so. I challenge them to get up and say, "We believe, all of us believe, that the Government is right on this matter to say that all negotiations should be ended after only three meetings". *(Aside)* Just check and find out how many meetings there were and tell us. There were two meetings? *(Asides)*

Mr. SPEAKER: The question.....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the question now is whether the Government really has the kind of integrity to stand up and tell the people of this country that they have really exhausted all of the possible avenues of negotiation. Let them get up and say so. I will challenge each one of them on this particular question. *(Aside)* I know you are a man of courage. I am talking about this issue. I know you got in on the word "integrity". I am talking about this particular issue. If you are satisfied, you can get up and say it. *(Asides)* That is your opinion. You can argue your case.

Now, Mr. Speaker, most persons will admit that \$25 a week is really miniscule. It is a very small addition to the wages and salaries of public workers of this country. I do not take what the Prime Minister says on this, as the "boss bull", that not much of the money will come out in taxes. I believe that a substantial part of the \$25 per week will come out in taxation. The tax bite will sink deeply into that \$25. On top of that, all of these levies will bite deeply into it, including the tax on roads, or "bare-foot tax", or whatever you may call it. These will bite deeply into that \$25.

One estimate, Mr. Speaker, is that some \$7 million out of \$25 million is going to come out in taxes. And can we get up and say in Parliament that \$7 million out of \$25 million, or whatever the figure would be, is not very much, that it is only a small amount. Is that what Parliament is being told, or the nation is being told?

Mr. Speaker, we expect that when the Government comes before Parliament that it must come with solid argument and a solid case, but on this particular matter, I must say that the case of the Government is a very weak one. It is well known that when the Government has a case, I am the first one to get up and say that I agree with the Government. If the case is weak, and it is patently weak in this particular situation, I say that the Govern-

ment should be ashamed of itself to put these proposals, at this stage, before Parliament.

When we resume, whenever we are coming back, whenever it is, 9, 8, 7 o'clock, you are going to hear the Opposition on this. There is pure fire power over here, pure fire power. Come up with your arguments on this particular matter and convince the people.

What I have mentioned.....(*Asides*). Mr. Speaker, I cannot hear myself. There is so much confusion on the Government benches.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chair cannot hear the honourable Member for St. Michael South either.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Right, because I am being drowned out with all that noise over there.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Chair feels you have run out of gas. (*Laughter*)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: No, no, definitely not. I am just catching my breath, Sir; catching wind, Sir.

So we have had the tax bite. We have had the levy bite, and then, on top of that, we talk about the bite for inflation. Because, make no mistake about it, as soon as it is known that increases in salaries are being given to the public workers of this country, the prices in this country are surprisingly going to increase.
9.15 p.m.

We are going to find that the business people, who also will say that they have to get an increase, too, will also increase the prices of their.....Electricity rates already up? We have not even passed the matter properly yet, but electricity rates are up, and so we are going to get an increase in prices. This means it must fuel inflation.

The point I am establishing is that that \$25 is going to disappear, and sometimes you wonder whether you really had an increase or not.

Do you know something? The Prime Minister said something that was very revealing. It is necessary to restrain wages — and this \$25 is in effect a wages restraint. It is a restraint on the open negotiating process, the process of collective bargaining that has formed the basis of negotiations in this country for some time. This is the first occasion — and let it be understood — this is the first occasion on which negotiations have been cut so abruptly in this country, only after a limited number of meetings. In effect, what has happened is that salaries and wages are being legislated at a very low level, and also it is a kind of wages restraint. And it is a wages restraint

within the context that other areas of the economy are not being restrained.

I have said on many occasions, and I make no apologies for it, that I believe that the economies of countries can be controlled to some extent by means of restraint in wages, but I also believe that wages restraint by itself must be inequitable and must be unfair.

There must be other techniques and devices used to complement that. You cannot control or restrain the wages of workers without controlling prices, or without controlling interest rates, or without controlling dividends. It is all one package. We are talking about one economy, and it is really economic nonsense to say, well, we have wages restraint, but we are going to allow the other areas of the economy to run wild and to run free in this free enterprise system.

Let me make the point. This is no attack on the free enterprise system; I am a believer in the free enterprise system. I am also a believer in a vibrant public sector. I believe, therefore, in the mixed economy, that is, that for Barbados, a small independent country, we must have a mixed economy.

We believe in a mixed economy for this country. (*Aside*) You would be able to tell us about Communism, because you have set up all of the diplomatic contacts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Address the Chair.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, through you I make the statement that on that side over there they would know everything about

Mr. SPEAKER: That is a statement you make through the Chair?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, the question of Communism has been raised, but the people who know about Communism is the Government. They established diplomatic relations with the Communist Governments. There is no point for persons over there to raise this particular issue.

We have heard a lot about these foreign models, as though we can take up the Japanese experience and transplant it into Barbados. This is patent, arrant nonsense. The Japanese economy, the Japanese social system, the Japanese economic system is completely different from whatever prevails in the customs and mores of some place like Barbados, completely different from that of the United States itself, to that extent that it is a marvel.

I recall, Mr. Speaker, paying a visit to Japan. I wanted to understand the basis of this miracle that was

taking place in Japan and I decided I wanted to look at a technical school, because if they are in an advanced technology and so on, let me look at one of the technical schools. I went to this technical school, a very large school, Mr. Speaker, and it was snowing, and you know when you go into these buildings, Mr. Speaker, I had to take off my shoes and they give you these slippers to put on. Mr. Speaker, I am not certain if you would have the same problem, but when I put my feet into these slippers half of my feet were protruding at the back on a very cold concrete and I had to walk through a large building with half of my feet not being able to get into these slippers.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are telling us about the Japanese experience.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that kind of anecdote, that kind of personal experience highlights the problem about the different customs and so on that we have which go into the totality of the experience.

The Prime Minister saying that Japan has this kind of system, and those kinds of arguments, cannot hold water. If you look at it, it is a highly automated society; the United States cannot compete with the production of cars. There are robots. It is a different society we are talking about, and I do not think there is really any point trying to go down that line about Japan and Barbados.
9.25 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I rise, Mr. Speaker, to draw to your attention that it is 9.30 p.m., and I beg to move that further consideration of this matter be postponed.

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

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until Friday October 1, 1982, at 12 o'clock noon.

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

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

On Resumption.

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. The honourable Member for St. Michael South was addressing the Chair when the suspension was taken.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, I am particularly critical of the Government's position in these negotiations, and I would like to approach this from the point of view that, in my opinion, the Government should be a model employer, it should set the right political climate against which collective bargaining should take place and, thirdly, that in instances where the Government itself is the major employer, it should conduct negotiations in good faith and be always ready and willing to sit around the negotiating table for discussions.

I think those are three basic principles which any Government should follow, and it is incumbent upon this present Government to follow those three principles. Those principles relate not only to the negotiations in which Government is directly involved, but they relate, also, to those negotiations outside of the ambit with which Government might be involved, because other employers may follow the example of Government.

Now, I want to look a little more closely at this question of collective bargaining and I would like to state that, for me, it relates to those terms and conditions of service which are negotiated in good faith between employer and employee with a view to reaching an agreement. And I would say that if we take this definition, and if we look at the three principles which I have just enunciated, one cannot help but get the feeling that Government has not handled this matter as effectively or as efficiently as it could have, and as it should have.

I am sad about that; because whatever we may do, whatever steps we may take in this country, as political leaders, as members of this Honourable Chamber and as a Government, we have got to realise that the repercussions may be felt beyond this immediate situation and may very well lead to a case in which Barbados becomes not as good a place to live in. There is always that possibility, and I am saying that we must try at all cost to prevent any such possibility from developing, because all of us want to know and to ensure that this country remains a good place within which to live.

I said that it is my view that the Government has not handled this matter as efficiently or as effectively as it should and that it is my view that it has failed in this particular set of negotiations. I say this against the background first of all, that the unions, in negotiating a two-year agreement, expected in all good faith, based upon precedence, that a two-year agreement would be negotiated — an agreement for two years.

Secondly, the unions themselves have been negotiating in good faith, and after negotiating through the processes of collective bargaining had an agreement for the first year of the negotiations, placed proposals before the Government for the second year of the agreement. These came from the Barbados Workers' Union as I understand it, involving some \$5 million, and from the National Union of Public Workers and the unions working closely with it, the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners, the Barbados Union of Teachers and, maybe — I am not too certain — the Barbados Secondary Teachers' Union — I am not too certain — and they placed other proposals involving some 9 per cent at the top of salaries and 14 per cent at the bottom salaries for that two-year period.

The point I am making is that the unions have placed proposals on the table in the expectation that the Government would sit down around the negotiating table and, using the processes of collective bargaining, which has been established over the years in this country.....
(Asides)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order. The honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, but if you would control the honourable Member for St. James North.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will not attempt.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: You will not attempt to control him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The unions placed these proposals for the second year on the table in the expectation that negotiations would take place for that second year. Instead of negotiations taking place, the Government has failed to go to the negotiating table to discuss around that table proposals for year two of that agreement.

Now the Government has had, I believe, only about four meetings with the unions. (Asides) If it is three, I do not know. Mr. Speaker, the Government

Mr. SPEAKER: Please address the Chair and leave the honourable Member. He will fall by the wayside. I really respect you for being sufficiently matured.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Government has had about four meetings with the unions on this matter and, as I understand it, the matter has never been referred to the Chief Labour Officer. I am really wondering what has been the position of the Minister of Labour in all of these matters, because the Minister of Labour has a responsibility in all of these

matters, I would believe, to ensure that all of the established procedures to conciliate disputes are used to their fullest in all the circumstances — and this is a matter that I would like the Minister of Labour to address his particular attention to.

Mr. Speaker, as an Opposition Party, it is the purpose and function of this Opposition to look at Government's proposals critically, and where those proposals appear to be in the interest of the people and of the country to give support, and, where they appear to conflict with the interests of the people, to be critical and to oppose. But in this whole matter we also want to be very constructive, and we are suggesting to the Government that the following steps should be taken in these circumstances.

12.15 p.m.

The Government has found itself in a very sorry plight in terms of the processes of collective bargaining and the business of sitting around the negotiating table. I am therefore proposing from these Opposition benches, first of all, that this particular Resolution and the accompanying Orders should be deferred or withdrawn.

Secondly, I am proposing that the Government should immediately return, immediately return, to the negotiating table, should resume negotiations with a view to completing an agreement in good faith with the unions, who have placed concrete proposals on the table in respect of year two of the proposed agreement.

I am proposing that they should immediately resume those negotiations. Half of the road has been travelled already. I believe that the Government can take the further step of sitting down around the table and talking with the unions, negotiating in good faith in order to reach some agreement.

Thirdly, Mr. Speaker, the Government should follow its own procedures, and if a dispute occurs — and to all intents and purposes there has been a breakdown between the negotiating parties — the Government should follow its own established procedures and, before you jump from the negotiating table up to the Prime Minister's Office or wherever the conciliation procedures of the Ministry of Labour should be involved in these procedures. (Asides)

I am making my proposals. You can counter that, whether they are asking for it or not. But I believe that in these matters, Government should proceed step by step and stage by stage, and this is why I expect that the Minister of Labour should have something to say in defense of the conciliation machinery that exists in his Ministry, or that should exist. (Asides)

Fourthly, we are proposing that the Government should consider identifying a skilled intermediary if the other procedures for conciliation have failed. It should identify a skilled intermediary to assist in the process of talking to both sides, trying to bring the two sides together with a view, out of the 'give and take', of reaching some kind of compromise, and of reaching some kind of agreement.

There is nothing novel in this. In the dispute about terms and conditions of work in the sugar industry recently, a distinguished Barbadian was identified in order to bring about some agreement between employers and workers within the sugar industry when things seemed dark and dreary.

Now why in these circumstances, may I ask, has the Government not explored all possibilities of trying to reach an agreement before coming with an ultimatum by means of legislation? I think there is something basically wrong with that, because I believe that that should be at the end of the road when you can say that the buck passes no further. But after four meetings?

Fifthly, I am proposing, as I have proposed previously, that a broad base machinery should be set up to keep this economy under surveillance, drawing upon the many sectors and persons in this country, so that the full background, the possibilities and the forecast of how the economy is expected to do, may be laid out fully on the table.

Now, we have been very constructive in these matters. We have analysed the situation. We have pointed out those areas in which the Government has not acted in all good faith, and we have made some concrete proposals which could get us out of this present impasse.

I do hope, Mr. Speaker, that these proposals and the analysis would not fall on deaf ears, and that the Government would take heed and pay attention to these possibilities which have emanated out of a deep interest in ensuring that the political, economic and social climate of this country remains stable, and that it does not deteriorate into chaotic conditions.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker. (*Applause*)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is that this Resolution.....

12.25 p.m.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is remarkable that, in the light of the circumstances which exist in Barbados, we could find ourselves going into a debate which, in many ways, is almost a picture re-presentation of a debate which has occurred in this Honourable House in the past.

Mr. Speaker, when all is said and done, there are two basic principles which will be at stake in any analysis of this situation. The first one is, whether the Government, having taken a position of principle in the past, and now having done a complete U-turn, not for the first time, not for the second time, but for the third time, whether the Government's credibility is capable of acceptance by rational beings in this society. That is the first issue.

The second issue is whether the Government has the moral right to return the community in Barbados to a situation which, in spite of gains made in the area of industrial and social conditions in the 1960s and seventies, is more reminiscent of the early 1940s and fifties.

Mr. Speaker, I shall develop the second concept first. It has to do with the position in which people view the ordinary worker in this community. There was a time in the 1950s when people joined the Civil Service because the Civil Service provided a certain security. It was accepted in those times that the private sector would always pay better than the public sector, that salaries and wages in the private sector would be higher than salaries and wages in the public sector, because those persons in the public sector who would be receiving in the short term lesser salaries and wages would have a certain measure of security. At the end of their days they would be able to receive a pension which could not be guaranteed in the private sector, and they would have tenure, they would have job security.

Unions used to argue in those days — unions or organisations of the public sector — used to argue from a position of cost of living, and they used to argue from a position of better wages in the private sector and lesser wages in the public sector.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1960s the Democratic Labour Party accepted a position, put mainly by the Barbados Workers' Union, that the progress being made in this community, generally, required that the kind of argument used for wages in the community needed to be revised, and it was accepted that equal pay for equal work was more realistic in this society, and we saw a very gradual move toward an equalisation of the wages and salaries in the private sector with those in the public sector.

Mr. Speaker, by the time the second half of the Sixties had come to Barbados, around the time of independence, it became acceptable in the Government sector that whereas pensions in the public sector could be used as a basis for accepting a smaller wage or salary, there would be the concept of a broad based pension for every worker in the society, mainly through Social Security benefits, and that the concept of a differential between the private sector and the public sector could

disappear, as it had tended to disappear in other developed or more developed countries.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the basis for argument for wages, especially in the public sector, moved into a different sphere, and soon an artisan in the public sector and an artisan in the private sector could expect the same kind of wages. A man working in the Civil Service could generally expect the same kinds of conditions as those working in the private sector, with the result that there was an equalisation in the society generally; and there was no feeling that one set of workers was inherently superior, for whatever reason, to another set of workers.

That is the position which obtained right through the early 1970s, but, Mr. Speaker, with the solutions which this Government seeks a third time to impose through legislation – and let me hasten to say that the principle of legislating salaries in a community such as this is a principle that is unacceptable, and it does not matter that anyone will point to the fact that it has been done by A or B, the fact is, it is an unacceptable principle, and I am not going to take the few minutes available to me to argue the merits or demerits of a particular case at a particular time, although it has been done and can be done effectively – the point is, Sir, that the settlement which this Government is imposing now will re-create divisions between those persons who work in the public sector and those who work in the private sector.

One has only to examine the hourly wage which an artisan will get with the imposition of \$25 as opposed to a percentage increase, and one will see that there is going to be a differential of about 50 cents per hour between what the artisan – and I am taking the artisan as an example, Mr. Speaker – in the private sector will be getting and that which the artisan in the public sector will be getting with the imposition of this \$25 across the board.

When you examine the wages of a person who is getting \$130 a week, for example, Mr. Speaker, which is about the base wage, and you add \$25 to that, you will see that now moves to \$155. When you remove the levies which are going to be taken, and when you recognise that Income Tax which was not being paid on the smaller sum will now be paid on the larger sum, you will find that the real position of the particular individual is going to be eroded. If you carry that analogy all the way up to a person who is earning \$150 a week, you will find that the differential between the private sector and the public sector is going to be substantial.

12.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, another even more interesting thing is going to happen with this imposition. For persons who are earning \$350 a week or more, an imposition of \$25 a week will mean that the person will now have to pay the Government more. Mr. Speaker, anyone who is getting \$350 a week or more, on receipt of this \$108 or \$25 a week, their net position will be worse when they receive this than it is now. The calculations are easily done. The Income Tax and levy situation is well known and it will be demonstrated.

In other words, if the Government had allowed the bargaining process to continue, the Government might have discovered, through the inputs from the unions, that the divisions which would be created among the society, the public sector and the private sector, are divisions which will continue *ad infinitum*, because persons in the private sector in April of this year were offering 25 per cent to people at the bottom. They were offering as much as 25 per cent, 28 per cent and 30 per cent to people at the bottom.

And if one looks at what a man at, say, Sunley – that company which is working on the ill-fated Heywoods Project which the Prime Minister allowed us from New York to understand that after seven years he has decided, he and his illustrious Cabinet – although I have reason to believe that the Cabinet was unaware of that decision; I believe he made the decision in a hotel room in New York – (there is something esoteric about hotel rooms in New York. Ministers of Government seem to become super garrulous when they go to the hotel rooms in New York and policies affecting the people of this country are handed down from on high, no doubt based on the effervescence and the natural lubrication which comes from the relaxation and the movement away from the normal onerous duties when a man is in his actual ministerial stable) – but the policies are announced and sometimes adumbrated from New York, and he said that he thinks he is going to give up the Heywoods Project. Well, more about that.

The people working at Sunley, who hitherto would have been using the artisans in the public sector as a guide to determine what their wages should be, are now in a position where they are going to be earning, if this Resolution is passed, fifty cents per hour more than the people in the public sector.

Now the people in the public sector, Mr. Speaker, cannot, after fifteen or twenty years, leave their work and go in search of a job in the Sunley or any other project, and so that differential of which I speak will continue.

But, Mr. Speaker, we as Barbadians have to honour the workers. They are called upon, and have been called

upon in the past, to tighten their belts, and they have come to accept a certain measure of the propaganda which has been put forward, and they are very peaceful in their acceptance of certain methods and certain decisions.

It is mainly the characteristic of the Barbadian that he will accept certain things for longer than almost any other nationality. But, Mr. Speaker, while we can praise the workers, there is no doubt that the reason why the Government is not able to pay more on this date in this year is because of its mismanagement of the economy during the last two years, or before.

Mr. Speaker, the fault must lay firmly at the feet of the Government. When the Prime Minister seeks to suggest that if he pays the civil servants more the balance of payments in this country would be in difficulty, not only..... (*Asides*) Mr. Speaker, when the Prime Minister seeks to impose this settlement, when the Prime Minister seeks to suggest that the balance of payments problem would be exacerbated, the Prime Minister is in complete contradiction of himself on two grounds.

In 1976, he correctly stated in a debate that the only way the balance of payments situation in this country could be affected by a settlement of Civil Service salaries would be in the \$3 million which would be paid to those civil servants who were functioning in an overseas capacity.

Mr. Speaker, in a debate in 1976, Tuesday, June 22, 1976, on the question of legislation of salaries by the then Government, — it is reproduced in the Newsletter of the Democratic Labour Party August–September, 1982 'Horizons', which I shall happily make a document of this House after I quote from it — the Prime Minister said:

"You can only run down your foreign reserves by paying them out overseas, and the only foreign reserves that could be diminished by a Civil Service increase are the few salaries that are paid to the Missions abroad. That \$2 million to \$3 million that is literally spent abroad on the overseas missions, they are the only ones which can make a dent in the foreign reserves."

And he went on to say:

"I do not know whether the Prime Minister" — he was then Leader of the Opposition — "is serious when he thinks that the bulk of the taxpayers can be mobilised to say that it is correct to impose solutions than make more serious efforts at collective bargaining."

I do not wish to quote this entire speech. Those honourable Members and the members of the public

who wish to see how it is possible for one man in the course of a few years to make a complete U-turn, may turn to the debates of this Chamber for June 22, 1976, and there they will see the complete opposite position to that which the honourable Member for St. Thomas took in this Chamber when this debate was introduced.

Mr. Speaker, it is a terrible hoax on the people of Barbados to suggest that the balance of payments will come tumbling down if the civil servants were given more than \$25 million.

Mr. Speaker, there is a way in which the Government could find an additional sum of money. It need only examine its own expenditure in certain areas, it need only check that there are persons working in the Civil Service now whose line of payment cannot be found in the normal Estimates, there are persons who are receiving salaries and wages from the public purse who have not driven a stroke for the Government for the last year, and in one case I am told two years and there are systems which have been introduced in the service which defy the rules and regulations as they are understood by the Public Service Commission.

There has been wastage in this community by the Government to the extent that there are large numbers of automobiles in this country, belonging to the Government, that sit idly in varying and sundry places in Barbados, cannot be moved, have not been moved for some considerable time. There are other areas of wastage in this Administration, Mr. Speaker, where, within six months of reorganising a department, a second reorganisation occurs in the same department to suit the whims and fancies of particular administrators.

12.45 p.m.

And Mr. Speaker, worst of all, the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance has allowed the people, who he now calls upon to tighten their belts, to suffer for the last four years with difficulties connected with the inability to meet their ordinary payments, because they have been unable, through a stupid, a stupid interest rate policy, to meet a number of their normal commitments in the household, the result of which has seen many of them, in their economic management of their household and their personal finances, falling by the way-side.

Now, Sir, the Prime Minister comes and he offer them a \$108. It would have been better if he had said to the senior civil servants, 'No increase.' It would have been better if he had said to the Ministers and the senior civil servants, "The situation is difficult. We believe that the people at the bottom should get a little more in order for them to tide themselves over and, therefore, we are asking you to hold strain for another year."

Mr. Speaker, if the Prime Minister is now getting \$99 600, can it really make a great deal of difference to him, except from the psychological point of view, that the \$108 a month he will now get will carry him over the top — he will now be a \$100,000 man. Can it make a great deal of difference to him? Can it make a great deal of difference to any Permanent Secretary, who we hear is getting \$47 000 a year, to be given an additional \$108?

Mr. Speaker, what I am saying is that if he says he only has \$25 million, I am suggesting that the \$25 million could be better distributed and that he could discuss with the senior people, those at the top, what arrangements will be made for next year.

Mr. Speaker, what have we instead? We have a Prime Minister, while giving the impression that there is going to be an increase, driving people into another tax bracket. We have the Prime Minister taking levies at the point of gross receipt of salaries, and we have the Prime Minister coming to the House of Assembly and saying that he has to legislate the salaries because this is all the money he has, and if he gives the people any more money, he will have to layoff more people.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that he has given them this amount of money and he is still laying off people. Let them get up, or the honourable Member who says he is ready to go, let them get up and say that it is not true that they are getting ready to lay off people in the Water Authority. Let them get up and say that they have stopped the laying off completely. Let one of the Ministers over there give a categorical assurance to the people of Barbados that they will not lay off anybody else for the rest of this year as a result of the settlement. Let them get up and say so. They do not give the people the money and they still, lay them off!

You said to them, you cannot discuss the second year. Mr. Speaker, it is a waste of time talking to the other side about the cost of living. It is a waste of time.

The other side has been perpetrating a falsification of method for a long time. They are the only people I know who have a straight line addition of inflation over a period of time — and then quote that inflation, and the answer they get is 10 one year, 11 the next year, that is 21, and 9 the next year; and then they say in the third year the inflation was 30 per cent.

That is how they argue. That is how the honourable gentleman for St. Thomas argues, and that is why he says that it was all right for him and the National Union of Public Workers, under that distinguished chairman at the time, that distinguished gentleman who was president of the National Union of Public Workers at the time, to come and ask the Government for 89 per cent — and

they say that they accept that 89 per cent was reasonable because the inflation at that time was high, so 30 to 35 per cent was not acceptable.

What, in fact, they do not admit, is that the World Bank, the same World Bank whom they have quoted, whom the honourable Member for St. James North quoted, said in 1977 that the management of the affairs of this country during the period 1973 to 1976 was masterful.

That is no star in the crown of anybody when the World Bank says that, because when the World Bank comes down here, the World Bank, invariably will publish, or print, or recommend what has been recommended to them by the officials to whom they speak. And so, every year the World Bank writes, you will find where they are giving an opinion that they have said almost the same thing in 1977 about the management between 1973 to 1976 as they said in 1982 about the management in 1981.

But, Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you is this, that what the World Bank had recommended to the Government, in terms of putting pressure on the people of Barbados, as I have said before, the Government has carried out.

They recommended a reduction in the non-economic bus routes and the Government has carried it out. They recommended a scrapping of old inefficient buses, made possible by a reduction in the non-economic bus routes, and a reduction in the number of recently acquired buses — and the Government has carried it out.

They recommended some increases in bus fares, and the Government has carried out part of it; and they are getting ready to carry out the second part of it. They recommended a more rapid increase in water rates, and every single Barbadian who ever had to pay water rates knows that the Government has carried it out.

The only thing the Government has not carried out, so far, is the recommendation that there be an elimination of conductors on the buses for the institution of multiple rates rather than the present flat rate fares. That is the only thing left for the Government to carry out. That is recommended.

Mr. SPEAKER: And now there is no more time left for the honourable member for St. Michael West.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There will be other times when we will be able to deal with the mismanagement of the Government.

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

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I rise to say a few words about this Resolution on hand. The first thing I would like to say is that I believe that legislating salaries poses a great danger to the survival of the unions, and I will tell you why I think this.

If every time there are negotiations going on, each and every time, the honourable Prime Minister decides that he is going to legislate salaries — I believe that this is the third time, I am not sure, but I believe this is the third time — if you decide to legislate salaries, those persons who are members of the unions, who believe that a union is there to negotiate salaries and better working conditions on their behalf, those persons who belong to the union will say to themselves, and they are saying to themselves now, that if salaries are going to be legislated every time the time comes, what is the sense of belonging to a union?

12.55 p.m.

That is what people are saying. I know for a fact, Mr. Speaker, that there are persons calling certain unions in Barbados and telling them, "You all accepted \$108 — well, I am dropping out and keeping my other \$7 and making it \$115." So, Mr. Speaker, you can see that in legislating salaries there is imminent danger of unions not having any members and collapsing.

I do not know if this is the reason for the legislating of salaries. I do not know. I do not know if that is the reason for the legislating of the salaries at this time so that persons will resign from the unions and the unions will be no more.

And if you look at it carefully, Mr. Speaker, the greater bulk of the public workers are in one particular union, and those are more likely to be the persons who will resign from the union. So you will see, Mr. Speaker, that that union is likely to suffer much more than the other unions if these public workers decide to resign from the unions. That is just one point I would like to make.

I do not believe, Mr. Speaker, that in a debate like this that we should be stating what has caused the Barbados economy to fall into this state. But since listening to the Prime Minister last Wednesday, and the honourable Prime Minister made a statement that regardless of what we over here say it will be no more than \$25 million, now when I hear a statement like that, Mr. Speaker, you have to go back and look to see why it is that the honourable Prime Minister cannot pay more than \$25 million.

Remember, I said that the debate should not have taken the turn where you have to say, why is it in that state? But if the Prime Minister says that he

cannot pay any more, it is imperative for people to understand why it has gone into that state, and the honourable Prime Minister has to take almost all of the blame for the state that Barbados' economy is in today.

I have repeatedly said it in here, and I will say it again, Mr. Speaker, and I will give only one reason — because all the publications on the Barbadian economy, all of them, have demonstrated that the Prime Minister has to take a lot of blame for what is happening, and I will just read one of them. This is taken, Mr. Speaker, from page 9 of the Economic Memorandum on Barbados by the International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, and this is what it says.

Mr. SPEAKER: What year and what date?

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: May, 1982, the publication of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. This is what it says. It says, Mr. Speaker:

"The main measure which reduced Government's revenue (Speaking about Barbados) was a 50 per cent increase in personal Income Tax allowances."

It goes on: "While the reduction in direct taxes has been encouraged as a stimulus to personal endeavour, it has also been suggested that compensatory changes in indirect taxes should be made at the same time as was done in the 1980-81 Budget."

What the report is saying here, Mr. Speaker, is that in previous years, up until 1981, when you had a relief in Income Tax, that the Government recovered that loss in revenue by increasing Consumption Taxes. But as you know, Mr. Speaker, and as I know, 1981 was an election year. So there could not have been any increase in Consumption Taxes in an election year, and that is one of the dangers I find in a democracy, because not only does the Government in Barbados do it, but this is one of the failings.

If I have one reservation about democracy, it is this, because I believe that in election time people are being fooled too much and I am not only speaking about in Barbados. I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that if 1981 had not been an election year, the compensatory changes in indirect taxation, Consumption Tax and the like, would have been made to recover the loss of revenue from direct taxation. And that is why I am saying, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable Prime Minister has to take a lot of the blame for the low state of the revenue in the Barbados economy.

I go further — what has happened since September, 1981? What has happened? Since September 1981, you had the Transport Levy, you had National Insurance increasing twice, you had electricity going up, water rates

going up, everything going up since September 1981, after the mini-Budget was delivered in here.

Mr. Speaker, I know for a fact that since September 1981, public workers have been carrying home less money than they were in August 1981. I know this for a fact. The only way you can carry home more money, Mr. Speaker, if more is being taken out, is if you have overtime somewhere or if you have an extra job somewhere. This is basic. So since September 1981, they have been carrying home less, a lot less. Those who have reserves are having to dig into their reserves to spend. Those who do not have anything saved are borrowing, or stealing. It is as simple as that — very simple.

But what do you hear, Mr. Speaker? The honourable Prime Minister is saying that those persons who say that the increase he is giving will not amount to \$25 million, but rather to only about \$18 million to \$20 million because he will get back about \$7 million from various taxes and levies anyhow, he is saying that those persons who are saying that do not understand Chapter 2 of the economic text book which speaks about the multiplier.

This is what the honourable Prime Minister said. But the honourable Prime Minister forgot to mention that if you are speaking about the multiplier — and, first thing, he never told us what the multiplier in Barbados is or is estimated at, nothing like that — if you are speaking about the multiplier, you will have to tell us what is your idea of how much money the consumer is likely to spend out of each dollar that he has received. You have to bring in what the economists call "marginal propensity consume." That is what they call it. All it means is how much you spend out of each dollar. That is what it means. The honourable Prime Minister will have to tell us how much he estimates that each consumer will spend out of each dollar he receives.

If the honourable Prime Minister thinks that the public workers today are able to consume anything out of that \$25 across the board that he has given them, he is sadly mistaken. As I have just told you, their salaries since September last year have steadily been going downwards and downwards all the time, so this \$25 across the board, in my view, does not even put them back to where they were in August last year.

1.05 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, these are things that you have to understand. You have to understand that with \$25 across the board they will still take home less than they did in August last year, despite that. Every single one of them over there knows that. Are you telling me that they do not know that, Mr. Speaker? You would not say that; they know it.

I am going further. The honourable Prime Minister is very fond of saying in this Honourable House of Assem-

bly that we are not congratulating him and the other side for bringing down inflation. I have said it before, and I will say it again, and it is an indisputable fact, whenever an economy is going through a depression, prices and inflation tend to come down. It is indisputable, because aggregate demand goes down, you do not have the purchasing power, and there is no money to spend, so how can you push up prices when there is no money to spend?

So we do not have to congratulate the honourable Prime Minister because inflation is going down. Inflation in the United States is going down, inflation in Great Britain is going down, because the economies are in recession, and.....(Asides). What I am saying, Mr. Speaker, is that because those economies are in a recession, the inflation rate is going down; and that is what is happening in Barbados, so what should we congratulate the honourable Prime Minister on?

If the honourable Prime Minister needs us to congratulate him for bringing down inflation, we will congratulate him for allowing the Barbadian economy to go into a deep recession and by that process the inflation came down. That is what he should be congratulated for. He has allowed the Barbadian economy to go into a deep recession.

I go further, Mr. Speaker. The honourable Prime Minister, in trying to decry the former Prime Minister's cynicism about balance of payments all the time, he says it quite often, that it shows how much the former honourable Prime Minister grasped the economic situation of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that when you go to buy a motor car, or I go to buy a motor car, from Courtesy or McEneaney, that we sit down, when Courtesy Garage says it is \$15 000, with a pencil and paper and work out how much money you are spending in United States dollars. When we go to buy a car, Mr. Speaker, we go with the impression solemnly believing that the honourable Minister of Finance and the Central Bank, or any monetary authority you have, have already decided how much foreign reserves should be used to bring in cars or anything else.

So when you go to buy a car you do not sit down and work out how many United States dollars you are spending. That is for the monetary authorities and the honourable Minister of Finance. I am not saying that as a matter of enlightenment, education, that you should not know what balance of payments means, or what foreign reserves mean, but it is not a matter of knowing how to cross the road, it is not that same thing, Mr. Speaker.

So when you are giving the impression that whenever you go to buy something you should know how

much it is, the next thing we will be hearing is that when you go to buy a tin of orange juice from Trinidad you should walk around with pencil and paper and work out how many Trinidad dollars you spend. Or when you go to buy a tin of Trout Hall you have to work out how many Jamaican dollars you spend, that is if you carry that to its ridiculous conclusion.

All the former honourable Prime Minister was saying was that people in Barbados were getting through very very well without knowing or understanding what balance of payments means. They were getting through perfectly, and you know it, between 1971 and 1976.

Finally, I would like to say that I do not believe that the honourable Prime Minister exhausted all the channels that should be exhausted in negotiating these salaries. I believe that if the honourable Prime Minister could tell the former Prime Minister in 1976, after the former Prime Minister had 21 meetings with the unions, that he should have gone back to the bargaining table, I believe that after three meetings the present Prime Minister should go back to the bargaining table as well. That is what I believe. Mr. Speaker, and I do not believe that the honourable Prime Minister or any single person over there believes that \$25 across the board is a just and fair settlement for the civil servants.

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

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Resolution that we are debating here today must be looked at in the context of the situation in which the whole world finds itself today. There is no doubt that the world finds itself in perhaps its deepest recession since the 1929 recession. All countries in the world are in exactly this position today.

Not so long ago, the countries in Asia — Japan and Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia in particular — were being studied carefully by observers from other parts of the world as to how they seemed to have escaped the depression which had entangled the rest of the world. But within the last two weeks even the Japanese economy has felt the impact of the recession.

Similarly, we here in the Caribbean were equally studying the fate of the most prosperous country in the Caribbean which derived a large part of its foreign exchange from that commodity called oil, which many people felt its possession would insulate you from the economic impact of this depression. But two nights ago no less a person than the Minister of Labour in Trinidad and Tobago cautioned the public of Trinidad and Tobago that already approximately 3 000 people were laid off and that Trinidad was in the grips of the recession itself.

However desirable, laudable, sympathetic all of us are, we must recognise the fact that the world is in a recession.

1.15 p.m.

Now the Barbados economy is inter-dependent upon the economic conditions in other parts of the world. Whatever we produce in Barbados that exceeds our consumption has to be exported, and we only have one group of countries in the Caribbean with which we have a free trade area, and that is the Caribbean Economic Community. And we know what the position is, Mr. Speaker, in respect of the two largest of these countries, Jamaica and Guyana, we know the position is that for every dollar we export to them, we cannot be paid in foreign exchange; we have to give them credit.

I wonder if it has not sunk home in the minds of a number of people, particularly the Members on the other side, that this world economic recession is such that the developed industrialised world, the OECD countries, are experiencing unemployment of the magnitude of 30 million.

I was just in the United Kingdom and I had a lot of opportunity to talk and discuss matters with a large number of Barbadians who were there, and their one fear, Mr. Speaker, is the impact of unemployment in the United Kingdom and the rise of racism as a consequence of the competition for jobs.

There is 14 per cent unemployment in the United Kingdom, three million people. In other words, Mr. Speaker, for the first time since the 1930s, the developed world is facing unemployment, percentage-wise of their labour force, which we in the developing world are accustomed to.

One honourable Member on the other side talks about the impact of the Social Security system as a buffer to this unemployment. That is the important point but doesn't the honourable Member recognise that the unemployment is so great now that the Social Security systems in those countries are under tremendous strain, and in many of those countries they are looking at whittling it down and cutting it away?

That is the problem, and I want to bring this, Mr. Speaker, to the attention of honourable Members: if in public finance you pay out in salaries and wages more than you can derive in revenue, you can either only borrow or cut the other parts of your services to bring your expenditure in line with your revenue, and that is what is happening.

So if the honourable Member on the other side is advancing the proposition that Social Security over there can buffer that unemployment, what about the situation

in Barbados? We must be more careful, because it is not the intention of this Government to reduce the level of transfer payments in welfare in Barbados, not to give an exaggerated increase in wages which we cannot afford.

If the proposition the Democratic Labour Party is putting forward is that we can afford to give the healthy, the strong and the workers more money at the expense of reducing old age pensions and reducing the modicum of Social Security that we have, then this Barbados Labour Party will not agree with that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of elucidation, the honourable Member obviously missed the thrust of my speech. The point that was being made is not so much that the Government can or cannot afford the \$25 million, but that it is the Government's mismanagement which has landed it in the situation where it now has to use that argument. That is the thrust of our argument.

Mr. SPEAKER: Point taken.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Speaker, the honourable Member had full opportunity in June last year to point out the mismanagement to the public of Barbados. They resoundingly rejected the concept that there was mismanagement. The public knew that this Government had embarked upon a programme of capital expenditure, together with a current expenditure programme when there was growth in the economy, which was well within the competence of the Government to achieve, and, Mr. Speaker, they can see with their own eyes the projects that the Government have completed and will continue to complete. (A VOICE: They never had it so good.) That is a fact.

Mr. Speaker, I now deal, having set the general context, with the position in these negotiations. It is untrue to say that there were only three meetings. Let us get these facts clear. They had two meetings with the BSTU and the BUT, three with the BWU, three with the NUPW, two joint meetings with the Prime Minister, and there was a multiplicity of correspondence passing to and fro. I make it ten.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the proof of the validity of their argument and their general acceptance is how much support they have from the general public, or from the unions themselves, for their position. Let us look around the yard. Let us see those great supporters of that point of view that they are advocating in here today.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding of the position is that after the final joint meeting on both sides, the Prime Minister made it clear that \$25 million was the order of magnitude that the economy at this period of time, although it could not afford it, could be stretched to afford it.

We pointed out that in addition to this question of \$25 million, we also had to take into account that next year we have to pay increased old age pensions and other Social Security benefits.

We also have to take into account, Mr. Speaker, two other points. This offer is an amount equal to 12 per cent more. The average increase taking the totality of the salaries of civil servants when you take what is given at the top and when you take what is given at the bottom, amounts to 12 per cent.

We want to go further and say it is untrue to say that there are many people in the Civil Service in the established grades who are only getting this increase. They, themselves, have been the beneficiaries, since April this year, and last year, of additional increments to their base salaries in 1980. This is something that honourable Members on the other side should know.

So you do not only have to look at the increases at the 1st April this year, but you have to go back to 1980, and you have to take into account that we have increments, which you have given automatically, for a large section of the Civil Service.
1.25 p.m.

This is a very important point, because it carries financial implications for the Government. I will challenge the honourable Member for St. Philip South to demonstrate to the public of Barbados, to a large number the civil servants, that now they are only getting 12 per cent increase on their 1980 salaries. That is not correct.

As a matter of fact, there is a problem with salaries negotiations in Barbados today, because we still have an incremental scale which was predicated upon the basis of a five year salary increase, and in truth and in fact the negotiating period was only a two-year period.

Attempts were made in this salary adjustment, particularly at the bottom of the scale, to narrow the points within the scale. That is why at the bottom of the scale some people are getting as much as a 28 per cent increase.

Now I know, Mr. Speaker, what is really galling the honourable Members on the other side. What is galling them is that this Government has the courage to tell those salary earners who earn in the higher brackets that they can only get 3.7 per cent. That is what is really galling them.

Honourable Members on the other side would prefer the proposition, as put forward by the NUPW, that you have a larger increase at the top. That is what the honourable Members on the other side would prefer. And I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we are very

proud of the fact, as the Prime Minister has said, that between the highest paid public servants and the lowest paid the ratio is less than 8 to 1 — better than Cuba, better than anywhere else. Check it out for yourself. You check it out for yourself. We are proud of that fact. It is a deliberate, conscious attempt to re-distribute whatever cake there is to be re-distributed. (*Asides*) We only improved it, that is all, but give us the credit for improving it.

The second point I want to advert to is this. We have costed the final so-called position of the NUPW. After that meeting, we knew what the position of the BWU — that they want \$5 million tacked on next year. Now the final position of the NUPW, when costed, was that they wanted \$23 million in addition next year.

Now having started off where they were, and having ended up there, and having at the same time, and this is a very important point, throughout the discussion with the unions there was one salient feature coming through — that every union was anxious for the negotiations to come to an end. They said they did not want protracted negotiations. They wanted to get this thing done.

I believe that, Mr. Speaker, I believe that. I believe that 99.9 per cent of the civil servants want this Resolution pass so that they can be able to bring themselves back up to a position where they were. I believe that, Mr. Speaker.

There will be no difficulty in the calculation of these pay sheets. They will be no difficulty at all in that, Mr. Speaker, because they know that in the face of the difficulties in which the world is placed, in which Barbados is placed, that any attempt by the Government of this order of magnitude can only be interpreted as an honest to goodness attempt by the Government to do justice to them in the light of the economic conditions. So I think we must look at it in this context.

There are obvious limitations. Mr. Speaker, when you have no established machinery for negotiating between a sovereign body, as an employer, and a Union. Many countries in the world have attempted to solve this by either legal or compulsory arbitration, by the Privy Council and by other mechanics.

Now I am not sure what the Other Side is advocating, because they will always be points and times when there will be profound disagreement. So, therefore, if you are the sovereign employer and you are the trustees of the taxpayers money, then some mode of settlement other than the normal conciliation machinery in which the Government is an independent third party, and the Ministry of Labour has to arbitrate or conciliate, has to be dealt with. You have to devise one.

Now are you suggesting an industrial compulsory arbitration tribunal independent of Government? Are you suggesting that? Let us carry it to its logical conclusion. One honourable Member asked that the Minister of Labour should be the arbitrator, but the Minister of Labour cannot be the arbitrator when he is a Member of Government. He is a Member of Government. He is independent? He cannot be independent.

What is the DLP's policy on this? Are you saying that you are going to bring in compulsory third party arbitration procedure? I want to know, Mr. Speaker. These are important points of principle, and if we are going to conduct this debate on a point of principle, let us deal with it from that basis (*Asides*). (Well I am always misunderstanding your point. It does not matter, Mr. Speaker.)

The basic position is that we feel that in the light of the present negotiations, in the light of the fact that a large percentage of the rank and file of the unions — do not mind the Leaders; the rank and file — the advice that has been coming back is clear that a large percentage of the rank and file feel that the Government has done its best in the circumstances. With that in the back, the propaganda.....(*Asides*). Well, if I were like you, I would feel so ashamed that nobody did not come down here cheering me. I would feel so bad. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the position would be dismissed.

Mr. Speaker, the position is that we could not afford to pay \$23 million next year, we cannot afford it, and that is what the NUPW is asking for. They will accept this, but they want \$23 million next year to get an agreement.

Mr. Speaker, there must be finality in all negotiations and we believe that we have had a sufficient number of meetings. We believe that until the economic situation in the world shows some sign of improvement, bearing in mind the most important point — and this is something, Mr. Speaker, that the other honourable Members on the Other Side missed — today employees all over the world are as equally concerned with money wages as they are concerned with other conditions of employment, and in particular with job security.

One of the lessons of a recession in all of the countries in the world is that the primary concern of a worker is not even so much with money wages, but with job security; and we know, Mr. Speaker, there have been massive cuts all over the world.

In Barbados, it is a fact that some of our capital works programmes have come to an end and there have been some lay-offs in there too. That is a fact.

In my own Ministry, Civil Aviation at the airport, we have completed the terminal building, we have com-

pleted the radar building and we have completed the freight shed. Obviously, the number of construction workers that you have in those areas, in the absence of further construction, would have to go.

But what can I do about that, Mr. Speaker? Am I to build another terminal building when I do not need it? Am I to build another radar building when I do not need it? Am I to build another freight shed when we do not need it?

So, Mr. Speaker, this is another vital area that, in the context of Barbados, unless we have a Current Account surplus to make a contribution to your Capital Development Programme, your employment generation, which is derived from a Government pumping the construction sector, cannot take place. The more you pay out in money wages, in the face of a declining revenue, means, Mr. Speaker, that you are running a Current Account deficit and therefore you have to massacre your public Capital Development Programme.

And we say to the Unions there is a trade-off between employment; because if we cannot carry on our Capital Development Programme, then we will not be able to keep the construction industry going. Now do some members of the unions understand our position?
1.35 p.m.

I want to say this, the Government has been exceptionally fair in other areas. You will forget that it was this Government that brought in the Income Tax concessions allowing the deduction of union dues, and, what is more important, because I will tell you now for the benefit of the people on the other side, we allowed \$2 400 a year to be deducted tax from their tax for credit unions.

Look at the position of the Public Workers' Credit Union today. In two short years, over a million additional dollars. And what is more, Mr. Speaker - I am sorry that the Barbados Workers' Union does not have one, I am very sorry that they do not have one - what is more, Sir, in our attempt to repose the people of Barbados, we have just signed a long term loan, and one of the administering authorities of that loan will be the credit unions.

You have to look, Mr. Speaker, at the totality of the Government's action in this area. It is not only money wages you must think of; you must think of the Income Tax deductions. Just as you think of the levies, you must think of the deductions. You must think of the flow of monies, specifically towards the institutions which are institutions of self-help.

How can we honestly be accused of being anti-unions when we have passed those measures, measures

the other side have never thought of, never thought of, never introduced. You don't hear about no "army of occupation" coming from the members of this side. We allow that kind of stricture to emanate from the other side. We have been abused and we have taken the abuse. All we have done is solidly plod along and try to do the best that we can do for all sections of the community.

I. Mr. Speaker, have no qualms at all in supporting this Resolution.

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

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that a debate on increases of wages and salaries seems that it must take place in an atmosphere of charge and counter-charge.

My recollection, Sir, of salaries and review goes back some little way. It goes back to the time when I first joined the government of the then Government of 1965; shortly after that in 1966 there was a salary review.

In those days, one could almost say far off days, the practice was that the salaries of public servants, be they unestablished casual, established, or what have you, were reviewed by a commissioner, usually, or invariably, imported from outside of Barbados.

That commissioner held discussions with workers, with workers' representatives, and with the Government, and finally that commissioner, usually in my time a sole commissioner only given secretarial services, made his recommendations to the Government. On the basis of that recommendation, Government then brought those proposals before Parliament, and Parliament usually accepted the proposals of the commissioner. In those days not everybody was satisfied with what the commissioner did for him. That is on an individual basis. Collectively, there was hardly a complaint.

But we became independent in 1966 and we moved on. We moved on from the practice of the commissioner and then moved into direct negotiations with the workers and the workers' representatives. I believe that that is what took place, Sir, in 1969 and 1972, as far as I remember. There were also direct negotiations with the workers' representatives in 1976, in our time, as well.

In the previous years, in 1969 and 1972, we came, after lengthy negotiations, to complete agreement with the unions or the unions' representatives or associations, or what have you, representing the workers. There were also protracted negotiations in 1976. The Government was not able then, after more than twenty meetings, to come to any definitive position as regards to wages and salaries. (*Asides*) Someone who does not understand what he is talking about says that the number does not mean

anything. (*Asides*) To some people it means nothing except, of course, their salaries. Then it means something. (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Let us have some order now.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Yes Sir, after more than twenty meetings — the honourable Member for St. Michael South said twenty-one,..... anyhow it does not matter — after more than twenty meetings we were not able to come to a decision at that time and, unfortunately, the Government of the day came to this Parliament and stated what the position was; no more meetings held and so on.

It was the then Shadow Minister of Finance — of course, we heard the whole story on Tuesday. I don't want to go back over that all over again. In fact, some of the actual words of the Minister of Finance were re-read, were quoted in this debate and read into the records of this debate.

Mr. Speaker, negotiations are never a simple matter and salary negotiations are probably among the most difficult in the world. It is a very emotive thing. It strikes people right in their pockets and, some would say, in their bellies. That's for some, not for all; some can do better than others. But it is a very emotive thing, Sir. Who is there to determine what a man is worth? Is it the employer who determines what a man's work is worth? Is it the worker himself? Is it the consumer? Is it the combination of all three of those? Who is to determine that?

1.45 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe anybody can say with any accuracy what a man is really worth in terms of what he is doing, but we have got in that imperfect situation to sit down and negotiate with those workers, bearing in mind the interest of the consumer or the interest of the taxpayer. We have got to bear that in mind at all times.

Sir, in the manufacturing industry you will find that competition plays a great part in determining a man's wages. In a service industry, that, too, plays some part, but in the Government Service we have new dimensions.

In the manufacturing industry, the manufacturer has got to bear in mind the cost of his product in relation to what his competitor is selling it at. In the service industry, the contractor has got to bear in mind his price to the person who employs him to do the job. A laundry is just another example. (Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: How does the Government do it?)

You will get your turn. If you know what to talk about it you will get your turn. He does not know what

to say. He is having his say now, let him get up when the time comes and have his say. He is having his say now from the security of his seat, let him get up and have it when his time comes. He has not even had a look in on these negotiations.

The issue is completely different in the Government Service. Government does not have to look at any competitor. Ultimately the Government has to look at the taxpayer, Government has to look in terms of the total economy. All of these are set out, we are not disputing that. Our main concern here is that the workers employed by Government are unable to get what is their just reward because the Government has run the country down economically, and that is what is important. That is the point.

We believe, Sir, that the proper method for carrying out negotiations is for the well-intentioned employer to sit down and negotiate with the well-intentioned worker or his representative.

In 1976, we were told we should get back to the bargaining table, we were even told what was the best method, by the now Minister of Finance, then Shadow Minister of Finance, of dealing with an increase in salaries. We were told that the best method was one of indexing — you index the man's salary in accordance with the rise in the cost of living.

That, of course, was nothing new, coming then from the Minister of Finance. That had been tried at that time in countries going through the kind of problems that the countries in the world are going through today. Italy tried it and it failed, and I dare say if we had tried it that we, too, would have failed. It is difficult.

The Minister of Finance, at that time Shadow Minister, was just grasping at shadows and allowing the substance to pass. That is what is happening now, they are grasping at the shadows and allowing the substance to pass them all by.

Mr. Speaker, it is a negation of democracy for any Government without due process of negotiation to impose its will on the persons that it employs. Governments are supposed to be model employers, they are considered to be model employers, and if Government is to be a model employer, then Government must do things in a way and set an example to the rest of his country.

We boast that we are the freest people in this world, but I say this, that freedom and democracy will have to go hand in hand. You cannot have freedom unless you are wedded to the principles of democracy, and if you are going to practise totalitarian methods, as indeed is the case in these negotiations, then the boast of being

the freest country in the world is indeed a very idle boast.

What kind of message would the Government be sending to the private sector of this country if the Government can unilaterally decide the amount of wages that the workers must have? What signals are they sending to the private sector? Is it not telling the private sector that they can treat the unions with contempt if they can get away with it? Forget the workers, you pay the workers exactly what you want to pay them.

I believe that the honourable Minister of Labour should protest strongly, because, in fact, what it is doing is making his job that much harder, his job becomes that much more difficult if the signals that I am reading are the correct ones, because the employers and the employers' organisations are going to back up and hold strain and point to the Government as an example of how they should pay their workers.

It is wrong, Mr. Speaker, it is wrong to label the National Union of Public Workers as unpatriotic. It is wrong to label them as uncaring for their country and for the economic situation in which the country finds itself. It is wrong to label the Barbados Workers' Union as unpatriotic. It is wrong to label the associations representing the doctors or the teachers, whether they are primary school teachers or secondary school teachers, as unpatriotic.

I find it difficult to understand why it is that the right honourable Prime Minister — should I say "abuse", that is the word he likes to use — should abuse the trade unions in Great Britain and accuse them virtually of bringing the country to its heels. Why is it that the right honourable Prime Minister should find common ground with people like Ted Heath and Margaret Thatcher? The one thrown out of power after less than five years in Government, and the other has to thank the Argentines for the new spark of popularity that she is now enjoying at this moment. I do not understand why our Prime Minister must find common ground with these people.

I do not believe that the \$25 a week increase that the Government says should be paid to the workers would put the workers back in the position that there were in prior to December 1981. I do not believe it.
1.55 p.m.

Since September, we have had three increases in National Insurance, we have had increases in bus fares — bus fares went up almost double, from 35 cents to 65 cents. The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central talks about the 65 cents, but he knows about buses; he is well acquainted with buses, he is an expert on buses and he knows about the cost of buses. That's

right. We have had increases in the price of sugar this year, the price of meat has increased, fish has increased in price, milk has increased tremendously, — yes, flour has gone down today; but give it three months and see where it will be, it will go beyond what it is today — all these things have increased.

All these things, Mr. Speaker, have eroded the take-home pay of the worker, and I do not believe, Sir, that with the levies placed on the workers, the transport levies, increased National Insurance contributions, and with the many other things I have mentioned, that even this \$25 a week, when the Income Tax is taken out, is going to place the worker back in the position that he had been in prior to January 1982.

I do not believe it. That is why we do not believe that this \$25 a week is a genuine increase at all, because with the increases in the cost of living that I have just cited, the worker is still not being able to take home more than he took home in December 1981, and that is a fact.

If the Government is not, in fact, able to pay more than \$25 million, which is \$25 a week, where is the Government to get the money from to purchase Aero Services Limited? Let the Government forego some of these things, let Government stop wasting money on purchasing things like aircrafts, because that is what I understand they are getting into — aircrafts. I see the honourable Member for St. James North is smiling.

I heard the honourable Deputy Prime Minister speak not so long ago about the housing loan. We on this side would like to know what are the conditions of these loans. I hope that in due course the conditions for that loan will be made known to this Honourable Chamber, because we have had experience with AID before and we have had to reject the AID.

They were requiring us in the Sixties to on-lend to the general public at 50 per cent more than on a loan they could then secure from the commercial banks or wherever. In other words, at that time when one would pay 8 per cent on mortgages, they were demanding that borrowers should pay 12 per cent on mortgages.

I would like to know what are the terms and conditions of this loan, because a loan from the identical agency in our time had to be refused. We will worry about it because we will want to know.

Sir, this \$25 million increase in relation to the \$220 million personal emoluments that Government has got to pay by law is only roughly 12 per cent or a little less than 12 per cent, but that is in terms of the total personal emoluments. Twenty-five dollars in terms of the average worker, and the average worker must be earning

somewhere about \$1 200 to \$1 500 a month, is absolutely minimal; it is probably 8 per cent. I have not worked it out, but it is probably no more than 8 per cent.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what has the Minister risen?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Just to suspend the sitting for lunch, it being 2 o'clock, and hearing nonsense all the time.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Speaker, I will finish just now. We have, through the honourable Member for St. Michael South, set out what we consider firm proposals for resolving this matter with the respective unions.

I believe, Sir, that if the Government — and I will not say they will not do it, because I believe that the Government will probably have another look at the second year, because the unions appear to have conditionally accepted this \$25 per week increase. I have accepted that they have accepted that, but they have only accepted it on the hope that there will be some further increase in the second year.

It may not be the \$23 million that the NUPW are seeking; it could be \$10 million or even the \$5 million that the Barbados Workers' Union says would be a reasonable figure for the second year of the term of this agreement. If one can call it an agreement, and, Sir, I am urging the Government to have a look at these proposals in the light of what we have suggested here and so resolve these problems with their workers, so that the public at large, because the public will be the losers eventually, will eventually benefit. (Applause)

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be suspended until 3 o'clock today.

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

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

On Resumption

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

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

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (TEACHERS) (AMENDMENT) ORDER, 1982

Order No. 10 was called — To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (Teachers) (Amendment) Order, 1982.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to second it, Sir, and I reserve my right to speak.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, most of what one would say on the Resolution with regard to the method and the amount has been said, and therefore, I would not, even if I could, wish to detain this Honourable House by repetition of those arguments.

I would like, however, to raise the question which is causing me, and a number of persons with whom I have been speaking, some concern. It appears that, as part as the policy of the Government, there has been a cut back in the staffing in a number of departments.

Now if one accepts either of the arguments advanced from that side or this side, the fact still remains that it is within the purview of the capacity of the Government, and, more particularly, the Minister responsible for Finance, to determine a retrenchment policy. What disturbs me, however, is that this policy, as it applies to the Ministry of Education, as this policy applies to the staffing in schools, it would appear, because one does not have all the information that the Minister would have, it would appear that the cut-back, as it applies to the schools, has not been rationally implemented.

I know, for example, that there are a number of trained teachers, and I know of one in particular who is a trained Erdiston teacher, and I know of one in particular who has not been able to be re-assigned by the Ministry of Education for the last year to two years.

Now if you are going to have a policy of retrenchment, that retrenchment policy has to bear some relationship to your total policy. It seems to me that you ought to have a wholistic approach to the development of the individual in the totality of the educational level.

It seems to me, Sir, that, regarding the quality of persons who has been trained by the Government, the taxpayers have trained persons in order to make them better and more efficient in the carrying out of the total policy. It strikes me as self-defeating for a Government, whether it is this Government or that Government, to embark on a policy of training and then, on completion of that training by a number of individuals, those

individuals have to give way to persons who may not be so well trained because of their cut back policy.

Now if you are operating on the usual basis of last in first out, then no one can complain. But even that policy, while it may work in normal industrial relations, would seem to me to be shortsighted, if it were the policy where you are dealing in this whole area of education and skilled teachers. But where the skilled teachers are in the areas of education that have been traditionally short in this country, it would seem to me that a proper review or a proper evaluation of your resources is the primary requirement, the first requirement, in any application of a retrenchment policy.

It is true that one or the other person might escape the total net, but I would think that in the area of education in a place like Barbados, that we would have sufficient interest, and sufficient time, and sufficient resources to be more qualitative in our analysis of the educational plant. And it can be no source of pride for us on this side to be able to make this criticism, because the loss of a skilled mathematics teacher, for example, is a loss not to the Government or, indeed, to the Opposition — it is a loss for the country. For each day he or she is not in the class room, that is a total loss which we cannot afford in this country.

I should like to ask the Minister whether in his retrenchment policies, as they apply to education, whether consideration to preclude the kind of problem I alluded to has been part of their examination.

Related to that, but of a different nature, is the whole question of the efficacy of the decision not to allow training at the university level, as has been the case in the past, for a number of teachers who hitherto have been able to proceed to the university to enhance their, if not teaching skills, certainly their knowledge. They have had during the last year, as I understand it, to give way to the necessity to cut back the economic cake.

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that there is a multiplier effect that is bound to occur. If there were 84 teachers or 184 teachers all posed to go up to Cave Hill to expand their knowledge, if the decision has been made to require all of them to remain in their places, then, Mr. Speaker, next year there would be another 184 that aspire to expand their knowledge by going on to the university.

Now it stands to reason that the university is unlikely to be able to absorb both sets of teachers, but even if the university could accept them, it stands to reason that the Education Department and the country as a whole will not be able to release all of them. So it means that, forever as far as the eye can see, a number

of persons who would have wished to expand themselves, expand their knowledge, will be taking their place at the back of the queue.

I do not believe that in the long term interest of our education development that that policy is desirable. And while the Minister of Finance might advance good and sufficient economic reasons for cutting back the training — there is some difficulty with whether that is training or whether that is personal development, but, I think, for a teacher, any opportunity to expand knowledge will have to be seen as sharpening the teaching skills — I think that if a decision has been made not to allow these persons to proceed, as in the past, to the university, then it strikes me that overall in the long term you are interfering with the quality of teaching capability available to the country over a time.

3.15 p.m.

I believe that that policy needs to be reviewed. I believe that the Government ought to give the community a better explanation or more insight into the actual policy.

Now, it may very well be that some people were doing what one heard about over in the United States, that is to say, over qualifying themselves. I have heard one school of thought suggest that a person would be a good primary school teacher and then would get leave to go to Cave Hill to get a degree and then, having passed the degree, that person would seek to leave the primary school to go to a secondary school, and as a result the quality of education might drop. I don't accept that argument, Sir. (*Asides*)

The Prime Minister is saying from his seat that he is staying at the primary school and draw the secondary salary because of the requirement that if you have a degree you are supposed to get a certain emolument. I am hearing the Prime Minister saying that he gets the higher salary for teaching the alphabet.

Well, I think that would be a call not necessarily to the individual not to get the monies that are given now for the number of degrees you hold, but for the Ministry of Education to examine and re-orient its policies as they apply to the selection, the grading and the employment of staff in the various schools.

The point is that tackling the problem at the level they have tackled the problem appears to me to provide an economic solution for the Government, but, at the same time, it opens another pan of worms in terms of the quality and the continuing development of the quality of teaching in the various schools.

Now when you take the twin problems, the one of the higher ratio of pupils to teachers, especially in the

primary schools, arising out of the decision to cut back on places — I am told, for example, that at one well known school that there are seven less teachers in the school but the roll has increased — that could be one of two things, Mr. Speaker. People were under-employed in the past — in which case we were not told, and we ought to have been given that information — I, myself, do not accept that — or that following some formula, which comes from somewhere, it might be decided that the education authorities to increase the ratio of students to teacher.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those persons who are familiar with the old elementary education and the quality of product which emerged from that old educational system, must be appalled at any suggestion that a ratio of 1:40 or 1:45 of primary school children is a desirable ratio.

For all of the years of education criticism in this Honourable House, that criticism has always been towards improving the quality of product by making the ratio of teacher to student sufficiently desirable as to allow each student to get a reasonable attention span from the teacher.

If this Government is in fact going back to the old days when you used to have one teacher to fifty and sixty children, where the teacher is necessarily forced to single out those children who are "well behaved" and those children whose natural aptitude come early to the fore, what it means is that we will be again condemning a section of the community to a position at the bottom of the economic and social ladder and leaving them to fend for themselves.

I contend, Mr. Speaker, that if the problem is not tackled at that level, at a subsequent level, it has to be tackled, except that it comes in the form of social problems — and the cost tends to be much higher when the cost has to be dealt with at the level of social problems.

I am suggesting that a number of the social problems, the increasing social problems which we are seeing among young adults, may very well be attributed to a failure at the level of the primary school to recognize the need for additional and extra care at that level by the primary school teachers.

I do not see, according to the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central, and I do not think there are large numbers of headteachers demonstrating, or a number of head teachers in the Public Gallery demonstrating. But that must not be the criteria by which we assess whether a problem exists or whether a particular policy is a good policy or a desirable policy. I believe that examining each issue on its merits is a much more desirable way for a Government to proceed.

Mr. Speaker, it is a problem which we are going to be observing and watching. But I warn the Government that this decision to make economic solutions, satisfying the bottom line at all cost, if, in fact, it is the case, is acceptable to them in the short term, perhaps, but it is laying a very dangerous foundation for the medium and long term.

I will be very happy to hear the Prime Minister or the Minister of Education, or whomever, explaining the policy so that I and a number of other Barbadians, and all of us on this side, can understand what the policy is with regards to this alleged cutting back of teachers in the primary schools.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I will be very short, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any other honourable Member who wishes to speak. It falls to me, rather than the Minister of Education, to reply to this, because so much of what the honourable Member spoke of dealt with personnel Establishment matters and on training matters within my Ministry.

I would like to thank him very much for the comments which he made. He put some cogent arguments and drew our attention to some abuses which, I regret, are very probable. I do not at all doubt that with the system of appointment that prevails, and with the atmosphere in the 100-odd schools in Barbados, that there will be cases where a trained mathematics teacher will find himself laid-off when there is a fall in the number of pupils, but an untrained teacher, perhaps still to go to Erdiston, has better contacts in the places where it matters — and they do not, of course, include any centre where politicians have a word — for him or herself to continue to be employed.

Very briefly, the situation is that the number of school children in Barbados has fallen over the past few years. I haven't got the figures immediately to hand, but although we had the absurd figure of 117 per cent enrollment in the primary schools, which means that they are 7 per cent more children at school in Barbados, according to the returns you get from headmasters and headmistresses, than there are children in the island as discovered in the Census, we yet have a fall in school population. 3.25 p.m.

The ratio of pupil to teacher is not anything like 40, it is, I believe, down in the most crowded schools to something like 28 point something to teacher.

It has been said many times in here that the World Bank more or less told the Ministry of Education that they were not prepared to finance the scheme now going

on, of rebuilding schools, if the pupil/teacher ratio was not improved any further. In the short, medium and long term, therefore, there is not going to be any expansion in the number of teachers; what we are hoping for is an improvement in their quality.

The Government has therefore decided that except for existing untrained teachers, who should all, I think, be trained within the next three years, that no further untrained teachers will be hired. It will not in future be possible to join the Government Service as a teacher and then go to Erdiston to be trained. You will have to go to Erdiston first, if you wish to be a teacher, and then be admitted. So the difficulty between a trained mathematics teacher being turned down in favour of an untrained teacher cannot happen in the future — they will all be trained.

The point which the honourable Member made about teachers going to study and then moving out of the primary schools — really, you have to get a balance. You want good teachers in the primary schools and therefore the Government's policy has been that posts do not carry the salary, but the holders of the posts carry the salary. In other words, no matter what a university graduate is teaching, he gets paid as a graduate.

There are occasions where graduates find themselves teaching the ABC, or teaching at a similar level arithmetic in the primary schools. Not very many, but the situation can happen. On the other hand, it is, of course, an enormous waste of money to encourage people to go away to qualify for a higher salary if you do not know you have a higher post available for them. The Ministry of Education continues to examine this situation.

There has been a little cut back in the training of teachers higher up the scale. The course at the university specially started for already qualified teachers has had to be restricted.

We are still, although we are now in 1982 a well educated country, with the mentality that the Civil Service exists as a place into which you can go to get higher education. This was all very well when university education was a hard thing to get in Barbados. There were many people in the Public Service who, if the facilities at Cave Hill had existed when they left school, would have gone there. If the number of scholarships which the Government now awards had been available, they would have won one, but they were not available, and therefore to make up for the past deprivation, Governments previous to this — and I do not only mean our immediate predecessor, the Barbados Labour Party Government — had always made it possible for public officers and teachers to go away and receive study leave to get degrees.

But now that we have free education in Barbados — and it is in fact very unusual to have free education in the only educational institutions available and the best educational institutions available right up to university level in any country, that is unusual — now that we have entirely free education, there is no reason why a qualified person cannot leave school and get a university education.

The Government's policy is, therefore, for the future, that study leave, even no pay study leave will not normally be granted for the acquisition of a university degree. There may be a few exceptional cases where particular skills are needed and where public officers will therefore be sent on courses related to the nature of their work in the Public Service, but, in general, study leave for the private purposes of the officer will not be granted.

The National Union of Public Workers is aware of this, and the Barbados Union of Teachers, and they are adjusting the changeover period, so to speak, so that no hardship will be wrought on existing persons.

But situations, such as I had to deal with this morning, where a clerical officer in the Ministry of Education, having been given two years' study leave to get a diploma in Public Administration, a qualification which I was assured by the Training Board is in surplus in the Public Service, now wishes a further period to do a B.Sc., and the Ministry of Education raised no objection, that sort of thing is not what the taxpayers are paying the Public Service for.

We cannot afford to pay a public servant to go and be educated, when education is free anyhow, and he could have got it at the time of leaving school. So all of these things have to be considered when we talk of cutting back on training.

I think that a greater interest has been taken in training since 1976 than perhaps was taken before. I mean no criticism, different people have different emphases, it merely happened that I was interested in the subject, and I was astonished at what could be done with local training, spending a good deal less money than the Government had been spending on giving training courses to people to satisfy the people rather than the needs of the Public Service. The best speech I have ever heard on the subject I think was made by Mr. Anderson Morrison on this side of the House when he gave us the benefit of his experience on how you had to go about getting a training course in the Public Service.

The honourable member for St. Philip South will be fully aware of the fact that in private industry nobody pays you to go anywhere to get a degree. If you want to get a degree you have to go at night and work hard during the day, except, I suppose, for short periods when

they are taking examinations, but during the day time, or as your shift allows, you are expected to do your normal work. I think Barbados has progressed to the stage where this must be done.

There is one officer in the Ministry of Transport and Works who, I understand, has 11 qualifications. He has been on eleven separate courses, none of them relating to his job except the fact that he is professionally qualified. All of the other courses are, in the words of the Minister of Agriculture, lateral; he has not at any stage moved upwards.

These things, Mr. Speaker, are just as much abuses of the training process as anything else, and I do not think that the taxpayers should any longer be called on to shoulder these difficulties.

The only thing that I would say in conclusion on the Resolution itself is that the Barbados Union of Teachers, which represents the employees now under consideration, although in the past it has never agreed with any Government on any salaries increase, has been unusually co-operative on this occasion, and I would like to thank the members of the delegation for their contribution to the discussions, indeed for the usefulness of their submissions, although in all the circumstances they could not have been expected to agree with the Government's action in this matter.

3.35 p.m.

I hope that the relatively good relations which the Chief Establishments Officer has had with the Barbados Union of Teachers over the last year and a half or two years will continue.

There have been one or two difficulties with teachers over disciplinary matters. The teaching service, Sir, is not by any means the best disciplined part of the Public Service. Headteachers have fights with senior teachers that end up in the courts. One school teacher, upon whom there is abundant evidence on record of his preference — it is an illness connected to the intake of spirituous fluids — I think he is reputed to have agreed with the Public Service Commission that he is a confirmed alcoholic, and yet he has been confirmed in his teaching post. These things will happen in any group of 1 700 people, I think there are 1 700 teachers, and I would not like to think that the teaching service is going to be characterised as a service where favouritism and abuse and indiscipline takes place.

There are more teachers now and there are more school children, and the system of teaching is different than it was 50 years or 80 years ago, more than that when my grandfather became a headteacher in the then teaching service of this island, and people are very apt to be critical of the teaching service. They compare them,

they compare present headteachers to the headteachers of a bygone age.

Education has been spread more widely and there have been many more opportunities in public life, in commercial life, for education and for the very able people to make a name for themselves outside of the teaching service. To that extent, therefore, the breed has been diluted one could say, but that does not mean that the teaching service in Barbados is to be derided, and I would not wish so to deride it, Mr. Speaker.

The teachers will have, perhaps more than most public servants, to bear the strain of this particular Resolution because they do tend, many of them, to fall into the category where the amount of \$108 per month will not be a large increase compared to their commitments, but very few of them will get such big salaries as will allow them to absorb the short-fall in their standard of living for one or two years.

I thank them very much indeed for holding the strain so well as they have, and they also have the Government's assurance that if times improve, the Government will not hesitate to re-enter upon a consideration of the current salary settlement.

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.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE RATES OF PAY TO TEACHERS IN THE OLDER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Order No. 11 was called — To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the new rates of pay for teachers in the Older Secondary Schools.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, as I rise to move this, I am also moved in a different way, after hearing the speeches of honourable Members on this Resolution, and the going back to the bargaining table, and after hearing all the recitals of my own earlier words on the matter, to recall a distant past when the teaching service, the public service, the casual workers and, above all, the secondary school teachers constituted "a wicked army of occupation."

For the benefit of all those who have been listening to this debate, I want to quote from the Financial Statement and Budgetary Proposals made by the right honourable Prime Minister on the 6th June, 1972, on the subject of Public Service salaries. This is when the policy of restraint of Public Service salaries was first introduced,

and I am quoting the words of the right honourable Member for St. John. This is page 8 of the Budget, paragraph "Salaries Revision."

"There is some kind of superstition that the Public Service is automatically entitled to a three yearly upward revision of salary."

It was three yearly in those days. The honourable Member for St. Michael South wants to make it annual evidently, but that is a diversion.

"This is the main preoccupation of the Civil Service Association which has now dispensed with the term "civil" and changed their sobriquet to the National Union of Public Workers and which registered as a trade union in 1964 and not at any time during the regime of The National Conservative and/or Labour Party.

They are demanding salaries for some public officers higher than those currently paid to Ministers of Government, increases in pensions from 30 per cent to 50 per cent without any explanation as to the manner in which these increases can be justified.

"The militant and churlish opposition leadership of the Secondary Teachers Union has staked its own claims on the earnings of the taxpayers, still entrenched in the belief that they can go further than holding up the nation's children to ransom but that they can blackmail the whole community and even overthrow the Government."

This was a Budget Speech, Sir, and the honourable Member went on to say:

"I wish to make it clear that what I decide as Minister of Finance is not predicated by exhibitions of bad manners and ill will of the detractors, but by a concern for the overall good of the country rather than the wide ambitions of any narrow sectoral interests."

And he ended this section:

"Negotiations may take place provided that a sensible rather than the present insolent and truculent approach is adopted. The appropriate time for increases will be the time when the country can afford them."

I wish to adopt the words of the right honourable Member for St. John, shorn of his criticism of individuals as "churlish" and "boorish" and "bad mannered." The time for increases, Mr. Speaker, will be the time when the country can afford them.

I will just say I have read this passage out at this time because I wish to say that although the Secondary School Teachers Union is a hard fighting union, strong in

negotiations, never hesitant to see bad faith where no bad faith exists, always with a point about pensions, about employment, about the behaviour of headmasters and their qualifications and so on, always with a point, I have never found it a churlish union with which it was impossible to do business.

In this particular situation, the Secondary School Teachers Union, perhaps, has been most vocal in indicating its difficulty with the Government's proposals and most ingenious in seeking special terms for its few hundred members, but in the end, Mr. Speaker, I am satisfied that, like all sensible Barbadians, this union knows perfectly well that if the Government could do better, it would do better.

3.45 p.m.

I do not want to belabour the point. Perhaps I may have to say something at the conclusion of the next Resolution and on the debate as a whole, so in passing all I would want to say, Sir, is that it must be obvious to everybody that the Government does not willingly court unpopularity by legislating civil servants salaries at a level below that which civil servants find reasonable or find desirable.

It is a matter of commonsense that no Government would go out of its way to make itself disliked with one-fifth of the population by not acceding to trade union demands on behalf of one-fifth of the workers.

And when judgments are being made, Mr. Speaker, I ask the public and honourable Members to consider whether it is likely that the Government is deliberately withholding money that it can pay out, or whether perhaps it is not more likely that the Government, hardly able to pay an increase at all, would prefer to scrape the barrel and move heaven and earth to find some money to pay Civil Servants over the next two year period?

I think that it is this realisation that has, perhaps, informed the negotiations, however few they may have been, between the unions, including this union, and the Government.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing special about this particular group of teachers except that, in general, they may be better able to stand the strain of wage restraint than those teachers embraced in the previous Order.

The secondary school teachers in this country are by no means our worst paid public officers. They do enjoy very long vacation periods and very short school hours. When one thinks of the enormous amounts of money spent on making Harrison's College, the Lodge School, Queen's College, right down, in terms of going down the order chronologically, to the St. James Secondary School, the amount of money spent in making

those schools equal to any in the world and very short hours that those schools are used, I wonder how long it will take the Minister of Education to add an hour or two on the school hours.

I was shaken to discover that cricket and football can be accommodated on Harrison's College curriculum between the hours of quarter to nine in the mornings and a quarter to three in the afternoon as well as academic subjects. And I very much hope, speaking as a parent and a taxpayer, as most of us in here must be, that the Minister of Education will look at this in her revamping of the school curriculum.

I hear honourable Members, *sotto voce*, saying it is the only way, but the point is you can extend the school hours. You do not have to have the hours between a quarter to nine and a quarter to three. You can extend the hours to a quarter to four and teach them for one hour more and then make them run.

In case honourable Members do not know, the school hours at a good preparatory school in England — not necessary boarders, a good school; a private school, teaching boys of ages 10 and 11 — may start at 9.30 a.m., but they are not going to leave school before 5.30 p.m. in the afternoon, and even then the games would stop only because of the onset of darkness in the winter, not because it is considered that they have been in school too long — and they then have to sit down and do French when it is too dark to play outside (*Asides*).

I hear, *sotto voce* a remark about a particular school. I will leave that school to others better qualified. Smith has suffered enough at my hands today, Sir.

Mr. Speaker, 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.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order No. 12.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE NEW RATES
OF PAY FOR THE UNESTABLISHED STAFF
AND CASUAL EMPLOYEES

Order No. 12 was called — To move the passing of the Resolution to approve the new rates of pay for the unestablished staff and casual employees.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Order No. 12 deals with the casual and unestablished workers. I am very happy to report to the House that as a result

of the regrading and as a result of the fact that the salaries of these officers are in any case not at the level of the officers whom we dealt with in the Teaching Orders, the percentage increases represented by \$25 a week are, in some cases, quite considerable.

I want to correct a report which was read out by the Caribbean Broadcasting Corporation T.V. programme where I was supposed to have said that on the 1st April, 1982 a maid was getting \$44 a week. It was up to the 1st April, 1976 that a maid was getting \$44 a week, and she now gets \$155.

I would really ask the reporters who attend the House to pay more careful attention to that kind of detail. Fortunately, the public expects misreporting, and, therefore, I do not think that the public, especially maids who know what they were getting at the beginning of this year, would necessarily believe that it was my error. But it is unfortunate when the principal news item on the CBC contains such errors.

This is the first Civil Establishment Order relating to the employees since their regrading. I did address the House on the question of the regrading and therefore I will not recite it at any length now, but the purpose of the regrading was to remove the bottom categories, especially those categories which were still principally occupied by women, so as to remove the last discrimination by pay in the Public Service. The 10 categories now before the House have been devised without any reference whatsoever to the gender of the employee.

We also found, and are still finding, Sir, that at the Ministry of Transport and Works there is some difficulty recognising ability in particular casual employees because of the limited nature of the gradings. We have given this matter a great deal of thought, but I would want those who are placed in such categories as artisans to know that we are still giving it thought.

The expression "Supervisor," which has come to be abused in an effort to improve working conditions for some, in some cases if a man has been a good clerical officer, although not officially a clerical officer, he is only casually employed, he will find himself having to be appointed a supervisor in order to get a little more money, although he was doing no supervision whatsoever.

We have tried to eliminate this from the list to be found in Schedule B of the Resolution, Mr. Speaker, so that you will see the title "Checker" (Supervisor B). The name "checker" more accurately reflects the work being carried out by some of these officers.

A number of trades have been removed from the classification, those trades at the Port which are dealt

with now as a result of the closing of the Port Department and the transfer of its employees to the Port Authority. 3.55 p.m.

There is still, Mr. Speaker, an anomaly relating to Category 1. Many, many years ago, the electricians at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital were able to get themselves specially categorized and remained the highest paid casual employees of Government. Neither their qualifications, nor their responsibilities, would seem to me to place them above "section leaders", "heavy equipment operators", and, indeed, above the "Head Butler" at Government House whom, although his work is not in the area of heavy outdoor manual labour, here is a person of great responsibility with a budget to handle, knowledge to demonstrate, and a very considerable responsibility for social activities and the control of the substantial staff.

So although at the moment, Mr. Speaker, the Government is not contemplating entering into negotiations, or putting forward proposals for these categories, mostly to the Barbados Workers Union, we are constantly looking at the categories and constantly trying to find ways and means of rewarding responsibility so that people who supervise others, who have to meet the general public, who have to maintain the fair face of the public service of Barbados, can be better rewarded.

I fully accept the argument which the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers Union has often put forward to the effect that a public servant and the established staff on a scale is in a different position from a lorry driver who is appointed at a salary, and who has to be a lorry driver for the rest of his life, and rely on a salary increase, not when he does well at work, but only when there is a salary revision.

We are trying to deal with these matters, Mr. Speaker, and certainly I will hope by the next salary revision, in 1984, we will be able to report progress in this regard to the House once again.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT (PART-TIME OFFICERS) ORDER, 1982.

Order No. 13 was called – To move the passing of the Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment (Part-Time Officers) Order, 1982.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this Resolution deals with part-time officers in Govern-

ment who all are either medical officers or chaplains. There are not a great number of these officers, Mr. Speaker, their names and titles will be found in the Schedule to the Resolution. The same principles which were canvassed on Tuesday earlier in the session, and this morning in my absence, Sir, apply to this Resolution. But there is very little to say on the specifics of it, and if there are honourable Members who have not had an opportunity to deal with the principles, I would be happy to abbreviate my speech and give them such an opportunity.

I therefore beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, in seconding this Resolution, I think I may have to say something which relates to the Resolution, and to make some comments overall, Sir, about the whole position which we have heard so much about here in connection with the legislating of salaries.

Sir, I have no doubt that an Opposition party must find something to say, whether it is something constructive or otherwise, and for the purpose of keeping debate in the august Chamber alive. I think, Mr. Speaker, you would bear me out, Sir, that you have held up this House with constructive debate over the years, and I believe you have the record outside Budgetary Proposals, of making one of the longest speeches in those days between 1966 and those very terrible years which we had to endure here when we came before Parliament.

We have been accused Mr. Speaker, of being a wicked Government by the Members for St. Michael South and St. Michael West, we have been accused as a Government that is anti-worker, we have been accused as a Government that is heartless and has no respect for collective bargaining, we have heard on the floor of the House on more than one occasion, Sir, where \$43 million of revenue means nothing to a Government and its people, we have heard, Mr. Speaker, repeatedly over the past days that \$25 million is not enough for the Government to pay out to its public officers – but we have not heard, Sir, how best it would have been handled by members of the other side.

I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, and you with some sixteen years of public and parliamentary life behind you, would know that it is the duty of any political party in office to do whatever there is in their power to avoid courting unpopularity.

I have no doubt, also, Sir, that this Government has an impeccable record where the workers of this country are concerned, and where the workers, Mr. Speaker, can safely be assured of having their fortunes entrusted in the hands of this party, because it is out of this party that the Barbados Workers Union and the whole concept of unionism was born in this country. 4.05 p.m.

Today the very General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, for whom I have the greatest respect – and I am not a member of his fan club – but I would say when it comes to actual negotiating I have the greatest respect for the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, and equally no respect for the General Secretary of the NUPW.

Now, that is where I believe we may have a little thing. I have all the respect for the General Secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union, and I am not a member of his fan club, and I have no respect for the General Secretary of the NUPW. He reminds me of the Member for St. Philip South. Both of them are from St. Philip, same characteristics, rum shop politics, every single debate, every single discussion that you hear coming out of the mouth of the NUPW worker is under a street lamp. Corned beef politics, no respect for the country, nothing at all, Sir.

Now, I listened to some of the speeches. Earlier today the House was held up, as well as last Tuesday, for two hours by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I regret that this Resolution could not come in a consolidated form. We were told to go back. I regret that all the Resolutions dealing with this matter could not have been consolidated into one Resolution, since they are taking money out of the Consolidated Fund.

I heard that they had 25 meetings, that we had nine meetings, and we should go back and talk again, but they did not say talk what, and discuss what. This is what we cannot understand. When in 1981 this very Government shed out \$50 million to the Public Officers, there was no cry.

Today you hear the absurd argument that the workers in the country today are worse off than they were in 1976 and in 1981. It came out of the mouth of the Member for St. Philip South, he said he was positive because he spoke from an area where he knows that in the Welfare Department a public worker is now getting less because of all the levies and the increase in National Insurance, all of these things Don't get up.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The honourable Member for St. James North is misquoting me. At no time.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Elucidation.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Elucidation, Sir. On a point of elucidation.

Mr. SPEAKER: Now, you cannot rise on a point of order to seek to elucidate. That is what you have to call a fraudulent exercise, so you will have to take your seat.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The Member for St. Philip South made reference during the debate to how difficult it was for the workers of this country to make ends meet, that we had eroded the standard of living in this country, they could not make ends meet.

I know there is one source of income – and I will have to remind you on the Floor of this House, I have to keep you quiet – there is one source of income that the Government is very thankful for, revenue. You have to pay more taxes as an individual and more levies, the Member for St. Philip South. You have to pay transport levy, National Insurance, Income Tax, and you have to face Mr. Cox from Boarded Hall every Monday morning. You have to face up to seven levies. I beg your pardon, Sir, at District "C" every single Monday you have to face up to seven levies. Those are the levies that are worrying the honourable Member, that is the erosion, it is a direct erosion into his pockets.

We heard, Mr. Speaker, that the country would have been able to pay additional money to the civil servants and to all of its public officers if the Minister of Finance did not mismanage the economy of the country.

What was the mismanagement, Sir? He made it possible for old age pensioners to get more money, he made it possible for the people who worked on the plantations all their years to be able to buy the spots of land which they now occupy by right and by law, he made it possible to have over 1200 houses built in one year overall. He made it possible for the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company and the National Housing Corporation to lend up to 90 per cent of the mortgage for the purpose of individuals to build their own homes, he made it possible – this is the erosion of the society, the bad management – for a maid who was just getting \$116 a week in 1976 – this is what we have done to the workers in this country – that a maid in the Government at the very lowest level in 1976 was getting \$42 a week – and the Member for St. Michael West was then the Minister of Trade and he had all of the price controls, he was controlling all the foods in the country, sweet potatoes at that time for the very maid were controlled at 80 cents a pound, and she was getting \$42 a week – now, Sir, this 1982, she is now getting \$508 a month and she is now in a better position to buy a better balanced diet, because, as I understand it, the price of certain vegetables have fallen rapidly in this country.

4.15 p.m.

The price of chicken and beef, I am told, has fallen between 1976 and 1982, and yet on that side we are hearing about the erosion of public officers and the workers' pockets in this country. All that we have done is bent over backwards.

We have heard repeatedly of the world recession. They have admitted, for the first time on the Floor of the House, that there is a world-wide recession, and any recession in the world must affect Barbados. If Jamaica, Trinidad, St. Vincent, Guyana, Antigua, St. Kitts and Nevis cannot buy the goods that we manufacture here, because there is no money available because they are going through a recession too, can we manufacture goods and sell to people who are unable to pay for them? You must therefore lay-off the workers in the manufacturing industries.

If there is a recession in the United States of America, in Britain and in Germany where we get most of our tourist arrivals, where people are unable to on holiday to support a very fragile industry, there must be recession in the tourist industry. This is simple common-sense, yet you are hearing repeatedly coming from the other side, every single time they open their mouths, that it is bad management that is responsible for the recession in Barbados.

I think I would therefore agree with them, that, if there is world-wide recession, you cannot only have bad management in Barbados that is responsible for our economic problems, it would have to be bad management throughout the entire world by all the Ministers of Finance of all the Governments in Latin America, Europe and North America; and they seem to think that Barbadians are so illiterate that they do not read the papers or listen to the news.

Only last Tuesday I laid on the Table of this House statements from the Postmaster General, and if you were to see the receipts of the monies coming in from Britain, Canada and the United States of America as compared with what used to come in, it is a classic example of the problems which those countries who are our trading partners are facing.

I believe that we have gone very, very far in meeting the various unions, Mr. Speaker, and, strange enough, the unions themselves say they are satisfied for the time being and are going to accept the \$25 across the board or \$108 per month - for the time being. They are satisfied, but you have the Opposition party telling you that the unions are not satisfied when the unions themselves say they are going to accept that, but in the meantime asks, "what can you offer in the next year".

And the solemn promise was made by the Prime Minister in writing, not on the air, but in correspondence to them, that if things look good, you will not even have to come to me, I will come to you, because we believe on this side, this party believes, that we all must share in the fruits of our labour.

When things are good, we assist all, we raise the pensions, we upgrade the police and teachers, build better barracks for the police, remove that barrier where there were privates, lance corporals and corporals, and now you can go from private to sergeant by giving you an incentive. All this we have done, an impeccable record. Now the entire world is faced with these economic problems. The experts have just met, and they have been meeting and will continue to meet, and yet they have not come up with one single answer to the question, "How we are all going to handle it".

We here in Barbados must await the leading countries in the world for the spill off; but our supermarkets, in spite of all this, you go in this evening, are still full of food.

In Guyana, it is a story which I hate to repeat, a tin of Ovaltine, if you can get it, costs \$60 Guyanese, and a sandwich loaf, if you can get the flour when it is sold blackmarket, costs \$7. I think the honourable Member for St. Philip North would know where I would get my information from, because he knows of my connections, and he can check out that very source. Toilet paper is unheard of, and toothpaste.

But we, inspite of very bad times, and because of good management, are still in a position to pay our overseas creditors and be able to bring in food and drugs into the country, the three most important things at this point in time in days of recession.

You may have your approach as to how to handle it, but while we have the reins of Government, I believe that we are going to do the best in the interest of the entire country, and I am quite sure, Mr. Speaker, that there is no way that the Minister of Finance and my colleagues on this side of the House would like to see this country come to total chaos and collapse. We do not want the problems you have in Jamaica.

There is something strange about it, Mr. Speaker. It is always convenient for members of the Opposition to say what happens in big countries when they are dealing, say, with the transport system and dealing with pensions, for example. But when the Deputy Prime Minister was addressing the Chamber today, I heard the honourable member for St. Michael West say, "Yes, but they have Social Security benefits". When he spoke about some 3 million in Great Britain laid off and some 9 million in the United States of America, do you know what I am told by the honourable Member for St. Michael West? That they have Social Security benefits.

It is good to use big countries, but he is not going to use the big countries' problems that affect us now. The reason why Canada, the United States of America and

Britain can lay off people is because they have Social Security benefits. You compare Barbados all the time with the big countries.

I cannot compare Barbados with the big countries, because in the eyes of the world, monetary agencies Barbados is called a city. We are recognised as a city with a population of under 300,000. That is how we are seen in the eyes of the international lending institutions, as a city, but when you have to open your mouth on the other side, you hear about bridges in the United States and why you should do so is because it happens in the United States.

I do not want those comparisons. I want comparisons within the context of the Eastern Caribbean. That is how I want them. Compare us with Trinidad with their petro-dollars, with no roads and no telephones and no transportation, and no kind of good hospitals.

Compare us with Trinidad, not with Canada and the United States of America. Compare us with Jamaica, compare us with St. Vincent, St. Lucia and Dominica. That is where you are to compare us with, and then you will see that we stand proud as a people and as a Government, with an impeccable record of good management.

Forty thousand private telephones, I am told, are in the houses in this country. I am not dealing with places like at the Crane where you have extensions; I am talking about 40,000 private telephones in a country of 250 000 people and a work force of 110 000 to 115 000 people. You have the best buses in the Caribbean.
4.25 p.m.

Of course, my colleague and I were in Columbia together and I am glad. You see, Sir, as long as I hold the post as Leader of the House and I have the job as Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, you can rest assured that I am going to try my best to take one of the Members on the other side, I am going to fight for them to go, because I know that they know that when they are travelling with me you see them with the cameras taking pictures, and they say to me, "Cragie, I did not know it was so bad."

But then they come back here, a different ball game. We have the worst houses for them when they are here. The worst buses when they are in here. The worst telephones, when they are in here. But I would challenge anybody at all on the Floor of the House to try and get through to Trinidad, try to make an overseas call to Trinidad now, and I am going to try and make one to England, New Zealand, Australia, as far as Japan, and I will get through to all of those countries before you get through to Trinidad, which is just a couple of miles away.

You talk about your health services here. You cannot go into the United States of America and get an

accident or get sick unless you put the money up front. You come feeling sick, you register and pay the money. While here in Barbados you only have to get drunk, go and take a drink out there, Mr. Speaker, and get drunk, go and drink some bad cockspur and vomit and be rolled into the Hospital and get attention. All of this, Sir, we enjoy in a country where the workers are responsible for our success.

I am not going to deny you the right on that side of making a worthwhile contribution. I am not that dishonest. During your years of office, you have made some worthwhile decisions, decisions that I am justly proud of; and there are decisions also that I will always be critical of.

The Prime Minister of Barbados and the Minister of Finance does not sit down, Mr. Speaker, and work out — not my Minister of Finance — he does not sit down and work out how much money in revenue you are going to receive, he does not sit down and work out how many civil servants there are, and break it down into how much food and then come to a decision alone — unless he is Jesus Christ, and I know he is not. He has advisers who start from the bottom and they come up, and come up until they get to the P.S. level, then a meeting is called and they all sit around the table and decide what is best for the country. Civil Servants sit around the table and it is this very NUPW that represents the civil servants that is now telling the very civil servants who advise the Minister of Finance that they are wrong.

The civil servants told the Minister of Finance, 'We can only afford \$25 million'. That is what they told the Minister of Finance, 'We can only afford \$25 million, looking at the figures and the projections in the months to come.' The NUPW that represents them, the very civil servants, is telling their civil servants that they are wrong 'No, I know how much money you can afford', as if they have the facts. That is why I say that the leadership of the NUPW is irresponsible leadership; not the union, its leadership.

You see, they have some people, Sir, that from the time they hear that Sir Gary Sobers can bat well, and they only hold a bat, they automatically feel that they are supposed to be a Gary Sobers. Some people see Frank Walcott, highly respected throughout the entire world wherever there are trade unions as a highly respected person in the field of trade unionism in the world, and believe that one morning you can be born and come overnight and say you are the secretary of an organisation, and believe that you can equal the stature of Frank Walcott. Frank Walcott's are not born every night, Sir. They are not made, they are born.

As I said, I am no member of his fan club — I fought him in four elections, and if he comes out again he

will get licks enough from me again – but when it comes on to matters of trade unionism, I believe he has the country's welfare at heart, and that is why they must have been rude. Frank Walcott must have thought the NUPW rude to invite

You see how ignorant Goddard is? Imagine Goddard inviting Frank Walcott to a meeting. But he does not know Frank Walcott. You cannot invite Frank Walcott to a meeting. A Prime Minister can invite Frank Walcott to a meeting. A Prime Minister can say, I will like to meet with you but Goddard cannot tell Frank Walcott to meet, they are no company.

How Walcott and Goddard can sit down unless it is Clyde Walcott and John Goddard? And both of them have finished playing cricket. That is where Goddard does not understand what he is talking about.

He has had more marches and call-outs and strikes since he became Secretary of the NUPW than, I believe, the powerful Barbados Workers' Union had in the six years that we were in Government. In the six years that we were in Government, the NUPW had more walk-outs – he had the Family Planning one time some girls may have decided they were not going on the pill, you know he had a strike. He had them at the Hospital, the Transport Board, the Welfare Department, one day, Sir, in Cabinet.

You talk about a free country. One day at Cabinet, a Thursday, my colleague, the Minister of Transport and Works, was amazed downstairs seeing about 20 or 30 – I think the Member for St. Philip South had interest in that, because he would have known in advance, he would have had family in the strike, it was a big thing for him – up and down through Government Headquarters during their lunch hour, a strike. That is why, when you talk about the BWU and the NUPW, it is regrettable.

It may be good in some cases where you have two unions – one union will not be able to monopolise the whole country of workers, have full control of them – it may be good to have three or four for that matter, the more you have the more competitive it will be – but I must confess that the NUPW, its leadership

And what do they think about it? They believe that politics is part of their leadership. You look at them. Politics is part of their leadership. You only have to be coming through the Court Yard and hear about the NUPW and the Government – not the Government, it is the NUPW – and you can safely walk by and you hear the same school meals workers, the old ones – you can always tell the school meals workers that came in in 1961 and 1966, Sir, heavy; they are really "sizey" – they are the one that will meet you at the gate as you come in and say, "Go along Craig, we got you" The NUPW.

You only have to say the pots and pans did not get clean and there is a shortage of soap and there is a strike at the School Meals. And the first set to come out, very clean, spic and span, but they do not weigh less than 200 pounds. (*Asides*) No they do not follow the procedure of collective bargaining at all. They do not follow that. The NUPW do not know that.

Finally I would like to say, Sir, all that was quoted on the other side, that was said by the Prime Minister when he was on that side, that they should have gone back to the bargaining table, you know why? It was a new formula. It was the first time in the history of this country that wages were ever being legislated in this country. It was legislated by your party. It is you who did it, and not us. We said that you should follow the practices as laid down

Mr. SPEAKER: And now the Minister has no more time.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Yes, Sir, and finally, Mr. Speaker

Mr. SPEAKER: You have already had that finally.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I support this Resolution and I salute the Government for the courage it has in facing up to the unions, and I also salute the unions for having that responsibility to the country as a whole.

4.35 p.m.

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

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak on this Resolution in the first place. But taking into account how the debate has turned, I have decided that I will have to join in the debate. The honourable Prime Minister, when he put forward the Resolution, said that he was allowing any Minister or any person who did not speak on the General Establishment Order to have a speech on this Resolution.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister has no such right in here.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: But he said it. (*Laughter*) Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the last speaker, and I listened very attentively, and I believe, coming to the end of his speech, he made some very good points of which I agree surprisingly.

But in the first part of his speech, Mr. Speaker, I did not think that he really addressed himself to the problems and to what we were saying from this side. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that from this side what we were saying was not that the Government can pay more or that it can pay less, no one over this side was saying this. What we were saying over here and are still saying over here.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of elucidation, Sir. The Member for St. Michael South said earlier in the debate that the Government's bad management is responsible for not paying the civil servants more money.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I will get around to that. What I said is that we never said it can pay more or less, that is just what I just said, but I have not got around to the bad management yet.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, a debate such as this, and I am repeating it, should not be based on the point about how we got to this position, but because of speeches made, we have to look at why we are in this position. Mr. Speaker, I am going to mention a few points now as to why we have gotten into this position.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to quote again from the Economic Memorandum of Barbados to prove that this present Administration has to take a lot of the blame for the situation we have found ourselves in now. I am reading from page 6 of that Economic Memorandum on Barbados. (*Asides*)

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that the same?

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: No, no, it is not the same quotation I made this morning; it is the same booklet. Mr. Speaker, it says here, and I am speaking now about why our public sector deficit is as it is, and I quote this.

Certain remarks made by Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN, a quotation from a document, were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. SPEAKER at this stage.
4.45 p.m.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: The point I was making, Mr. Speaker is that as far as the public sector deficit is concerned, the present Administration has to take the blame.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please, I would advise the honourable Member. You are now referring to the same difficulty in which you found yourself. You cannot support it, you just quoted from it, you cannot put it in evidence that the Chair can verify that you were indeed quoting from a document.

Mr. B. M. TAITT rose.

Mr. SPEAKER: You will not be heard.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: That is your privilege, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: You will not be heard in this matter.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As Your Honour wishes. I rose on a point of order, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I am only hearing the honourable Member for St. Philip South.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, the point that I am making is that the rise in prices in Barbados are mainly caused by domestic factors.

And what I am saying now, Mr. Speaker, is that the honourable Member for St. James North in his contribution mentioned a Cox and a Boarded Hall. Mr. Speaker, if this Cox and Boarded Hall is the Magistrate at Boarded Hall court, I would like to say that I have never been to court, I have never been summoned to court, I do not even go near to any court, but the honourable Member who spoke knows a lot about the petty debt courts. That is all I want to say.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: That is John 3: 16, but not for children, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two honourable Members are on their feet. On what did the Honourable Minister rise?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am sorry, Sir. I must apologise to Your Honour.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Minister must take his seat.

Mr. H. A. BLACKMAN: Mr. Speaker, I will continue. Throughout today we have been trying to point out that whereas the other side keeps saying that there is recession here, and there is recession there, and recession all over the place, which we all over here know is true, we are saying that a lot of the blame for the recession in Barbados has to be laid at the feet of the administration. That is what we are saying, and no person has got up and contradicted any of the points we have made to prove that is not so.

This is what I believe a debate is all about. If you had got up and said such and such a thing, I believe the other person should get up and disprove it, say that what was said is not true. They have never disputed what we have said, and this is the whole point, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, we have spent the day so far dealing with matters that have to do with salaries in the Public Service and I have sat here in amazement trying to discover how it is possible for the Opposition to be able to come into this House of Assembly and mount any debate on the manner or the

conduct of the Barbados Labour Party as it relates to the process of industrial relations.

For the benefit of those members of the Opposition who may not be consonant with the labour legislation in Barbados, or who, like the former Minister of Labour, might have forgotten what the true history of Barbados is with respect to labour, I would like to refresh their memories. The Barbados Labour Party, for the benefit of those persons who do not know, is the father, grandfather and great-grandfather of the industrial relations process in this country.

4.55 p.m.

The honourable Member for St. Philip South raised the question that people are saying that salaries are being legislated because the Barbados Labour Party wants to destroy the unions, or words to that effect. He further said that people are saying that there is no point belonging to the trade unions because the Government is in the process of legislating salaries.

Before I answer that, I would like to point out the legacy that this party has left to all those people who in Barbados can be characterised as workers or "the working class", and by the "working class" I have an extended definition of that term; I mean everybody who works.

On September 1, 1943, Cap. 23 of the Laws of Barbados was enacted. That, Sir, was the Department of Labour Act, which established the Labour Department, which is the institution which is responsible in the main for overseeing the conduct of the industrial relations process; it is mainly responsible for mediation services in Barbados. It does not mediate with respect to public service salaries, but it is mainly responsible for looking after the mediation with respect to the private sector, but it looks after the general welfare of the workers regardless of what category of worker they may be.

On October 28, 1945, Cap. 345 of the Laws of Barbados was enacted, and Cap. 345 established the Employment Exchange, which is responsible for the generation of employment, and which, not too long from now, will fulfil the full vision of the persons responsible for its establishment — and they have been the Labour Party — when I take a firm grip of that institution and transform it into a modern day institution responsible for the general overseeing of the total concept of the generation of work in this country.

On November 12, 1951, Cap. 351 of the Laws of Barbados was enacted, that is The Protection of Wages Act. On January 11, 1952, Cap. 348, "Holidays with Pay". Notice that I am reading out for you the legislation that had been put on the books by the Barbados Labour Party that I hear people coming in here today and saying

is seeking to destroy trade unions and militating against the general welfare of workers.

On April, 30, 1952, the Labour Clause and Contracts Act, Cap. 349 of the Laws of Barbados. You are not aware of it, and I am reading it for you, because you need to know. On September 1, 1959, Cap. 347, the Factories Act, that looks after the general welfare of workers in the work place. On June 1, 1961, Cap. 344, Domestic Employees Act, which looks after the welfare of the domestic workers in this island, and that Act was recently updated to further advance the cause of domestics in this country, and that happened under my jurisdiction.

On June 9, 1961, Cap. 343, Displaced Workers Act. Cap. 346 on March 24, 1977, Employment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act. Cap. 345, July 19, 1976, Employment of Women, dealing with maternity leave, all under the aegis of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: This is not a point of order, but that is not true.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: On October 14, 1955, Cap. 362, Wages Council Act.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, the honourable Member is misleading the House. The Maternity Leave Act was enacted when I was the Minister of Labour in 1976. The Minister cannot claim that.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The point is taken, Sir. What I was trying to do was to put their record of labour legislation against ours. On July 19, 1976, they enacted that piece and the most horrendous piece of legislation that has ever been put on the Statute Books — judges can't interpret it, lawyers can't interpret it — the Severance Payments Act, but I am going to bring it to its senses not too long from now when it is amended on the Floor of this House of Assembly. The Wages Council was in 1955, Cap. 362. The Wages Council looks after those workers who are in the situation where they are not able to be represented by unions.

Now, Sir, I have recited those in order to let those members over there know what the record of the Barbados Labour Party has been with respect to Labour legislation in this country, and I will challenge them to look at their legislation in the fifteen years that they were in power and tell me what it is that they did for workers during the time that they were in this House. They had fifteen long years, and it had to be the Barbados Labour Party which would go out of power and come back in to begin the whole process of updating labour legislation in Barbados.

Now, Sir, add to all that that so concerned are we with the general condition of workers in this country that we do not just walk around and look at a condition of unemployment. We have established an apprenticeship programme to make sure that youngsters who are not eligible for work can find gainful employment. How then can they be heard to say that we are anti-worker, or how can they lend their voice to an argument in here that says that we have not been concerned with unions, and are not looking out for unions, when it was the Barbados Labour Party that gave birth to the Barbados Workers' Union? (*Asides*) It is old, but people like you, whose head happens to be hard, must hear it over and over again. It must be repeated over and over again that it was the Barbados Labour Party that institutionalised the concept of workers representation in this Island.

I do not have to go along to recite the long litany of woes that those persons in our country who happen to be on the lower rungs of our society had to endure, the conditions that the field workers and domestics and all those had to endure. I do not have to go through that. We have brought dignity to the industrial relations process.

Now, Sir, this concept of trade unionism. It must be understood that the process of industrial relations, and the concept of wages negotiations have to be conducted in an atmosphere that takes into consideration all the variables that impinge upon that process. In a time where a recessionary situation exists, every sensible trade union leader recognises his obligation to negotiate for his workers, not so much for increments in wages, but he tries to augment their position with respect to non-monetary benefits.

Let me give you an example, Sir. The United Auto Workers Union in the United States, recognising that the auto companies were in desperate financial trouble, did not seek to put their workers out of work by trying to negotiate for higher wages. They were responsible in their negotiations and they negotiated a contract that called for a reduction in wages in those circumstances, so that they would be looking after the retention of jobs as opposed to trying to wring water out of stone, or wring blood out of stone.
5.05 p.m.

In Barbados, we have trade unions who ought to be fully aware of the economic situation, not only in this country, but in the world. Pan American World Airways last week laid off 7 000 workers. British Airways, 17 000 around the world. And here in Barbados we have a situation where the Public Service Unions do not seem to be able to appreciate that they have a responsible role to play, and that it is not just sufficient to sit down and try to bully a Government into a position that will guarantee the ruin of us all.

You are talking about retrenchment? If the Government was so mad as to try to accede to their demands, half of the Public Service would probably have to go home. And the Union leaders go along in a blissful state of oblivion, they do not seem to be concerned about these very hard and practical facts; so if it is not capable for them to generate within their own brains the reality of the situation with which we find ourselves, the Government then has to assume a position of responsibility and maturity.

That is where the distinction of the Barbados Workers' Union and the National Union of Public Workers can be starkly drawn. In one case we have a leader who recognises his responsibility not only to his workers, but he understands the true negotiating maturity of a union leader and he tries to make reasonable concessions. But the other people, they sit down and blandly tell you that they are not moving from that position, come hell or high water, mount strikes during the process of their negotiations, and want to convince somebody that they have been negotiating in good faith.

You also must realise that those Members over there said that they had 25 meetings with the unions in 1976 before they finally came to the position of legislating salaries.

I am glad that they recognised that it was they who had, in 1976, to introduce the concept of legislating public sector salaries — because of the intransigence of the NUPW.

Twenty five times they met, wasting the Chief Establishments Officer's time, wasting the Prime Minister's time, and still after all of that they refused to come to any agreement; and the Minister of Finance, at the time, the honourable Member for St. John, introduced the concept of legislating salaries.

Ever since then, as if to seek to build a case that the Government, not only this Government but that one, too, when it was in power, is seeking to destroy unions, it has maintained a position of uncompromising intransigence. Ever since that time.

Now, Sir, we met with them a total of nine times. We came to the point faster. I do not see the point of meeting with the people just for the sake of meeting. Unless a union recognises that the collective bargaining process is an interchange and exchange of ideas, it is a give and take situation, it will never be able to get any negotiations settled.

When you walk in to people and try to blackmail them into positions by taking up an uncompromising position, you will only guarantee that no agreement is

going to be reached. It does not take you fifty times of meeting to recognise a position of intransigence.

I am one of these people who has always maintained, Sir, that I have a deep fundamental abiding respect for the people of Barbados because I believe they have more sense than we give them credit for.

The leaders, without reference to the workers, take up positions of non-compromise, and I am satisfied in my mind, having gone the length and breadth of this country, that the workers themselves — and I am referring to the Members of the NUPW — recognise that it is in their best interest in these present circumstances to accept the offer which the Government has made. The only persons who take the position of ignorance and folly in this situation are those persons who claim to be the leaders of these unions.

Why, Sir, do not the union recognise that they can bargain on points other than on high wages in every case. Perhaps in a society like Barbados where we have such a vibrant Social Services programme, the need for negotiating non-monetary benefits is not as acute, but I would like to think, Sir, that it would be possible for unions to start talking to the employers about extending benefit programmes for their workers — health service packages, leave arrangements etc.

Mr. Speaker, my mother gets a pension from the union to which she belonged in the United States, and that pension is big enough so that if I found myself in a tight corner I could go to the old lady and get a little something to hold me over until the next time. From the trade union, Sir, not from the Government — and she gets Social Security too, so you know I can get a berry off of her. She gets Social Security and then she gets pension, and she also gets the pension that my father died and left.

The point I am making is that she got those benefits out of the union. The union negotiated with her employer for those benefits, the retirement benefit. She wears glasses, Sir, she got those glasses from the union. She wears dentures, she got them from the union — all part and parcel from a contract that the union negotiated with her employer.

Now, Sir, these packages, these little benefits, have advantages for the employer because they do not call for immediate outlays of money. The honourable Member on my left, the honourable Member for St. Michael East, is giving me the correct nomenclature; it is soft ware of union contracts. But you do not hear these union leaders talking about soft ware benefits. They are always talking about 50 per cent increases, a 75 per cent increase, all kind of ridiculous increases, when in Canada and the

United Kingdom and in the United States wage agreements of 5, 6, 7 and 8 per cent are regarded as excellent benefits for workers. You do not hear any double digit stuff like 23 and 35 per cent increases.

And let me tell you this, Sir, and I am saying it as Minister responsible for Labour. Barbados has to come to the point where all of this 25 per cent increase in wages has to stop at some point in time otherwise it is going to guarantee the destruction of this society in which we live.

Unions have to realise that no more can we talk about the days gone by when people used to work for two shillings. Domestic servants in Barbados — the Public Service maids, are now earning \$508 a month. Mr. Speaker, it is not a big sum when you really think about it, but let us face it, a domestic does not have a real case to demand a wage higher than that. Because if you start paying the domestics \$1 200 a month what will you pay your teachers? We have to be realistic in this whole exercise.

5.15 p.m.

Salaries and wages must be classified according to the services that are being rendered and according to the skills that are provided in relation to those wages. That is why the Ministry of Labour has the Skills Training and the National Training Board, because we are trying to bring people from a position to a position where they can demand higher wages on the basis of merit. They must be able to offer a skill that will be worth a reasonable outlay.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have the Shop Wages Council. The Shop Wages Council falls in my portfolio and it has the responsibility of legislating, because the shop attendants in Barbados cannot easily belong to a union due to the difficulty in getting them to negotiate with a particular employer. They are too spread out, so it is difficult to have shop attendants belonging to a union and having a satisfactory arrangement conducted through the trade union process.

The Government, therefore, the Barbados Labour Party Government, in 1955 established a Shop's Wages Council which fixes wages. The Council meets for the purpose of fixing wages for shop attendants. It is a body established under the highest principles of tripartite arrangement between the employer, Government, and union representative.

The Barbados Workers' Union has a place on the Shop's Wages Council. The Employers Confederation of Barbados has a place on the Shop's Wages Council. The Minister responsible appoints three independent members to be members of that council. Their job is to meet

together and negotiate so that we can then come back and legislate a salary in the interest of shop attendants.

Within the next couple of weeks, hopefully not too long, because the Order is already on my table and being revised to go to Cabinet shortly, we will have a new Order issued in respect of shop attendants.

That, Sir, is only to reinforce the position that the Government is fundamentally and eternally committed to the concept of trade unionism in this country, and where trade unions cannot exist, the Government has a mechanism through which the workers' rights can be guaranteed.

We will continue to maintain that position, and we will continue to believe and support and encourage a "cross-the-board" negotiation process as long as the leaders of the trade unions recognize that they have a responsibility to behave in a mature, reasonable way, and in a condition of good-will and sincerity. You cannot come in there and make sport of the process and try to believe that because you have your position as a trade union leader in the country, and you believe in trade unions, that you can blackmail people.

The honourable member is pointing at the clock, telling me that I have to go home. I will go home when I am ready. But I want you to recognize that the Barbados Labour Party has always been committed, and will continue to be committed, to the process of industrial relations, and, as long as we are on this side, we will look after the workers' interest, because we are the ones, Sir, who broke the chains in which the workers of Barbados were fettered for generations. We broke those chains. We were the forgers who broke those chains — don't forget it. You did nothing but sit down for 15 years and I would like to remind him, Mr. Speaker, that in 1962 March, during the Estimates, the honourable Member for St. John, who was then the Minister responsible for Finance, got in here and said that we, when we were in Government, allowed the civil servants to inveigle us. You hear the words, Sir. I am using his words....

Mr. SPEAKER: And you hear the words, that the Minister has come to the end of his time.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Yes, Sir, and if he were the Minister of Finance they would not have had one red cent. He was talking, Sir, about civil servants' wages.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support this Resolution. *(Applause)*

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not believe that it is necessary to traverse ground that has been

covered by the last two speakers on this question of the final act I say final — the last of a series of Resolutions dealing with an issue that has been debated all day.

I am disappointed, Sir, that the honourable member who glories in the title of Minister responsible for Labour among others.... *(Aside)*....He says that he does not "glory" in it, that he is. But the fact that he has to reiterate that he is will help me to make the point I am making now.

I believe that the Minister responsible for Labour ought to be able to bring a level of maturity in the debate of this issue, such that persons who hear him can understand what Barbadians can look forward to, by way of their social developments, through the progressive policies of an enlightened Government. However, Sir, we were subject to a historic review of the labour legislation in the country, and that historic review was not even as accurate as one would have expected from a Minister of Labour steeped in his subject matter.

Most of the labour legislation that, as he says, broke the chains and broke the fetters, can properly be said to have been passed between 1937 and 1961. Mr. Speaker, if legislation is already passed, as the Deputy Prime Minister reiterated today, the most one can do is to discuss improvements along the way.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to enlightened policies, if one were going to brag about such policies, one would look at the development which occurred, not only in the country but in the individual, between the period of 1961 and 1976. For example, National Insurance, a form of Social Security, was introduced in this country during that period, and it is the duty of each succeeding Government to improve upon that Social Security legislation.

I think it is only fair and reasonable to point out to the honourable Member in particular that the improvements, which are being legislated by the present Government, were envisaged in the Act. And if he would go back and read the documents which brought into being Social Security in this country, he would see that it was always anticipated that after its introduction, there would be a gradual and general development until we had reached the point in this country where Social Security was a matter on which Barbadians can reflect in the same way that the honourable Member was able to discuss the benefits which his beloved mother now receives from her Social Security in the United States. 5.25 p.m.

I think that it is not really desirable in a debate of this kind to seek to introduce the — I do not want to call them red herrings — but to seek to introduce those aspects of our social development which would tend to suggest an adversary approach to these matters.

It is a fact that there was one Labour Party in Barbados at one time. If there was a Labour Party called the Barbados Labour Party and then there was the rest, the Conservatives and those who held power and who held the economic reins — they held all the power — it would have been strange if descendants of that Barbados Labour Party could not get up and say with some pride that something had been done.

For him, fledgling in his approach to these matters, to get up in this Honourable House and seek to inform persons, who, by their perspicacity, have demonstrated that they are fully conversant with the historical aspects of our economic and social development, is a testimony to his own ignorance of the total struggle between the 1930s and the present day. It does not behove any of us to glory in any development we have had so far. Rather, it is for us to regret that as we are in 1982, whether it is that party or this party, that we have not been able to move even further.

The people of this country are not concerned primarily with what happened in the past. As they come into the economic difficulties of a world situation that was entirely unknown until 1973, they seek to find out what kinds of solutions are going to be offered to the new approach to life which they are being daily forced to adopt. So if we are going to continue, each time there is a debate of this kind, to look backward, we are not serving our people properly, nor are we serving our people effectively.

It may very well be, Sir, as happens from time to time, that those who are only able to deal in certain areas will have to amuse themselves within the parameters of those small areas. The rest of us have a duty and a responsibility to press ahead. It is in that context, Mr. Speaker, that I regret that the debate took the turn which it took ever since the introduction of the speech by the honourable Member for St. James North.

I do not intend to add to that, what progress we have made so far pales into insignificance as we look at the pressures which those same downtrodden people have to suffer on a daily basis today.

It seems to me that this attempt on the part of the Government to deal with the part-time officers falls into the same category as other attempts spoken by the Prime Minister earlier. And I wish to take special note of the fact that the Prime Minister himself has acknowledged that there is a certain category of worker in this country which seems to suffer the slings and arrows, and which seems to be at the brunt of the economic difficulties, no matter what system is used for the improvement of wages and salaries.

Mr. Speaker, I prefer, when I am attacking the Barbados Labour Party as a political party, to do so on the hustings. I prefer to do so out where the people have an opportunity to judge, assess, and finally make a decision. I am not going to engage in this amorphous rhetoric which can only serve to clutter up the records of Parliament with more words, saying the same thing over and over again, while the people continue to be in the muck and the mire, struggling day after day without any hope, without any promise, except the same rhetoric.

The honourable Member spoke about maids getting \$130 a week or \$116 a week. It is not the numerical amount that she gets, it is the quality or the qualitative aspects of what she is able to do, in terms of her quality of life, with the amount that she receives. If a woman in a household in 1982 is still getting \$116, but her husband is being laid off, her first son cannot find employment, her second daughter cannot find employment, then she and her family are in a worse condition than if everybody was working and getting a small amount of money, because the total family would have a higher quality of life.

We in this community must be concerned not so much with the quantitative aspects of so called salaries and wages, we must be concerned with the quality of life which the people in our community can lead arising out of decisions such as those we are called upon to make today.

Is the honourable Member, who, unfortunately, for reasons which do not concern this debate must leave, is the honourable Member who just spoke really satisfied that when he reads out something about certain labour legislation we passed that the women who are working in some of the industrial parks in this country are interested in the list of legislation which he has called out, when there are persons in this community, under both Administrations, who can continue to subject those women to conditions which were outlawed in some countries ten or fifteen years ago? Is he satisfied that he is the Minister of Labour and his voice is not heard at all as employers in some of the private sectors, and indeed some of the Government Departments, are able to take the economic situation under which we are reeling and use that economic situation to victimise individual workers? Is the honourable Member satisfied as Minister of Labour that he has done and is doing all that he can to improve the lot of those who have to toil on a daily basis in this community?

Mr. Speaker, it really makes no sense to continue the debate along those lines. I will merely say this. If the Government is satisfied that that kind of rhetoric is sufficient to justify the position it has taken, if they are satisfied that the absence of the National Union of Public Workers representatives in the Gallery, or some other persons who may feel that to come down here and demonstrate they could be victimised, if he is satisfied that their

absence is sufficient indication that the Government may proceed down its merry, mad way, then, Sir, he must rest in his own confusion.

But Mr. Speaker, there are persons in this community who are thinking persons, who, although they can recognise from time to time a golden streak still running from 1937 through the Barbados Labour Party by way of one or two who might utter the odd word here and there, have come to wonder if the Barbados Labour Party in 1982 is the Barbados Labour Party of 1940, 1950 and 1960. There are those who wonder if the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party is not taking its cue, not from its predecessors, but from those with whom its predecessors had to grapple as with the beasts at Ephesus.

5.35 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the honourable Minister of Labour must examine himself and his party to see if he is truly carrying on the mantle of which he so sagely brags today. He and his colleagues on the front bench must ask themselves if they are carrying on the great work which was laid down by the founders of the Barbados Labour Party. That great work was a vision seen for the ordinary people of Barbados, a vision which after forty years of Government by themselves and people who emerge from themselves, the vast majority of them are still out there struggling and battling as their foreparents had to struggle and battle.

We have passed legislation in this House, Sir, which still takes cognisance of the fact that there are women in this country who must work in the fields, bent over until they are 65 years, before they become eligible for what has been euphemistically described as a pension. We all of us know of persons who live in this community today whose conditions are worse than the conditions described in such documents as the *Pickwick Papers* and other documents written about the English conditions in the industrial revolution at its beginning.

It is not a well-meaning or well-chosen phrase for the Minister of Labour to advertise that he represents a political party that had the vision for social development and labour legislation as far back as the Forties. The Minister of Labour has nothing of which he can brag, but he has much of which, if he is a serious thinker, he may well be ashamed.

Mr. Speaker, it is not often that this kind of debate leads us to discuss some of these things, but I say that unless the political parties in this country, whether it is the Barbados Labour Party or my own political party, can begin to have visions of a Barbados in the 21st Century in which a number of issues which now form the basis for partisan and adversary proceedings have all disappeared, and we, too, can be like those in the United States who take for

granted Social Security payments, that we, too, can be like those in England, three million unemployed and yet they can eat food at a level where the diet can be described as balanced, as opposed to the people of this country who have to fill their stomachs continuously with nothing else but carbohydrates and water.

I believe that the honourable Member for St. James North understands a lot of what I am saying. He might not agree that it should come from this side. He prefers that statements such as this should come from him, because he is the, I cannot even say "self-appointed", he is the self-anointed champion of the old people.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour, the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, must examine, along with the honourable Member for St. James North, some of the conditions of the old people even in his own constituency, and then he will be in a position, after he has corrected some of the difficulties there, to come to this House of Assembly and seek to lecture this Honourable House on the passage of legislation.

The passage of a piece of legislation is nothing if its implementation is going to rest with the likes of the administration of the honourable Member, the Minister for Labour.

For almost all of the six years that that party has been running the affairs of this country, they have not been able to reconstitute a Labour Department that can take a forward looking position in the industrial relations of this country. For all too long, under both Administrations, the Labour Department has been nothing more than a post office, and sometimes even less than that.

If they want to talk about innovative approaches to social development, let us look at the role which ought to be played by institutions such as the Labour Department in a society like Barbados in the 1980s. Let us ask ourselves the question whether the institutions which have served us well up to the middle Sixties, and maybe up to the beginning of the Seventies, are appropriate and apposite for the Eighties, the Nineties and the 21st Century.

The Minister of Labour, instead of telling us what legislation was passed, ought to be telling us what we can look forward to. I make bold to say, Mr. Speaker, that he is not in a position so to do, because he is unable to grapple with the ramifications of the forward looking nature of such visions, such planning and such requirements.

This political party of which I have the honour, Mr. Speaker, to have been chosen by large numbers of people to head, does not lay claim to having within its bosom

all of the wisdom, nor does it lay claim to being able to produce all of the solutions to all the problems, but I would make bold to say that no one who is going to write the history of Barbados will write the history of Barbados and exclude the contribution made by the Democratic Labour Party.

From 1961 to 1976 the record is there for anyone who wishes honestly to examine it. (*Asides*) (You are the only honourable Member who would say that). The record is there, and anyone who wishes honestly to examine it will not fall prey to the false, and, sometimes, intellectual dishonest contentions of persons who quite unnecessarily feel bound to run down the Democratic Labour Party.

We are in an adversary situation, but not one of us in here has laid claim to blindness. There are some who are intellectually dead, but they are not blind. The record of the Democratic Labour Party is there for all who wish to see to gaze upon it.

I will go on to say, Mr. Speaker, as I come to the end of this very brief intervention, that when given the time again, we will bring the same commitment, the same dedication and the same vision to the running of the affairs of this country as we have brought in the past. Those of us who would pick up the mantle from those who went before us, will try to continue in the same spirit. It is our hope that those of them over there on whom the mantle has fallen will try to match up to the vision which was laid down to them in the years which they now regale us with as history.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East feels bound, as usual, to attack me in a *ad hominem* way from his seat. I will not fall prey to him on this occasion, and I will not respond to him, Sir, that is if Your Honour would have allowed me. I will not respond to him, because I know that in his heart, he, above all others over there, has had the opportunity to examine the political parties, and in his heart he knows that the Democratic Labour Party's contribution cannot be pushed away or gainsaid by pure rhetoric.

We will continue to criticise the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party because we believe that from time to time, indeed too often, the Barbados Labour Party leadership has not always been able to gaze at the people who make up the bulk of the population of this country.

5.45 p.m.

We believe that the policies of the Barbados Labour Party are not always informed by the sensitivity that is necessary in a society of this kind. We believe sometimes, Sir, that dogma and a certain propensity for mathematical

formulas play a greater role in informing the leadership of the Barbados Labour Party than the other more humane policies with which leadership is usually associated.

We believe, Sir, that each time we see a manifestation of this particular propensity, it is our duty not only to draw it to the attention of the leadership, not only to draw it to Your Honour's attention, but to draw it to the attention of the country at large.

We believe that when this is done, and when it is done honestly, and fairly, even unfairly sometimes, that we are serving our purpose in this community. We will not allow statements, such as those attempted by the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, to deter what we consider to be the noblest work, service to our community.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank all honourable Members for what they have said about the glories of the Barbados Labour Party and its contribution to the economy of the country and the running of the country.

I, myself, would not have much good to say about the running of the country between 1971 to 1976 when we really went through the most catastrophic ministry we have ever had, and in which every policy that was justifiable in terms of its humanity, like the price control policy, ended up by making people suffer the worse inflation they have ever had to suffer in the history of the Commonwealth.

If that is humanity, I prefer mathematics. Mathematics, even when, as I understand, the World Bank has said domestic factors cause inflation; mathematics still did not allow that inflation to reach even a third of what it reached in the days that humanity was right.

If there was inflation in Barbados in 1981, I am quite prepared to believe that improved wages for carpenters and masons put up the price for housing, which is what is the Housing Index, and that improved salaries for bus conductors put up bus fares, and that the increases in the price of oil put up the cost of transportation. I am quite prepared to believe all of that.

The fact is we must have a little balance and a little realism. Just as I said when I spoke on the first of these Resolutions earlier in the session, there are certain arguments that hold water and certain arguments that do not.

When the Opposition says in Barbados that we are fooling the whole world that Barbados is a well run

country, but that we are responsible for recession, the Opposition is like the stroke of the "Racing Eight" in the immortal novel by Verga "All rode fast but none so faster stroke" or like the woman who sees the marching cadets and says, "Everybody is out of step but little Johnnie". The little Johnnies over there who says that everybody is out of step but they are marching, not even in a platoon or a section; they are marching in a defaulter's parade where the Government and the people recognise the contribution which the Barbados Labour Party Government has made since 1976 to the theory of the management and government of small economies in the world. That is who we are marching against.

The world is in recession. The Trinidadians are losing \$250 million reserves in a few weeks, laying off ten times as many people in a week as we have laid off in all of the lay-offs in a couple of years, and Trinidad's work force is certainly not anything like ten times Barbados', nor is its unemployment any less.

Last night we could hear, even in oil-rich Trinidad, that Ministers have to warn the public that they will feel the recession too. In Barbados we are feeling it, and I am thankful that the unions and the general public are giving the Government the understanding that we need to carry the public with us through these difficult times.

I, myself, must tell you, Mr. Speaker, that I really look forward to being able to announce a salary settlement to the House such as we announced in 1980. I really look forward to that, but I really cannot have that pleasure at the present time. It is impossible for the Government to contemplate that kind of generosity when the entire world is going through this dreadful phase of getting over.

I thank all honourable Members who have contributed to the debate, and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, October 12, 1982 at 12 o'clock noon.

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

5.55 p.m.

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SANDIFORD, L. E. (St. Michael South).
St. JOHN, Hon. H. B. (Christ Church East Central).
TAITT, B. M. (St. Michael West).