

THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

FIRST SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, January 18, 1983

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

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. S. Craig, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs,
Leader of the House)

Hon. H. B. St. John, Q.C., LL.B., (Deputy Prime
Minister, Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry)

Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, LL.B., (Minister of Educa-
tion)

Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, (Minister of Health)

Mr. J. G. Odle, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees)

Mr. B. M. Taitt, B.A., (Hons.), M.A., (Hons.)

Hon. L. R. Tull, Q.C., B.A., M.A., (Attorney
General and Minister of Foreign Affairs)

Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw, (Minister of Housing and
Lands)

Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, B.Sc., (Econ.), M.Sc.,
(Govt.), Ph.D., (Minister of Agriculture)

Mr. P. M. Greaves

Mr. R. E. Brathwaite

Mr. A. Truss

Prayers were read by Archdeacon F. A. Cayless.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, January 11, 1983.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that the Minutes of the meeting of Tuesday, January 11, 1983, be taken as read.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there are no observations or objections to those Minutes, let the Minutes stand confirmed.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY HIS HONOUR

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am to announce that I have received the Accounts and Statement for the month of November, 1982 as prepared by the Accountant General.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Finance and Planning, I am commanded to lay the following:

The Customs Tariff (Amendment) (No. 6) Order, 1982.

The Road Traffic (Road Tax, Registration Fee and Permits) (Amendment) Order, 1983.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay the following:

The Annual Reports of the Parks and Beaches Commission for the years 1978–1979 and 1979–1980.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

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

Resolution approving the initiatives of the Government and supporting its economic and monetary strategy for dealing with the international economic recession.

Resolution to approve of the vesting in Collins Ltd. of land together with the building thereon situated at Philadelphia and Liverpool Lanes, Bridgetown.

Resolution to grant the sum of \$4,845,981 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1982-83, Part I - Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1982-83 - No. 16 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Resolution to grant the sum of \$1,723,771 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1982-83, Part II - Capital as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1982-83, No. 17 which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Bill to provide for the eradication of plant pests and diseases and related matters.

A Bill to amend the Immigration (Amendment) Bill, 1982.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, I wish to draw to Your Honour's attention that there must be a typographical error. The honourable Member has moved a Bill to amend the Immigration (Amendment) Bill, 1982. I am sure that should be the Immigration (Amendment) Act, 1982. I draw it to Your Honour's attention.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, a Bill to provide for the eradication of plant pests and diseases and related matters, was read a first time.

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG seconded by Hon. L. R. TULL, a Bill to amend the Immigration (Amendment) Act, 1982, was read a first time.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Government Business be the instant Order of the day, and that Order No. 5 be taken.

THE MEDICAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY ACT, 1983

Order No. 5 was called - To move the Second Reading of a Bill to reform the law relating to abortion.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Bill before the House in fact stands in the name of the honourable Minister of Health, and he wishes to do the Bill.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I approach the Second Reading of this Bill with a sense of my responsibility as a citizen of this country, and bearing in mind the health position of the country. From a decision taken at the Alma Ata Conference in 1978 in Russia, the principle was enunciated that there should be health for all people by the year 2000, and it, therefore, becomes the duty of all Governments to ensure that, in matters of health, all aspects should be taken into account.

In the introduction of this Bill, I am on safe grounds to assume that all sides of this House are sympathetic to the aspirations of the Bill.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN entered the Chamber and took his seat.
12.30 p.m.

It was on May 16, 1974 that the then Government made the decision to set up a Committee to look into the reform of abortion and matters connected with that. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not believe that, except for the form which the Bill would take, there will be any fundamental difference with respect to the concept of the Bill itself.

There is one thing which I want to say at the outset, that it is certainly not to be believed by anybody, no matter how naive, that illegal abortion is condoned. As a matter of fact, under the Offences Against the Person Act, any form of abortion, which has come about as a result of the taking of medicine or the use of instruments, certainly is a criminal offence, and this Bill seeks to rectify that situation.

But, on the basis of the statistics before me, it is clear that a number of abortions take place in Barbados, and we do not need to hide it under the carpet. There are people who, for religious reasons might feel they cannot support a Bill being put on the Statute Book to deal with the termination of pregnancy. But we need not be ostriches and bury our heads in the sand, and believe that abortions do not take place.

A brief look at the Chief Medical Officer's Report, or the Report of the Committee that investigated and looked into this matter, will reveal that a considerable amount of cases of illegal abortions - and that is the only way it can be described today under the law - takes place in this country.

Abortion ranks fourth in the occupancy of beds in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, and that information can be found in the Chief Medical Officer's Report of 1981. And when you have such an alarming situation, and when death invariably springs from a situation such as this, the time must come when we must invite people to come into the open and to take a very honest assessment of the

situation, and to do the things which they need not hide and cover up; because, invariably, unless they want to die, they have to go to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, or to see a good doctor who will give them remedial help after the damage has been done by the quacks.

We have no substantial figures but it is estimated that between 4 000 and 5 000 abortions take place in Barbados every year. I need not go into the full ramifications of all these matters, but I suppose, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that honourable Members are aware of a number of famous cases which took place in Barbados with respect to abortion. And it is common knowledge that it takes place, whether you choose to believe that it exists or it does not exist.

This Bill which seeks to put a system of regulation with respect to the reform of the law relating to abortion in a proper form, has probably come a bit late. Throughout the world enlightened societies have seen the need for putting on the Statute Book a number of laws which probably in earlier times would have been seen as outrageous. But with the moving of developments within the world, what would have seemed very radical even five years ago, seems to be quite normal today, and I want to suggest that the people in the society, who may be critical of such a law being put on the Statute Book, may as well face up to the realities of the times and recognize that abortion does exist.

To cite a few examples, abortion was on the Statute Book of Great Britain from around 1967 and, subsequent to that, a number of amendments have been made to the Act, which have made the laws there extremely liberal. One would be surprised to know that in a place as Italy, which is highly Catholic, and France which is also highly Catholic, very liberal laws exist for abortion. I say that at the outset, because there are a number of Catholic priests, and particularly one who seeks to excel himself in dealing with all matters which he considers to be in opposition of the Government — I want to suggest to that priest, and I will call his name as well, that if he wants to constitute himself as a person in opposition to the Government, it might be well for him to join openly and appear on platforms with the Opposition party. It would be better when matters are to be pronounced upon that we would hear people who are less political than himself discuss these matters. I refer to the Rev. Father Harcourt Blackett.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If I may draw it to the Minister's attention, we cannot comment or call the name of a person before you have given ample notice of that. I can understand the Minister's position because you have a certain latitude, but let us keep it on a straight line.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I am not speaking adversely in connection with the goodly gentleman.

I am merely concerned, and I will tell you that as soon as you enter into the political arena, you have to expect that your name will be called. I am not here concerned with the private life of the gentleman or anything like that. There are people who are famous for that and who can do that very well. I leave it for them to do — character assassination.

But I want to suggest very forcefully to this gentleman of the cloth that he examine himself and examine what is happening in countries that are predominantly Roman Catholic. I do not know if the Roman Catholic Church is a fundamentalist church — I think that is the case of certain Moslem countries, especially in Iran, with the Ayatollah — and I was amazed to discover that, even in countries like those, with all the puritanical outpourings we get, abortion exists in a number of them as well. But in those predominantly Catholic countries there is abortion legislation, and a socialist government, my understanding is, is seeking to shortly introduce a Bill to liberalize abortion in Spain. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are certainly not on a bad wicket in terms of this Bill, and we have absolutely nothing to be ashamed of.

12.40 p.m.

A brief look at the Bill and what it stands for would reveal very clearly what the Bill itself sets out to do. If we look at Clause 4 we would see:

"The treatment for the termination of a pregnancy of not more than 12 weeks duration may be administered by a medical practitioner if he is of the opinion, formed in good faith

(a) that the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk to the life of the pregnant woman or grave injury to the physical or mental health;

or

(b) that there is substantial risk that if the child were born, it would suffer such physical or mental abnormalities as to be seriously handicapped."

These are, to me, mild areas of reform in terms of abortion, and I do not think that anybody can quarrel with a Bill which seeks to make life easier for people whose lives might be at risk.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I should like to enquire what Bill the Minister is speaking on. If the Minister will enlighten me, then I will enlighten Your Honour as to why I should rise to that point of order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member rose on a point of order. What is that point of order?

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The point of order is that the Minister said that this would make life easier for certain people. There is a certain defect in the title of the Bill, which I should like to draw attention to.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The honourable Member will have an opportunity to reply to the honourable Minister.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: No. No, Sir. It would be more fundamental, to use the honourable Member's language. The short title to the Bill is "a Bill to make provision for the medical termination of pregnancies," but if you look at the introduction to the Bill, the Bill says it is a Bill to amend the law relating to abortion. There is no such law in Barbados, and now the Minister adds to the confusion by saying the Bill would make life easier for certain people. Before we can really discuss the Bill any further, I think we have to delete the title that it is a law relating to abortion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The Minister is entitled to have his views, his comments and his opinions when doing the Second Reading of a Bill. Any amendment to the Bill can only take place in the Committee stage. If the honourable Minister seeks to deal with the Bill in this way, he has the right at all future times to make any amendments he wants, at the end of the introduction of the matter, or even in Committee. That is not a fundamental point at this stage.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am trying to make life easier for the Minister, because there is a contradiction. It says; a Bill entitled an Act to reform the law relating to abortion. There is no such law. The short title of the Bill is an Act to be cited as the Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: With all due respect to the Leader of the Opposition, the right honourable Member for St. John, the honourable Minister is entitled to get through with his Second Reading speech.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Of what, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Of what is before the Chamber.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: But what is before the Chamber?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Minister will continue, please.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I am a bit surprised that the right honourable Member for St.

John wants to make life easy for me. It is not like him to do that, and I do not thank him. If he would make life easy for me, I certainly would be going into the grave. I tell you I do not thank you.

Section 3 says:

"Notwithstanding Sections 61 and 62 of the Offences Against the Person Act, the treatment for the termination of pregnancy is lawful if administered in accordance with this Act."

When I talk about making life easier, I talk in terms of what is stated here with respect to the question of the peace of mind and the mental and physical condition of a woman. That is what I am thinking about.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, let us make no mistake about it, the person who has to have an abortion now and has to go into the back room must certainly be fearful at every stage, like a person who has committed a crime; whenever there is a knock the police are coming. Or if something happens, that person must go to the hospital, and must then be exposed. Nobody likes to know that they are doing something which is wrong. You want to know that you are able to do something, if it has to be done, under the law.

You have a situation in this country where a number of things happen. I have been getting a number of calls and have been having discussions in connection with this Bill. We live in a Christian society, I know, and people have the feeling that, as soon as you are going to introduce a Bill which seems to be radical in nature, it should not be done. But the Government of the day must at some stage recognise that these problems in the society exist and, therefore, you have to make every attempt to address these problems.

There are countries all over the world, the most enlightened countries of the world, that have abortion Bills on the Statute Book, and I am going down, as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, clause by clause on this Bill, because I think it is necessary to do so in an effort to be able to clear.....

(A Pause.)

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I was saying, we need not confuse ourselves and feel that there are not problems in the society as far as abortion is concerned. When you have these illegal abortions, improperly done, you will find that the hospital services are unduly pressed and that it creates a greater burden upon the taxpayers, in terms of maintaining patients within the hospital for a simple matter which can be easily done. Therefore, it is necessary that the Government moves

towards reforming this section of the Offences Against the Person Act.

(A Pause.)

12.50 p.m.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I am grateful to Your Honour for drawing certain matters to my attention. I, myself, at some later stage will be making certain amendments to the Bill as well. I do not propose to do them at this stage; I prefer to do them in Committee stage. I appreciate any suggestion which is given, and I am not unwilling to heed to any suggestions which might be made in order to put the Bill in as tidy a form as possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Clause 4 provides for the early termination of pregnancy. That is at the stage when the treatment provides little or no risk to the woman. To me, this is a very interesting and important point, and we ought to take this into serious consideration. In this instance, the Bill does not require the treatment to be done in a hospital approved by the Minister for the purpose, but it can be done only by a medical practitioner. The Bill shows that the Minister will have to designate the hospital or clinic at which the termination of pregnancy will take place.

The Bill itself does not provide for abortion on demand. On reading the file, I discovered that a number of objections were raised by the churches with respect to the question of abortion on demand, and I am happy to say that this is not included. I insisted that this be not included because I do not think that we should do it that way, neither should Barbados be regarded as an abortion shop. It is not proper to have that. Our christian principles, as far as these matters are concerned, will not permit the Government to allow such to take place.

The opinion of the medical practitioner, formed in good faith, is important in the making of the final decision. At a period of 12 weeks, the medical practitioner who is carrying out the operation — or performing the function, however you may care to put it — will have to have another opinion; and in looking at those opinions, the question of the risk of the life of the woman must be taken into consideration.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, these are very important and fundamental points, areas in which we consider that the life of the person involved is very important. And while a number of churches might have had objections to the Bill, they have broadly agreed, in any cases where the risk of the life of the parent is involved, that they do not quarrel with the question of abortion. We are very clear on that.

When the Committee was set up, I think the Christian Council was party to that invitation. They were invited and, from what I see on the record, they attended one meeting — and this is unfortunate. A number of churches have given their views, which I do not propose to read out here. I, myself, do not want to breach the confidentiality of anything which might be communicated to the Ministry on this very important matter, but the views of the churches are here on file. We are all acquainted with them, and the churches have not been, with one or two exceptions, hostile to certain aspects of this Bill.

They object very strenuously to abortion on demand and making Barbados an abortion shop, and this has been answered very clearly. In the case of the woman's health, in the case of what affects her fundamentally in the terms of her future and what have you, the Bill deals with this.

The Bill does not seek to have abortion based on economic grounds. These are some of the considerations that are used in developed countries that have abortion legislation on the Statute Book, but the Government does not consider this to be an adequate ground to have in this Bill. Therefore, we have put that one aside.

We have answered, in the main, a number of points which have been put forward by the Barbados Medical Association. We have answered the points which they have made, and the Bill is largely a worthwhile and proper compromise on most of these matters.

Clause 4, as I was mentioning there, deals with the question of termination and the time involved. This clause provides for the termination of pregnancy of not more than 12 weeks and clause 5 deals with the question of the termination of not more than 20 weeks duration, whereby you have to have additional advice and assistance in terms of counselling.

In relation to Clause 5, the opinions of two doctors are required, and, in making the final decision in accordance with paragraph (a) or (b) of Clause 4(1), the treatment must be done in a hospital approved by the Minister for the purpose, as stated in Clause 9.

Clause 6 provides for the termination of pregnancy of over 20 weeks duration. At this stage of pregnancy, the risk is very great; and the treatment should not be administered unless three medical practitioners are of the opinion that it is immediately necessary to save the life of the woman, or to prevent great permanent injury to the physical or mental health of the woman or the unborn child. These cases may be quite dangerous and must be performed by a medical practitioner — and only in a hospital approved by the Minister.

1.00 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill is a Bill which we need to have on the Statute Book. This Bill seeks to minimise the anguish and the pain which many women have had to suffer over the years. We have got situations in this country whereby young children are abused even by their fathers, and stepfathers and uncles as well, and incest is a very prevalent cause of pregnancies in this country.

Only recently I was talking to a school teacher, who told me of a home in which there is a girl who is very intelligent, and at the school they would like to see this girl come along because she is doing well; but her mother is very ill; and the father feels that, if the mother is ill, the daughter must be his mistress. These are things which you have to say, and there can be no better place to say them than on the floor of this House, and to draw in a positive way to the attention of the country the problems which exist in this community.

When you go to the institutions in this country and you see the amount of children who are deformed, many children who are there helpless, you have to ask yourself a number of questions in connection with these problems, because it is thought that a number of these problems invariably spring from in-breeding. These are problems which we have to try to address.

Many people talk, and a letter was written recently to the *Sunday Sun* which dealt with the question of deformed children and the special love which you should give them. I agree entirely with the view expressed. Those children deserve to be loved and cared for and be treated well. But are they being loved? Are they being cared for? Is the society recognising that they are there as human beings and it is human life that is there? Sometimes, had it not been for the kindness and love given to them by the nurses and the doctors and the people in whose care they are placed, life would be without hope for them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what this Bill would also do is rectify a situation whereby a number of women become permanently ill, become sacrificed as a result of the type of abortions which take place — pelvic injuries, permanent injuries. Sometimes an abortion takes place and then the woman finds herself unable to have a kid at a time when she would hope to have one. Therefore, you have to remove the whole approach to the subject away from the quacks and the back-street butchers in the country, and allow whatever is to take place to be done in a humane condition and in a proper place.

It is felt sometimes that when people who have improper abortions go into hospitals, they are not treated well. They say that nurses sometimes push up their noses at them and see them as the people who have committed a grave mistake and should be cast out. But I would say to those as Jesus said, let those without sin cast the

first stone. I believe that many of them, who are unkind to women in the hospital going through the trauma of abortion, should ask themselves a number of questions, and ask themselves if they, too, might not have guilt.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West asked me if I had brought the Church into this subject.

Asides.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I am sorry if I did not hear him correctly, but I thought I heard him *sotto voce* mention this.

The people who expose themselves, because of the difficult situations which they have to encounter in seeking to have remedial assistance in matters such as abortions, need to be placed in a position by way of the law that they should not be fearful about what is going to take place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not propose to speak at too great a length on this Bill. The reason for it is that there is a lot of information on file, which I will want to deal with at a later stage, probably in the winding up of this debate. In other words, I prefer to hold my guns until a later stage, and, as I mentioned to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at a later stage in this Bill I will move — probably in the Committee stage; I will want to do it that way — a number of amendments to the Bill.

With those few remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to second this Bill and I wish to make a very short contribution. This Bill has provoked quite a bit of stir from sundry people within the country over the last couple of weeks. Accusations were levelled against the Government. Some people hypocritically taking a stand on what they call the issue of abortion have, in a number of cases, failed to accept what is a norm in our society.

1.10 p.m.

Abortion is nothing new. This Government can be proud of its record and come here and face up to an issue which, we are well aware, has provoked a lot of stir in this community.

We feel that we, like people in this community, have a conscience. We feel that we have a moral duty and we feel that we should do what is right. We cannot, because some people take certain stands, shirk our responsibility as a Government and as leaders of the society.

Abortions have been done over the years in this country. This is a fact, it is well known by all Barbadians. Abortions were done by doctors and by quacks — some succeeded, some failed; some people survived, they lived after those abortions, and some died, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These are the facts. Some of these abortions were done in the back streets by people who are known as quacks — I refer to them as bogus doctors — who got some instruments and gave the impression that they were more professional than the doctors themselves. Some of them used their private homes, their own homes, and some of them went to other places to perform these so-called operations or abortions.

I, myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, know of some of those quacks, and I know of a number of cases. I was a teacher for twenty-one years and, during my course of teaching, I came across a number of girls who were the victims of some of these badly done abortions by the quacks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of these instruments I must say, were apparently stolen, and some of the instruments used on some of the girls and on some of these women were rusty and not sterilized. I will go as far as to say that some of the instruments were stolen from the QEH, and some abortions were performed by people who had some connections, who worked in the operating theatre at the QEH and who saw some of these operations performed, and felt that they were qualified over a period of time to do it themselves, too. As a result of all of this a number of lives were lost. Some of these girls ended up bleeding profusely — some of them bled to death — and some were lucky, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they were caught just on time by their friends or relatives and taken to the QEH or some other place to be treated.

All of these things have got to be told, because I know that people get up and they are holier than thou; everybody is corrupt or immoral; no principle; all sorts of things — but they do not want to face what are well known facts. I know that some of these girls cried for days, screamed when they saw some of these blunt instruments.

Asides

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You know what I am talking about too. You have experience, man. I want you to get up here today and take a stand today, and I will knock you down.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not going to hide under any carpet on this issue. Some of my money was used in some cases. I am saying this, and you know that, too. I used to hang around, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and many a time the girl felt that she should not have a baby; and

rather than acquaint a qualified practitioner for an abortion, she would go in the back street; and the next thing you know — she may succeed, but, as I said, sometimes it was done detrimental to her health. Because she would have felt that everything was well then, but at a later stage she realized that damage was done to her, which she would have hoped not to talk about.

We have cases where some men take advantage of school girls; rape them. Some of the girls are scared to death to tell their parents, or to tell the teachers or the priest what is going on — and the girls are left there with unwanted children. Now are you going to tell me as a father that my daughter, who was a victim of that sort of thing, should be allowed to bring that child without my having some say as to what she should do? Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of these people carry V.D., herpes, and you are asking a school child, a young girl who because of her innocence was taken advantage of, to bring a child.

I am saying that although I will support any suggestion that before any abortion in those cases, the professionals, who are well versed and experienced people, should lend their guidance in such matters, I will not be the one to say that there should be no abortions at all, because I know it happens. What I am saying is that this particular Bill, when passed and on the Statute Book, would put an end to some of those quacks who have caused a number of lives in this society. Now, if you do not want to see abortion and you do not want to face up to it, you have to understand what you are asking for. You have to be satisfied with the perpetuation of a system which lends itself to illegal, badly done and cruelly done abortions.

I support this Bill, because the purpose of the Bill is to give the victim, the person who becomes pregnant, an opportunity to consult a practitioner and actually have, in some cases — because the Bill provides for cases; not all cases — an abortion done professionally. That is what concerns me. Have it done professionally and legally, because, as I said, some doctors are doing it now — and it is illegal.

We have to face up to it. Some girls cannot raise the \$300 or \$400 to do it, so they have to go in the back streets, and all of this is causing confusion. What we are doing, as a Government, is facing up to the realities the facts of life, and that is why we are bold enough to bring this Bill before this Chamber today. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did promise that I would not be long, but I felt that there were some things that had to be said.

I know that people will get out there and say, "You voted for the abortion, you should know better." I want them to understand where I stand and where my colleagues stand on this, and I am sure that I have the support of

honourable Members on that side. I have my christian principles, too. I go to church; so, therefore, no one can criticise me on any moral or christian grounds. I understand the morals of this and, therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with my conscience that I am lending my full support to this Bill before this Honourable Chamber. 1.20 p.m.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have listened quite attentively to both speakers and I am almost satisfied, by their remarks, that the wrong Bill is before the House. They have all made the strong point that the illegal practice that has been going on in this field needs to be corrected, and certainly the Minister of Health, having explained that it will not be a situation where it would be abortion on demand, strongly suggests that this Bill may very well be amended to suit that purpose. Therefore, I am very concerned about this Bill in particular, because it has far reaching consequences not only for the individual, but it can affect other areas as well, and I want to be sure that the philosophy of this Government is not bordered on an old political thought — that if a life is probably deemed to be useless and unproductive, then we should do something about it.

I want to take you back to very early in the last World War. We are actually reverting to a similar practice, only at the other end, where old people and cripples were killed. As the Minister has pointed out, we seem not to care much about these people; I hope he is not suggesting that we should probably exterminate them as well. It is a very serious philosophy, because, if you are not careful, all Governments may not think the same way. We may have other Governments in the future who, as the Minister said, may do it for economic reasons. That may be so, and so I share this concern with them.

My argument on the Bill is probably based on the fact that prevention is much better than cure, and certainly if the honourable Members on the other side had taken time to read the Commission on Women's Report, they would have found some very interesting comments there. The gist of that report suggests, very strongly, that quite a lot of precaution should be taken and that the education and development of the people in the community should be such that they should be exposed to a greater form of education that would prevent this high incidence of back street abortions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, first and foremost, it is always the people who are involved in this particular exercise, who should make their comments. I have not heard the Minister responding to any youth groups or any such who have not sat in on discussions, or who have initiated, but who have requested that this form of termination should be implemented.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the real problem today is that we have failed to arrest the kind of dangers that have developed in a kind of permissive society, and in that permissive society we have found that we have developed, or experiencing now, Sir, what we call the sex explosion, and this sex explosion will force you into many other avenues apart from abortion Bills. That is why I say that as long as you make the first attempt to condone in a way, or even to suggest to relieve in a way, there will be repeated calls for these amendments.

The whole problem, as I said, very much lies in our attitude towards the sex problem. We have failed to realise that young people today are exposed very early in life to these new ways of life itself. There were times when people, younger than they were, were refused even the kind of lecture or information regarding the dangers of this very valuable and very most important development in man.

One of the organisations, I understand, Sir, that has been pressing for this Bill is the Barbados Family Planning Association. I have never conceived, and will never conceive, abortion as a proper means of birth control. It cannot be. You see, the idea that a Family Planning Association is calling for such a reform will suggest in the minds of the people that it will be something extended liberally. I believe that they could have been effective in another way in trying to explain why they are asking for this.

There is no point saying that young girls, teenagers, are caught up with this problem, and after they have been found in this situation that you are going to try to protect them from going into the back street. That is what you are saying. I have not really grasped all the legal implications in this Bill, but I am almost certain that there are certain clauses that are likely to allow them, really to circumvent the whole process. Because if you are removing them from the back street or the quack abortionists, where are you sending them? Would this law prevent them from getting into that situation? It would not.

The answer to your problem is proper educational facilities for those young people. It is necessary that they be told the whole truth of the dangers in respect of being involved or flirting with these exercises. We need to tell them in a proper way and not leave them to wayside people or anything like that. They need to be exposed to proper teachers who are able to show them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Family Planning Association has at its disposal, both locally and internationally, enough expertise that they can draw from in an effort to reduce this problem, because what they should really be trying to do is to reduce the problem and not open

a way to legalise it. They have many means, in which they can use their own programmes through the Government, the media — and while on the media, we must take note of the fact that many of our young children today are being exposed to very suggestive films, and that may very well be the starting point in creating a passion, rather than an understanding as to what the whole exercise is, and it is because of that passion that many of them may be led astray by the ones who are willing to take advantage of them. We need to back up our educational programmes through the media.

Then, Sir, recently medical science has proven that one of the techniques used to control, contraception, has proven to be a health giver. It has not proven to be detrimental, so far, to the health of many individuals. Even though we are having a family planning programme, you would be amazed to know how ignorant many of these young people are of the true benefits of these particular devices.

I am speaking particularly of the pill, because some time ago in the United States of America, there was a controversy — since you accept the fact that teenagers would be involved, you would have to protect them — and there was a discussion on the pros and cons of whether to introduce the pill at a very early age or not. Again, I believe the Family Planning Association will have all the data and information, and know to how best they think it can be used.

1.30 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there are so many ways in which we can avoid this problem of our young people being exposed to such dangers that, as I said at the beginning, I thought that the wrong Bill might have been before the Chamber. It should have been a Bill to highly penalize those who tend to go that way.

I make no apologies, Sir, because my views are that as long as you open the door to the possible thinking for others to believe that the solution to their problems lie in this area, it is going to be very difficult, very, very, difficult to persuade them to use otherwise.

I also feel, Sir, it could also create economic problems as well. The majority of people who we refer to today, and who have ended up in the hospital — and if the Minister probably has the statistics he will probably realise this — have come from a particular strata, in general, in this society. That can be borne out possibly by statistics; maybe not, but you will find that a large percentage of those people probably have economic problems. Poverty has always been associated with a lot of these problems.

I want to be certain in my mind that when you pass this Bill as it stands — although I have some doubt

as to the interpretation of Clause 4(2) and 4(3); I have some doubt about that — I am sure that we will have to be on our toes to make sure that the Bill does not find itself being used for the purpose other than what it is intended.

I would also like to say something to those religionists as well. The Church has always strongly condemned it because they believe that taking a life, at whatever stage is wrong. It is a pure and good idea which we should all accept, but, Sir, I believe that part of the Church's concept should be that there is a divine purpose in sex and they should take the opportunity to get into the schools and complement other efforts. If it is sex education in schools that they are having, they could emphasize the purity and the divine purpose of sex.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you put all these things together, Sir, it clearly demonstrates that our problem lies in our ineffectiveness to help people understand the best way to go about the problem of pregnancy — the problems relating to contraception.

I hope, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, that those few remarks may in some way enlighten the Minister as to how I feel in respect of this matter.

I should also, before I sit down, Sir, like to remind the Minister that, before we stretch any further into this Bill, there is still time left, and I would like to suggest that we could get some kind of Commission or Committee, from the various groups within the community, dealing with this matter and then finalize our own position.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. B. M. TAITT and Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER stands.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, No. The honourable Minister.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am much obliged.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are told that, in developing countries such as ours, between now and the year 2000 that some 800 million additional jobs will need to be created to meet them. We are looking forward, we are told, to a population of many billions. We are told that in developed countries the per capita consumption will rise, and that, as a consequence of this, we will have problems in respect of pollution that we cannot even begin to imagine, and that our environment on this

planet will be further degraded. We are told that, in the extreme, world peace could possibly be put in jeopardy. This is a picture of the future through the eyes of man, because those are the only eyes through which we have the power to look.

Barbados, of course, has its role to play. I think it is generally known, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Barbados was the second country in the world, the second country, in 1955 — after India — which had the courage to come out and support a National Family Planning Programme and to provide funds to implement such a programme. In 1955, the Barbados Family Planning Association was founded and successive Governments to this day continue to support it generally.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, leading up to what I want to say about this Bill, generally, speaking, I feel that I have to make the point, too, that successive Governments in Barbados have given very high priority, great emphasis and certainly have invested very heavily, and continue to invest heavily, in maternal and child health, and maternal and child care. I think that, in Barbados, we take these things for granted. We do not take the trouble to inform ourselves about what is available.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in respect of ante-natal care, nowadays in Barbados that includes exercise classes, child care for young mothers and pre-natal supplements; for example, iron and vitamins, nutritional counselling by nutritionists and nutrition nurses. Nutritional counselling is to be found at all polyclinics and health centres and at the National Nutrition Centre. In this country, hospital delivery services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital are as good or possibly better than those to be found in many other countries; not only developing countries like us, but developed countries. Post-natal care, again at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, is to be matched in few countries in this part of the world.

We have Family Planning clinics, Government clinics, Government-assisted clinics, which are run by the Barbados Family Planning Association. We have a Cancer Prevention Programme. We have home visits by public health nurses and nutrition nurses where this is necessary. We have child health clinics and immunization services at all of the polyclinics, the health centres and the sub-centres, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Immunizations are also done at the day nurseries and at schools, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Do we know these things? Do we know that there is a School Eye Clinic and that spectacles are provided at Enmore Health Centre. Do we know that speech therapy is available at Ladymeade and at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

Asides.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: We will come to abortion. I am describing a community under successive Governments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which cares for its children and cares for its mothers.

I hear talk abroad that this legislation — and this talk comes clearly from people who have not read the Bill — is meant to terminate life, exterminate people and murder children. I am describing the kind of community that we are subscribing to. Our taxpayers' money, pay for these services and this Honourable House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is going to hear about them from me today.
1.40 p.m.

We have a special clinic at Ladymeade, a children's development centre where assessment of handicapped children, therapy sessions, special stimulation classes for the severely handicapped and counselling for parents are provided. I opened that centre myself. It is a very small chattel house that we have there now, but plans are afoot, even now, by the parents of handicapped children, to expand that service.

We have residential care for severely handicapped children at the Evalina Smith Hostel, which is to be found at the St. Philip District Hospital. We have a hostel for adolescent handicapped children, which is now known as the St. Andrew Hostel, down at Belleplaine. Dental care and education for school children and expectant mothers are available at all polyclinics and health centres, and at some of the sub-centres. There is a child diet clinic at the Black Rock Polyclinic, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There is family life education where group instruction is given to schools, to community groups and in the polyclinics. Individual counselling is also available, given by fully trained nurses. We have a full time child guidance counsellor on the staff of the Ministry of Education. This is how we feel about the children in our community. There are adolescent health clinics, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where education sessions for teenagers are available in the polyclinics.

We have day nurseries, fifteen of them, which cater to over 950 children, from Monday to Friday. We have foster care and adoption services, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 146 cases in the year 1981–82. These foster care and adoption services cater to children who are also in need of care and protection and who have, in many cases, been rejected by their parents. Adoption is a legal method of placement of children, many of whom are the result of unwanted pregnancies in this country. I am told that, in the year 1981–82, some 119 enquiries had been made by people who wanted to adopt children, and that twelve children were finally adopted during the year 1982.

We have ten children's homes, which cater for children, mainly from single parent families, who are in need of care and protection, and this service is given from birth. Again, a number of children who are the result of unwanted pregnancies find their way into one or other of these ten children's homes, and there are over 200 children in care.

There are counselling services for parents and for children, which involves supervision of children in their homes, and of parents, by trained officers. Advice is given to them on the basis of child rearing. The Child Care Board was involved, I am told, with over 2,000 parents last year.

We have other services under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act of 1904, and the 1981 amendment gave protection to children who are neglected, and parents can also be prosecuted for the neglect of children.

I am told, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that many children who are referred for adoption were children who were rejected even before they were born. Most mothers who cannot get an abortion give up their children for adoption. Are these facts known in Barbados? They are known to the welfare workers, the probation workers, the Child Care Board workers and people who are involved.

Most cases of child abuse, physical abuse, I am told by social workers, occur in this country where the children are unwanted. The Child Care Board has recorded 61 cases of sexual and physical abuse in 1982, last year. There are some terrible cases.

Only this morning I was told of a case of a man who lives in a house with his fourteen year-old daughter and two women. He has impregnated his fourteen year-old daughter. When she sought the services of a doctor for the purpose of having an abortion because she was the victim of incest, she was told that it would cost \$500. She said she did not have that kind of money and went away to try to raise it. By the time she got back to the doctor, it was too late — and this child was in a very advanced state of pregnancy at fourteen years of age. Further to that, the other two women who live in that house are currently both pregnant now by that man — for the second time.

Let me tell you about the case of an eighteen month-old baby beaten by its mother from the time it was four months old, hospitalised with head injuries last year, all over the Christmas period. The child is now with the Child Care Board under a placement of safety order. Let me tell you about a ten year old girl, severely beaten and choked by her father, who had to be admitted to care last month, in December, after she was severely beaten and has been placed under a placement of safety order.

We have a lot of legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, already on the Statute Book which speaks of this whole issue of our children and the care which we have for them. We have a Family Law Act, passed by this Parliament in 1981. We have Prevention of Cruelty to Children (Amendment) Act, passed by this Parliament in 1981. Look at the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker — a Child Care Act of 1981, which is not yet proclaimed, and which I hope soon will be proclaimed; a Status of Children (Reform) Act of 1979; a Maintenance Act of 1981, again not yet proclaimed.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is more. The Government Industrial School comes under the portfolio of the Ministry of Education. Just a few weeks ago, while I was doing the Draft Estimates, it was reported to me that there are increased numbers there. At the end of the year 1980, there was one girl at Summervale. In 1981, there were three and in 1982 there were thirteen. In fact, there are eleven — two are on remand — and we were made to understand that the two who are on remand are going to be committed very shortly. At the Boys' Industrial School we have a fairly constant number, in the region of thirty-five or so. These are children in care; these are unwanted children; these are children who, more often than not, the social workers tell us started off as unwanted pregnancies and, in some cases, as attempted abortions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am sure, even though I hope not, if not in this Honourable Chamber, outside of it in the public domain — that there is going to be a great deal of hypocrisy on this issue of abortion, because that is the nature of human kind. We have heard a lot about it in the past years because this issue has been in the public domain for a long time; it has enjoyed full-scale public discussion. I have heard many pronouncements over the years and, particularly now that it is before Parliament, we are going to hear more. Most of what I hear come from the lips of men; very few comments fall from the mouths of women, and I would like to endorse what the honourable Member who spoke last has said, that people should read this Bill very carefully, and this goes for the Press as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before shooting off their mouths and pronouncing upon it.

This is a very limited piece of legislation, which is seeking to regularise a situation which has been existing for many many years in this country. The Bill is seeking to give relief in cases where the mental and/or physical health of a pregnant women is in jeopardy or subject to serious injury, and in cases where rape can be shown to have occurred. That, really is, the ambit of this piece of legislation. But do not let us fool ourselves, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that abortion on demand does not exist in Barbados today, because it does.

1.50 p.m.

Our statistics show us that roughly 4 000 children are born each year. The Chief Medical Officer's report for the year 1981 will show you, show us all, that the leading cause of hospitalization at the Q.E.H., excluding normal delivery and ill-defined conditions and injuries, is still abortion.

In 1981, in the 15 to 44 age group, there were 825 abortions. Those are the ones which took place at the Q.E.H. the ones that we know about. In the 5 to 14 age group — eleven. Do not let us fool ourselves. We have every reason to believe that, of all the conceptions which occur in Barbados in any given year, well over 50 per cent end up in abortion; some deliberately induced, some voluntarily — what are known as voluntary abortions.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have been trying to make the point that successive Governments in this country, do care about maternal and child care and maternal and child health. It is not a small thing that, in a country such as this, in this part of the world where we are, we have a birth rate of between 17.6 and 17.7. That is something that is commended outside of Barbados by people who are interested in population activities — every single day. It is something which redounds to our great benefit.

Perhaps, again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Barbadians do not know that last year, in the year of 1982, there were no maternal deaths — for the first time. If you look in the Chief Medical Officer's report, at page 70, I think it is, you will see where it says, "Maternal Deaths — No maternal deaths."

We have an infant mortality rate of 17.2. We have a death rate of 17.4. We have a rate of population growth of 44 per cent. This was not achieved overnight. Over the past 30 years, enlightened policy on the part of successive Governments; not only population policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, generally speaking we have always understood very clearly that when there is a general upliftment of the entire population, this kind of situation will be part of the out-fall. We are proud of these things.

In a country like Barbados, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where abortions are illegal, and the management and eventual treatment of those women — it is always women, of course — is a human and a medical problem, it is very sad that, in 1983, women find themselves in Barbados in this situation where in no other medical condition are they so humiliated. They have to hide under cover of night and other cover.

I do not need to be too explicit on it, because we are a small community in this country and I do not

think that there is one family which can point to itself and say this family has not been touched by the issue of abortion, either trying to counsel a member of the family against it, trying to counsel a member of the family for it, having to live with the result of an incomplete abortion, a young woman whose life is crippled, whose body is crippled; in one way or another, you show me a family in this country who has not been touched by it. Indeed, show me a man who, if he has not paid for an abortion occasioned by his own indiscretion, has not paid for an abortion occasioned by somebody's indiscretion; and if not that, have had to counsel or drive in his car, or arrange for a car, to take some young woman to offices somewhere, or premises somewhere, for an abortion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there are not many men in Barbados who, when they examine their consciences can hold up their hands; not many. Just as there are not many women who are in a position to say that they have not been untouched by it, who may not have contemplated it, who may not have gone to extremes to avoid it, who have not, perhaps, had to counsel another young woman about it, or themselves have had to make arrangements, just like men have done, to take a young woman to a particular place or to take her from a particular place.

It is not anything that is unknown in this country, and I think that it is time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this position was regularized. I do not know for how much longer we can continue to pretend, because, as I said, there is going to be a lot of hypocrisy on this issue. How long can we continue to pretend that we will accept these unacceptable positions with respect of unwanted pregnancies.

I have not known, during my life time, of any case where a doctor in Barbados has ever been prosecuted or brought before the courts in matters to do with abortions or the illegal termination of pregnancy. I may be wrong, but I do not know of one. I know that there is an argument abroad which says, "okay, abortions have been going on in Barbados for years, and they will continue to go on; so let the status quo continue. Do not interfere with it."

This is one of the things we do not like to talk about. When I was a child, there was an old-fashioned saying that Barbadians do not like to discuss politics or religion. I have never found that to be true. But it is true that this issue of abortion is one that people do not want to talk about. They do not even want to think about it.

We have a problem, too, growing in Barbados — I knew this when I was at the Ministry of Health, I knew this when I practiced at the Bar, and know it now that I

am at the Ministry of Education — where there are a number of women and young girls who are using abortion as a method of contraception. Again, I agree with the distinguished honourable Member who spoke before me, that this is to be regretted. This is not to be encouraged and, certainly, this Bill is not about that.

Part of our problem, too, as a country where abortion still remains illegal, but where it occurs, is that every year several thousands of women, not hundreds, Mr. Deputy Speaker, several thousands of women, are afraid of seeking medical advice when it goes wrong. Let the people who work at the Casualty at the Q. E. H. tell you about the number of hemorrhaging young women who are brought in there, especially on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. Let them tell you about it. When you hear a call on the wireless for blood, in more cases than not, it is blood for circumstances such as these.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member be able to complete her speech within the next ten minutes?

Hon. Miss B. MILLER: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Continue.

Hon. Miss B. MILLER: The hospital authorities tell us that the majority of incomplete pregnancies and other complications which arise, and terrible complications do arise, are the result of illegal abortions. And I pose the question again. Are we really prepared to see that this continue?

Are we really prepared in this day and age — we say we are an enlightened, educated people — are we really prepared to condone this? Are we prepared to say that this should continue? Are we prepared to hide our heads in the sand and pretend it has nothing to do with us, until it happens to our wife or our daughter? Because I have not really mentioned anything about the older women, who have had what they consider to be the family that they want, and find themselves in their late thirties and early forties, quite pregnant, and who abort; some of them abort for cosmetic reasons.

Legislation such as the one which we have before us, Mr. Deputy Speaker, has existed for many years in the Bahamas, in Belize, New Zealand, Singapore, India, United Kingdom and Canada.

Before I sit down, there is another point I must touch on, and I want to touch upon it. It has to do with the Church and the State on this issue. I believe that the Church and the State have no need for confrontation on the issue of abortion. There have been many other issues

— divorce, homosexuality, bastardy, contraception itself on which the Church and the State have held different views. The State has a certain responsibility to the citizens and so the Church has a certain responsibility to its flock. The State sees a need, recognises a need in this community, and feels that we must address it. The Church, likewise, sees a need within its flock and addresses that need.

But the Church has always had, and I hope it will always continue to have, the right to say to its flock, this is not for you. And it is not unknown. On the issue of contraception itself, the Roman Catholic Church has made it clear to Roman Catholics throughout the world what it will accept and what it will not accept. The Seventh Day Adventist have made their views clear to their flock throughout the world about the day on which the Sabbath should be celebrated and on the eating of pork. The Jehovah Witnesses have made it clear to their flock throughout the world how they feel about blood transfusion and other medicines. It is open to any church in Barbados to look at this Bill and say to its flock, "Where your daughter, or your wife, or your mother or your niece or your god-daughter is pregnant by rape or by incest, or that there is a complication in the pregnancy and her mental or her physical health is in danger, she shall not have these services available to her." That is the right of any church.

But I was the one who canvassed the churches when I was at Health. I sat down for a whole day with a particular cleric on this matter and — I am not aware — my memory does not tell me that there is any church in Barbados which is prepared to say to any woman in its flock, "Where your mental or physical health is threatened by pregnancy or by a complication of pregnancy, or where rape or incest has been committed upon you, you shall not have these services available to you." I do not recall that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Again, this is part of the nature of human kind, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Church, just like the State, finds that it cannot always speak with a single and unified voice on these issues, and abortion is simply another one.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that I am likely to go on for perhaps another ten minutes, and perhaps I might continue after lunch. I had hoped to finish, Sir, but I feel that I must say.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has already exceeded her half hour.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Very well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. At Committee stage I will continue.

Applause.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now 2.05 p.m. This sitting stands suspended until 2.45 p.m.

On Resumption

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. There are no questions on the Order Paper. We now move on to Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael South is not in his place, so Government Business is now the instant Order of the day.

RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If no other honourable Member.....The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make my contribution to this debate. I speak as a Christian, as a citizen of Barbados, as a Member of this Honourable House and as a medical practitioner, of some 20 years standing, who has seen this issue of abortion on demand canvassed and legislated in several countries.

I want to make it clear. When this Bill is actually broken down, what we are doing in fact is introducing abortion on demand. Never mind the sort of caveats that you might see within the Bill, the fact is that these events take place in such a personalized manner that those caveats can be easily overcome, and the net effect will be abortion on demand. And that is the issue, that is the issue that we have to face.

It is a medical issue, it is a moral issue and it is an issue that relates to attitudes and techniques in relation to the control of population growth. Now, let us examine the last one which I have mentioned.

Many people have taken the view over the years that easy access to abortion, legalized, would represent a significant back-stop, so to speak, in the event that other methods of contraception have failed. It is a matter of fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that several techniques have recently been evolved in relation to inducing abortion, particularly in the early stages of pregnancy, which are tantamount to facilitating that procedure so that it can be done relatively safely in an office, and perhaps

in hands that need not to be as skilled as 20 years ago, when I first started practising medicine.

I am particularly fortunate in being able to speak on this matter from the point of view that I, myself, have never done an abortion. In fact, I do not know how to do one, because it is not within my competence and within my training. It is as simple as all that. This does not say that I have not, on occasions — within the law — been party to the recommendation of an abortion in circumstances where measures had to be taken to save the life of a mother. This is usually in relation to the classical cases that usually present themselves in Barbados, cases of severe pre-eclamptic toxemia, where it may be necessary, as a physician, to associate yourself with an obstetrician to recommend the termination of a pregnancy or, in some instances of septic failed abortions, it may be necessary to associate yourself with an obstetrician or gynaecologist in order to ensure that the toxic uterus does not eventually lead to the death of the mother. Those are the kinds of situations in which I have found myself involved over the years.

But I want to say this. Many Third World countries have been the victims of pressure, put on them by many international organisations, to subject their womenfolk to all sorts of experimentation in the area of abortion.

We have had, Sir, the very appalling situation in Barbados — and at that time I was Chairman of the Medical Staff Committee at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital — where the use of a drug called prostaglandins was introduced into this country and where many individuals were subjected to the use of that drug. It was done within the Queen Elizabeth Hospital without any official approval, certainly not by the Hospital Director and certainly not by myself.

I would like to issue a word of caution here. If you believe that the mere fact of legislating for abortions would mean that they would necessarily be more safely done within public institutions or designated institutions, that is not necessarily the case.

I recall, Sir, one morning being confronted with a delegation of nurses and administrators making it perfectly clear that they would no longer participate in that exercise on abortions, particularly late in pregnancy, induced by the use of prostaglandins. To my horror, and the horror of the Hospital Director at the time when it was brought to our attention, we certainly took immediate action, along with the Ministry of Health at that time, to make sure that the practice was stopped on that particular day. It did stop and, as far as I know, that has not taken place in that hospital since then. We have to be careful when we start copying legislation. I have seen the situation in Sweden. I have seen the situation in the

United Kingdom, professionally, following the introduction of abortion on demand; I have seen it in New York State, following the introduction of legislation permitting abortion on demand, and I am absolutely sure that it has had its share in contributing to the moral decline of the society. Make no mistake, when we take decisions and introduce legislation which permits abortion on demand, then the whole attitude to sex, the whole attitude to a constructive approach to contraception and the whole attitude to abortion, and perhaps the whole attitude to life itself, would probably be significantly altered.

What is important is that we must recognise that we are taking a major decision when this Bill is being debated. That is why we, on this side, have taken the view that each and every person on this side is free to speak and vote as a matter of conscience. We have also taken the view that there should be a public enquiry into this entire matter and that legislation dealing with this particular area should not be brought before Parliament only after discussion with select groups within the community. I say there should be a public enquiry where each and every Barbadian, who has an interest, can have a say. That is the position of the Democratic Labour Party.

Sir, I have seen, and I have heard, way back in 1973 where conscience brought a free vote on this side. Way back in 1972/73 there was a tremendous demand in Barbados for abortion on demand, and I remember that one of the most powerful supporters of abortion at the time was a gentleman, who has now passed on, a very wealthy American, who came to these shores, bought a very expensive property, was prepared to put millions of dollars behind a programme to promote abortion on demand here. He was a former member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and, indeed, he had made major contributions in another sister island, the island of Jamaica.

3.00 p.m.

When you analysed carefully what his proposals were, he had done a demographic study of Latin America and the Eastern Caribbean, and he took a commercial view that all countries south of Barbados happened to be predominantly Catholic, and if you established abortion clinics in Barbados, then it would not only be very significant for foreign exchange earnings for Barbados, but it could enhance the tourist industry of this country. It was as callous as that.

I am not dealing with the Government's position. What I am saying is that there have been people who have been looking at this matter from a perspective where they could use the uteri of Barbadians and other people in order to enhance their personal gain. So all these factors have to be taken into account when we are dealing with these matters.

There is another factor I want to bring to this House's attention. There seems to be a general presumption that, with the passage of this legislation, abortions will be more readily available to all members of the society, irrespective of their social stratum, and that there would be a reduction in back street abortions or abortions not performed by qualified medical personnel in an appropriate environment.

I would like to humbly suggest that this is not necessarily the case. There are people in Barbados who can afford to pay \$10 000 for an abortion, but, rather than go to a doctor and pay whatever they charge, they would still have a back street abortion — this is my experience — because there are social and other factors, apart from economic factors, which would be operating in this area.

Another important factor, Sir, is, do we have the capacity in terms of personnel, do we have the capacity in terms of facilities to say to the entire country that, if you wish an abortion, it is now legal to do so on social grounds, and, therefore, you come forward and you can have an abortion? I would very much like to suggest that this is not the case....

I went back to 1973 and now I go back to 1975, and this relates again to that prostaglandins disaster here in Barbados. A doctor was able to go to a reputable international agency that deals only with Government and actually made arrangements for a US\$14 million loan — he actually signed it on behalf of the Government of Barbados without the Government of Barbados knowing anything about it — to extend the obstetrical and gynaecological services at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital to set up an abortion unit to serve Barbados and to serve as an experimental basis for the uses of abortion as an adjunct to family planning. The then Government, of course, vetoed the matter immediately.

(Asides)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have not called any names, but that is a fact. The kind of money that people are prepared to put into this kind of effort in Third World countries is something that you have to be very careful about.

(Asides)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: A member of the Barbados Labour Party, but I am not calling any names.

The third point I would like to mention is this: there is absolutely no statistical data in Barbados to suggest that the incidence of complications from so-called back street abortions is any more than the incidence of complications from abortions done in other environments.

I will say that probably 90 per cent out of every 100 abortions in Barbados are done outside the clinical environment of medical practice.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, politics has not intruded in this debate — I rise on a point of order — until a remark was made by the honourable Member about a doctor trying to set up a clinic — I believe an untruthful remark, but nonetheless a remark — and the doctor being a member of the Barbados Labour Party.

There are only, to my knowledge, two doctors who are members of the Barbados Labour Party — one is not in practice; he is in the hospital, the victim of a stroke, and the other is the President of the Senate — and the honourable Member, by a casual and unnecessary remark in a debate that has little or nothing to do about politics, has said a most wicked and dangerous thing, and I respectfully submit that he should withdraw any references to doctors being members of the Barbados Labour Party.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not consider the remark unparliamentary, but I would say that somebody representing the interests of the Barbados Labour Party could put that right when he takes the opportunity of speaking.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Thank you very much.

To continue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will say this: I was trying to make the point that I have certainly seen many a complication from abortions performed within hospitals. I have seen perforated uteri and I have seen even tetanus arising in a case done within a hospital.

That statistical information might be somewhat biased because, generally speaking, those in later pregnancy and those with medical problems would be done in hospitals. What I am saying is that whilst there is an emotional assumption, one of the main arguments that I have heard put forward so far for this legislation is that it would reduce the incidence of complications — because, presumably, it is assumed that more would be done within hospitals and under the supervision of doctors — I would question these statistics, because they do not exist in Barbados.

I would tend to agree with the honourable Member for the City that, for every live birth in Barbados, there is probably an abortion done in this country. If you look and see the small number that would be done in hospital, you will probably find that 3 000 or more abortions would be done in the back streets, and when you look at the relatively small number of complications in relation to the numbers that are done in the back streets, you will

probably discover that that statistical information is not as strong as you might think.

Indeed, Sir, it is not an area in which I keep a close tag on the research studies, but my recollection is that a study was done some time in the United Kingdom, about 1976 or 1977 around the time when the first abortion Bill was brought in that country, and the general findings from that study pointed to the fact that, when you estimated the number of abortions done outside clinics, institutions and doctors offices, the short term complications were about the same, but they could not come to any conclusions in relation to the long term complications of such matters.

The human being is a remarkable creature, and his body can withstand remarkable physical insults of one kind or another. So it is quite remarkable, indeed, that many more people do not end up with serious complications as a consequence of interventions of this nature. Not that I wish in any way to suggest that there is not a grave risk to life. Almost in any abortion that is not done under medical supervision — that would be contrary to the tenets of the profession, of course — there is grave risk.

I would just like to get across that there is no statistical evidence available to really support the kind of argument that, if you introduce legislation of that kind, you will automatically reduce the incidence of complications. You might reduce certain types of complications; that is quite possible, because the pattern of complications in relation to abortions done within institutions will obviously be somewhat different to those done outside of institutions.

I am not convinced that this Bill is really the answer for the problems of Barbados. As I said, it certainly will be sending forth a clear signal to the community, as in other areas, that we are taking positions at the highest levels which seems to me to go against the moral acceptances of the people in this community. It is a clear signal that goes forth, and I am not sure that what you will get from this will compensate for that loss of cohesiveness in relation to the moral fabric of this nation.

I, Sir, have every sympathy with the young lady who finds herself in a particular difficulty. The kinds of problems which the honourable Member for the City outlined are the kinds of problems which I am confronted with from day to day, and there has always been in Barbados, certainly within the period in which I have practiced in this country, since 1967 — and I am in my fifteenth year of practice in Barbados — a general understanding and clearly within the law, and that understanding has been that, where it is necessary to preserve the health of the mother, an abortion is justifiable, or in

certain circumstances — and I think that this was given particular prominence in Barbadian practice in this area — where the child is likely to be born deformed, there has never been any difficulty in obtaining an abortion legally here in Barbados — legally.

The thalidomide tragedy, which as you may recall had, heightened interest in the Caribbean, because several children, particularly from Jamaica were involved in this. A very distinguished lawyer, a former Governor of St. Kitts, I think, did a wonderful job for a colleague of mine whose children were affected by that particular unfortunate episode. But, as far as I know, if, for example, a mother has German measles in Barbados today at a given stage of her pregnancy, there has never been any difficulty in obtaining an abortion.

(Asides.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If the honourable Attorney-General says that it is against the law, then, fair enough. I would not object to those particular parts of the Bill. I think it is in Part 4(1) and (2) that deals with those particular problems, because these are things which have been operative in Barbados.

(Asides.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Are you accusing me of breaking the law? You do not know anything about the law, anyhow.

I will go further, Sir. When you go on to the other area now, where the word "socially" is introduced. I think that it is in the next clause; I do not have the Bill in front of me. Once that word "socially" is introduced, that word really means socio-economic, and make no mistake about it. And once that is introduced inside there, you have moved right out of the area where abortions will be permitted on medical grounds, and you have gone into the area of social grounds — and this is the big area. For example, you could probably make out a case for an abortion legally if someone has four children.....

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on a point. I do not think we should be misled like this. We all have the Bill before us. There is no such ground; it is a consideration, to be found at subclause (3). Please.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I am sure that I saw the word "socially" in that Bill and it is in Clause 4(3):

"The medical practitioner must take into account the pregnant woman's social and economic environment."

That is the point I am making. In other words, if a lady comes up and she is perfectly fit and she is pregnant, and she says.....

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, please. It is against the Standing Orders of this Honourable House to mislead. He cannot take a part of the clause and read it out without reading the other half of it. I mean, this cannot be an occasion for half truths and impressions. It says here, very clearly,

"In determining whether the continuance of a pregnancy would involve such risk of injury to the health of the pregnant woman as is required by subsection (1) (a), — (that is to do with injury to the physical or mental health) — "the medical practitioner must take into account the pregnant woman's social and economic environment, whether actual or foreseeable."

It is a consideration a medical practitioner may bring to bear; it is not a ground.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, further to that point, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member can not have a point of order on a point of order.

I will not entertain any discussion on the sections of the Bill at this stage. We are in Second Reading and we are supposed to deal with the general principles of the Bill. If there is going to be an argument as to the interpretation of the clauses on the Bill, that must be dealt with in the Committee stage. I would not like the honourable Member to continue in a vein to create an argument over the interpretation of the section at this point in time. The honourable Member has three minutes left to conclude his speech.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I was making the general point, which was my main point, and a general principle, that it is well known that those bodies that advise countries in relation to how to structure these Bills, the way that clause is put together, that section of the Bill, is to obfuscate the issue and the obfuscation will not be allowed to continue by me as long as I am in here. And what you are doing — you cannot have a mixture of medical criteria.....

Hon. L. R. TULL: On a point of order, Sir. Your Honour has just ruled that you will not be entertaining any debate in respect of clauses of this Bill until such time as we go into Committee. The honourable Member is dealing with Clause 4(3) and, in dealing with it he is casting his aspersions on the people who drafted this Bill. I am hoping that if Your Honour allows him to continue in that vein, you will give me an opportunity to reply to him hereafter.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there seems to be a determined effort to stop me from dealing with this whole area of the introduction of social criteria.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will ask the honourable Member to withdraw that, because the honourable Member is now intimating that the Chair has allowed the other side to prevent the honourable Member from continuing his debate.
3.20 p.m.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, with great respect to the Chair, I withdraw that immediately.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To sum up, Sir, from experience in this area, and as I said, as a Christian, as a medical practitioner, as someone who has seen the moral consequences of the introduction of this kind of legislation in other societies, I take the view that I cannot support this Bill. Unfortunately, it contains a couple of sections which would conform to practices in Barbados in relation to the ill mother or the ill child, and therefore I will have, in conscience, to abstain in this vote.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that, although my colleague mentioned it during the course of his presentation, it is proper to indicate to Your Honour — and perhaps it should have been indicated before the debate began — that on this occasion the Opposition has taken the whip off, and honourable Members on this side are free to speak as their consciences dictate; so speeches made from this side do not represent the view of the Democratic Labour Party necessarily, but they represent the position taken by the individual, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am thankful to the honourable Member for bringing that to the attention of the Chamber. I would have liked for this pronouncement to have been made at the beginning of the debate, because it would be helpful to both sides of the House. It is not very often that the House has had the opportunity to debate matters of this nature in free conscience, but I would hope that, in future, where that is going to be the position of either party, it be brought to the attention of the Chair before the debate commences.

The honourable Member may proceed.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This issue is one which is bound to create confusion, high temper, and indeed some obfuscation, if it is to be debated honestly and as people feel. I think that at

the outset I would wish to make my position clear, by seeking to indicate what I understand the law on abortion to be in Barbados at the moment.

This Bill seeks to reform the law relating to abortion, and an attempt was made to take the point that, if it seeks to reform the law relating to abortion, it should come as part of the criminal, an amendment to the Offences Against the Person Act, rather than its coming in its present form. But, to me, Sir, it is not so crucial a point that it cannot be dealt with in the Committee stage.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the law, as I understand it, emanates from a decision that was made in 1938 in the courts of the United Kingdom when a gynaecologist called Bourne performed an abortion for a 14 year old, or a 15 year old — one report said she was 14, the other report said she was 15; but a minor — who had been raped by two soldiers. The gynaecologist made the decision that he would perform the abortion, and during that time, the law, as it was interpreted up to then, seemed to suggest that the gynaecologist would be guilty of committing an abortion contrary to the laws of the United Kingdom, and indeed he was prosecuted.

He was found not guilty, and the Judge, in the course of the trial, stated what has become the law in the United Kingdom until such time as an Act has been passed by the Parliament either consolidating that decision or taking it farther. During the course of that trial, the Judge had this to say, and I hope the House will bear with me:

“If the doctor is of the opinion, on the reasonable grounds and with adequate knowledge, the probable consequence of the continuance of a pregnancy will be to make the woman a physical or mental wreck, the jury is quite entitled to take the view that the doctor, who under those circumstances and in that honest belief operates, is operating for the purpose of preserving the life of the mother.”

For those who are interested, that is 1939 1 King's Bench at page 687.

Then, Sir, subsequently on the phrase “preserving the life of the mother” it was indicated in the same case.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not want to interrupt the honourable Member, but in keeping with the rules and in keeping with the standard of Hansard, if the honourable Member would make known the reference which he is about to make before he reads it, it would save any confusion about laying a piece of paper. If he makes the reference first, then he can continue.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Thank you, Your Honour. In fact, I was not going to read, I was merely going to say that, subsequent cases, in the phrase, "preserving the life of the mother", has been given the widest possible interpretation.

I said that to make the point that although this issue has not come before the Barbadian courts, although this is an issue which has not been tested in the Barbados courts, it is the widely held belief of all or most of the practitioners of the law, and those who comment on this issue, that the position taken in Bourne is the law in Barbados. Indeed, as Your Honour knows, if, in fact, that is the position — and up until the time Barbados became independent, and subsequent to that, the tendency has been to follow those decisions almost sheeplike — so I think it is fair to say that the law in Barbados at the moment is such that almost every doctor who wishes to, may perform an abortion in his clinic so long as he honestly believes that he is preserving the life of the mother, bearing in mind the wide interpretation given to the phrase "preserving the life of the mother".

Indeed, the mental health aspect of this issue has been given the widest possible interpretation, and what constitutes the mother becoming a wreck is arguably accepted at, possibly, a very low threshold. In other words, I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, to the extent that this Bill is legalising and clarifying what many persons believe to be the position in Barbados, then I do not think that anyone can quarrel with the substance of the Bill.

I believe, too, Sir, that there is tremendous difficulty surrounding this issue, brought about on moral grounds. Many of us are professed Christians, and I include myself among that large number of persons in Barbados who identify themselves as Anglican, and I have said on more than one occasion, both on the political platform and in this Honourable Chamber, that I am not ashamed to confess that I am a Christian.

I believe however, that if one accepts the position as adumbrated by the Bishop of Barbados some time in 1977, when he said that, in a society which treasures and cherishes the legal traditions such as Barbados, the law ought to be made so clear — I am not quoting him directly — as to remove what he described as "an anomalous situation", and he said in 1977 that the matter should have been dealt with immediately.....

I am told that in 1973 the Barbados Family Planning Association submitted a recommendation to the Government that the issue be examined in all its ramifications, and that the law should be changed to accommodate abortion in certain circumstances. I

understand that a Committee was set up during 1974, and that Committee subsequently reported, and according to the Minister who introduced this and more particularly the honourable Member for the City who spoke subsequently, she sought to suggest that this was a continuous matter, which has come to fruition by way of this limited Bill.

3.30 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Christian Church, excluding the Roman Catholic Church, says that you may have an abortion to save the life of a mother, or you may have an abortion when there is rape, or you may have an abortion when there is incest, or when there is extreme youth or when there is a high risk of a deformed foetus or when there is danger of the physical and mental health of the mother, then I believe, Sir, that it has outlined and encompassed almost every aspect of the reasons why a woman might seek to have an abortion.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not take it upon myself to come into this Honourable Chamber and dare to speak for any woman in this community on this matter. I believe there are some other matters on which I can perhaps provide, on the basis of my experience, some guidance to the women whom I have the honour to represent from my constituency; but I believe that on a matter so personal and so dear to them, except perhaps for the minors, they are the best people to make decisions concerning themselves and their bodies and their own connection with their God.

I cannot say that I accept the principle that abortion should be made so available that persons might wish to leave other parts of the world and come to Barbados to get an abortion. You will recall, Sir, that there was a tremendous outcry when, 10 years ago, this whole question of the liberalization of abortion became an issue, and it was clear that, in some instances, because of the failure of some countries to update their legislation, those countries that had taken the decision were in danger of producing abortion mills.

Obviously, that in itself is basically immoral. Obviously any attempt to make abortion available in the same way that one could make biscuits or corned beef available on a shop counter is by itself immoral, because the question of abortion deals with one of the most fundamental issues of a human life. It is a question on which there is no absolute answer; and, despite the fact that man continues to search for such an answer, there is no answer that has been acceptable to the total community.

Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is precisely because of the knowledge as to when life actually begins that the Catholic Church has taken a position that an abortion, at any stage, is contrary to the laws of God. I believe

that is their right and I believe that it is their responsibility as a church to guide their members, and I believe it is the responsibility of every denomination to guide its members as to how they should view their moral position *vis-à-vis* their existence as humans on this earth.

The Bill that comes before us has, to my mind, a number of shortcomings, but I do not propose to examine those shortcomings in any detail. I would have liked to see the Government, on the decision to bring a Bill, as they say, to reform the law on abortion, inviting the community at large to participate in a discussion – after they had drawn the clauses of this Bill.

I take the point that there has been discussion prior to the drawing up of this Bill, but if one looks at what has been recommended by the Committee on the Status of Women, which was set up on the recommendation of this Honourable House, at page 373 of that report, there are a number of recommendations which are made concerning the issue of abortion, and on page 715 of that same document, there is an article by a J. Massiah, in which a number of recommendations have also been made. Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of those recommendations are of very serious importance to the people of Barbados and, more particularly, the women of Barbados.

I would have thought that the Government, after having drawn this Bill, and after having drafted this Bill, would have given the community at large a greater opportunity to participate in the making of the decision that we are being called upon to make. But failure to do that does not, in my mind, negate the importance of the Bill; nor, indeed, do I believe that that is sufficient for me to reject the Bill out of hand and to indicate that I could not support it in any case.

I am hoping that even now, however, the honourable Minister would give serious consideration to not passing this Bill today. I do not know what numbers the Bill would gather, since I do not know what the position will be on this side, and I am not certain that the position on that side would be a straight party vote, but I would like to suggest to the honourable Members on that side that, even now, it is not too late for this Bill, in its present form, to be circulated, and for us to hold hearings, genuine hearings.

If we hold the hearings, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and no one comes to them, then we can say that you have given everybody an opportunity to speak on it, this is your collective wisdom and you are proceeding along these lines. On the other hand, Sir, when we held the exercise concerning the Constitution – I believe the Commission was headed by an honourable Gentleman, a former Member of this Honourable Chamber – I understand that large numbers of Barbadians came from far and wide, once they were properly notified, to give their views in this matter.

I believe that the question of abortion in this society is sufficiently important that it could be treated in a manner similar to how the question of the reform of the Constitution was treated. I am really suggesting to the Government that it can do us no harm to attempt to set up such a Commission, or to set up such a system, by which the rank and file of the community, if they wish, will be able to come and make their views known.

It may very well be that, at our level in this Honourable Chamber, we are entirely out of touch with the views of the common man, the ordinary people, as the phrases go, on this particular issue. We hear from the Bishop of the Church; we hear from the Catholic Priest; we hear from other "important people" in the community, but I would like to hear the voice of the people on this one.

It is true that we represent the people, ostensibly, but I do not believe that on so personal an issue, with the possible exception of the honourable Member for the City, we can get the essence of the feeling of the women in this community and the people, generally, on this issue.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make bold to say that, while this is an issue that concerns the entire community, it is an issue that is of primary importance and consideration for women. The National Organization of Women, up to the time of the writing of the articles when the Status of Women in Barbados Commission sat, had not declared its position. But I would make bold to say that even the National Organization of Women, when they put their position, might not, in fact, be representing the cross-sectional views of this total community.

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Attorney-General is indicating that there have been hearings around the country.
3.40 p.m.

I am putting it to him that he may very well be right. My argument here is not that you have not had hearings. I am saying that when you had hearings you did not have the benefit of this Bill in its present form. I am suggesting, now that the Bill has been drafted, that it cannot cost us a lot, and it will not do us any harm, if we took the Bill in its present form and allow there to be a series of hearings.

(Asides)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is saying *sotto voce* that it would attract hypocrisy, but he is

taking unto himself a very serious position. He is daring, as he has done in the past, to speak for all the people in the absence of having heard them. He may very well be a genius in that regard but I do not lay claim to that kind of genius.

I believe that it is more desirable to hear the voice of the people. I cannot believe that, on a matter of conscience, the honourable Members on that side can become recalcitrant to the point where they would prefer to err on their own side than to take this very simple and straightforward course which I am offering them, to go out and hear what the people think.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on other issues I would be prepared to make the logical political conclusion, but it is precisely because I wish to see this Bill removed from the area of political partisanship that I will not even make what seems to be obvious political points that can be made. I feel very strongly about this, Sir. I happen, as I said before, to hold a responsible position in the church, and I happen to be the father of two daughters, and I happen to be married and, therefore, I have a wife, and the three of them have views on this which may, in fact, differ from my own views. I make bold to suggest that there are other persons in this Honourable Chamber today who might not even have asked their own wives or their own children what is their view on the Abortion Bill.

(Asides)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You cannot risk to ask them, I am being told.

But I believe, I honestly think that this is not a matter on which the Government can lose face; it is not a matter on which the Opposition can lose face. I believe that this is a matter on which the country can gain substantially from having taken a position that is a position of consensus in terms of the total community.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a few comments to be made on the question of statistics in Barbados. Statistics have tended to mislead on more than one occasion. If we should get up and talk about statistics as they come into the reports of the Chief Medical Officer, or from any other department, we can mislead ourselves.

It seems to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there are many more abortions carried out in Barbados than any of us in this Honourable Chamber will know. It seems to me, in fact, based on my own experience, hearing persons who come to see me in my capacity as representative, that they have a tremendous amount of pain and suffering in a community arising out of this issue.

But there is another point. The incidence of abortion is not held under a bushel any longer in

Barbados either. Anyone can go on any street corner in Barbados today and find out where you may go to get a legitimate abortion; that is to say, performed by a doctor. The Walrond/Hoyos Study.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member should remember what he said at the beginning of his speech about what was legitimate and what was illegitimate; therefore, the honourable Member, at this time, cannot now say that you can find out on any street corner where you may get a legitimate abortion. I thought the very nature of the Act was to remove the uncertainty between legitimate and illegitimate abortions.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Legal and illegal, not legitimate and illegitimate. I am sure Your Honour will see the fine distinction. The Attorney-General seems to have taken the point.

The point I made at the beginning was that a doctor can perform an abortion in Barbados, we believe legally, once he brings to his contemplation, or says that he brings to this contemplation, that the woman was going to suffer mentally. We believe that that is legal, Sir, so I am saying.....

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: On a point of order: I don't want to interrupt the honourable Member, but abortions in Barbados are not legal. Under the Offences Against the Person Act it cannot be done, contrary to what the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central has said. If he has been doing it, he has been doing it illegally.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order, the honourable Member.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member cannot make a point of order on a point of order.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is clear that the honourable Member, the Minister of Health, does not understand legal argument when it is put in a certain way and, therefore, I am not going to pick up what he has said, for fear that I may have to say things which are uncalled for at the moment. I will put the point very succinctly for him.

It has not been tested in the courts. In Barbados, decisions made in the United Kingdom courts tend to be the law in terms of common law actions, and, therefore, since under Bourne and subsequent cases the law has been liberalised to the point where a doctor who performs an abortion under the terms I outlined at the beginning of my speech, that doctor is likely to be operating legally, and most commentators on the law believe that he would not be acting illegally.

I will say no more on the point, Sir. If that is not understood, I do not believe I can make it understood. The point has been taken by every one who has commented on this abortion issue, and it is one which has been accepted as trite by now, Sir, so I am not going to waste any more time.

I was making the point that the statistical information might, in fact, be misleading, and when I finally examined the manner in which this Bill has been brought before us, I find it difficult to understand what it is that prompts the Minister of Health at this time to produce an Abortion Bill and bring it to fruition in such a short time.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the time we heard the Minister saying there was an Abortion Bill, I recall that a very senior member of the Church asked me if I had a copy of the Bill so he could examine it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is only last week, it is only on Saturday, that I, myself, came in possession of a copy of this Bill. So I am suggesting, and I am appealing indeed to honourable Members, that this be not proceeded with immediately as a matter of urgency, but that enough opportunity be provided for enough persons who are interested to come and put their position to the Government.

They need not fear that there is going to be criticism from this side of the House, because such criticism as would come would be personal criticism rather than political party criticism, because we feel very strongly that this is an issue on which, as the honourable Member for St. Andrew said, you cannot speak with any one voice. I dare say that there cannot be any one voice over here and I doubt there can be a single voice on this issue over there. I do not speak for them, Sir; I do not seek to do so, but I think that the people in this community deserve an opportunity finally.

I am not suggesting to you that you should not pass an Abortion Bill; I am not suggesting that you should not reform the law. I am only saying to you that it would be easier, and perhaps more acceptable to all concerned, if you took the opportunity to hear what the people have to say.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in those circumstances, if the Bill is proceeded with immediately, I would have to abstain. If, however, the proposal I have suggested is taken, I would have no compunction about supporting such a Bill for the reform of abortion laws in Barbados if I am satisfied that that is what the people in this community want to have.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.
3.50 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Thomas.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the 16th day of May, 1974, the Cabinet, of which the honourable Member who has just sat down was a member, took a decision to carry out an indepth study of all the various issues relating to the liberalization of the abortion law. The terms of reference were — and I am quoting from the Cabinet's decision — “to examine the need for a reform of the law relating to abortion, with particular reference to the legal, sociological, economic and religious aspects thereof, and to make recommendations thereon.”

At that meeting on the 16th day of May, 1974, over eight years ago now, the Cabinet concluded that a Committee consisting of representatives from the following bodies should examine the issue: The Barbados Workers Union, the National Union of Public Workers, the Barbados Union of Teachers, the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners, the Barbados Secondary Teachers Union, the Bar Association, the Association of Social Workers, the National Organization of Women, the Barbados Ministerial Association, the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the Barbados Youth Council, two persons selected by the Minister of Health, and the Manager of the Barbados Family Planning Association.

In my experience, which embraces approximately twenty years in politics, I have never known any issue received examination from so wide a body of persons in this country before it came to Parliament. I venture to suggest that there is no other issue, personal, constitutional or otherwise, that has ever been looked at by representatives of so many organizations as the Abortion Bill. I, therefore, dismiss the arguments of the last two speakers as being arguments catching at popularity.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of explanation, if the honourable Member will give way. The honourable Member has indicated that he did not understand the point I was making. He listed a number of names, and he said that it has had a wide examination. I wonder if the honourable Member could indicate the Report that was filed that came from that Committee, when it was laid in Parliament, and when did the population of Barbados get a chance to examine that report. I am not questioning.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of explanation.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I beg your pardon, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thought you were going to explain a portion of your speech. You are now seeking information?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir, I did that as a preamble.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But you are now seeking information?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am trying to explain to him exactly what I said.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am not giving way.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You sat down already. What I am saying Sir, is that, having said that, I would want to explain.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are seeking information.....

(Asides)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Now Sir, if the honourable Member wishes to introduce a rule in the public life of our country, that where issues are personal rather than political in character they shall be the subject of public meetings before they come to Parliament, the honourable Member is free to introduce a constitutional amendment. He was free to attend the Commission set up to investigate changes in the Constitution. I recommend such a procedure to him.

I am not prepared, as Head of the Government and successor to the issue of abortion reform, to adopt the argument of the last two Members. I do not believe in its sincerity, Sir. And I say that, although I do not want to reflect on what I know to be the very wise and liberal views of the honourable Member for St. Michael West. In matters of social reform, the honourable Member has always shown himself to be on the side of the angels, and if his Ministry perhaps in the last dispensation had been one dealing with social issues, he might would have been a more successful politician and stand nearer towards the head of this Party than his position as President would make you think he stands. The honourable Member is very sound on social considerations and I regret that, trying to get the best of both worlds in this instance, he should have lent any support to what I think are the wicked and contemptible arguments that I have heard on this matter.

This issue has been under consideration since 1974. All the bodies concerned that attended meetings — some did not attend the meetings, the NUPW did not attend any meetings; but the bodies which attended meetings gave their views and I do not think that there is any possible purpose to be served by pursuit of further consultation.

Honourable Members do not seem to understand what is involved in the fact that more than half of all pregnancies in Barbados end in an abortion. That is not a simple statistic. That is not something that you hear

and you put out of your ear because you say there is a whole set of statistics and you don't understand them. It means that on every other occasion, indeed more than every other occasion; in my opinion, it is something like three out of five, or two out of three, pregnancies in Barbados end in abortion. Perhaps three occasions in every five when a woman is pregnant, she seeks to terminate that pregnancy before the full term.

We are, therefore, almost by definition dealing with a matter in which the majority of women, perhaps an overwhelming majority in this country, have already silently voted for abortion by their action. Do not let us deceive ourselves, as a mainly male Parliament. There can be little doubt that, of the women who have reached child bearing age and who have been of child bearing age within the last ten years, most have had an abortion. There can be no possibility that, in 1979, 5000 women who were pregnant, or recently pregnant, came into the hospital, and that well over 1000 of them came in as a result of an abortion or an incomplete abortion. That is actually in the records. That is what is there.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it would behove any legislative assembly to take consideration of the plight of the women in this country who are voting, by their actions, for abortion and consider some liberalization of the abortion laws.

Now I want to deal with a point of law.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Just one brief point.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On what point does the honourable Member rise?

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order. The point of order that I wish to make, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the statistics which I quoted took into account a double counting situation that might take place. 4.00 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have to let you understand the background to make the point of order. Many of the persons, who go into hospital with incomplete abortions, in fact have a tube stuck up in them and are told to go to the hospital and have it completed, after they have bled for a day or two. You can get a bit of double counting then.

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

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Utter nonsense! Utter and the most complete nonsense, worthy of the IMF foolishness. Nonsense! Telling me some blasted, stupid nonsense about double counting, you idiot!

I beg your pardon, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that was not addressed to you. Sir, you must not be put off by foolishness.

I want to deal with the legal point now. The honourable Member for St. Michael West is not a lawyer; he is a successful student of the law. Otherwise, he would know that the case of Bourne has no authority since the jury acquitted Bourne. The case of Bourne is published in the Law Reports for its interest and for the fact that, for a very long time, British opinion at the legal and medical level was ahead of the wish of the British Parliament to legislate. Since Bourne was acquitted, the judgment as reported in the King's Bench Reports — you will not find it in the Criminal Appeal Reports — is there merely to assist doctors in carrying out abortions in Britain before Parliament was ready to change the law.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir. Now, the honourable Member is a lawyer, not a successful student, a lawyer. He is now misleading this Honourable House, because he knows that in the decisions which have been made in abortion cases after Bourne, judges have specifically referred to the Bourne statement, that the Bourne statement is, in fact, accepted as the law, and that is the basis on which decisions concerning abortion were made right down the line until the British changed the law, even in 1974. Do not get up in here and try to mislead. He is misleading this Honourable House. He has not practised law for a while, Sir, and perhaps he is rusty, although the evidence does not show that when he was practising he was any different.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Attorney-General will deal with him in depth. The honourable Member knows perfectly well that the case which he cited to the House is a case of first instance, and since the jury acquitted, the judge's direction has no authority. But that is only in passing, I will not worry with the honourable Member.

The fact is that in Barbados juries long ago decided that there was no crime of abortion. I will not go into that at any length, but public opinion, women themselves and society have long ago decided that abortion is not only a remedy for the possibility of damage to health, social or otherwise, but that abortion is an extended form of contraception. This Act does not mention that, but, as a matter of common sense, we know it.

Now, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central in another one of his contributions which owes everything, as far as I can judge, to craving after headlines and to craving after views that is fashionable in the columns of the Press, started out by saying that this Bill provides for abortion on demand, as if this was the introduction of abortion on demand in Barbados — the Bill, of course, does no such thing — and later on in his speech

the honourable Member made the point, which I will repeat, that some measure of abortion on demand already exists in Barbados.

But the system of abortion in Barbados puts a terrible moral burden on women who although they know instinctively that they must have an abortion if the circumstances demand it, yet are Christian women, women aware of the mores of society, at least of the lip service that is paid to certain principles in the society; women who, therefore, feel that they have done something wrong in having an abortion.

They are the people who require the assistance of us men and women here in Parliament, and that is why, if there were no other reason except to systematise a practice that already exists, I would have supported this Bill — no matter who brought it. I think it is the only honest and moral thing to do. You contribute absolutely nothing to morality if you tell half the women who become pregnant in this country that they are doing something wrong or committing a sin. All that happens is that it creates feelings of guilt, feelings of dis-satisfaction with themselves that they have come to such a path.

I am a little surprised that this debate has gone so far with very little reference to the position of the churches. I think it is my duty to report to the House, although I do not intend to go into detail as to every church's response, that no church in Barbados, when asked to comment on this Bill, objected absolutely to abortion. Every single church envisaged the possibility of abortion and discussed with the Government circumstances under which it could take place.

In the case of the Methodist Church, which is one of the churches I am going to mention by name, since it has commented in the Press, the Methodist Church specifically accepted that there can be an abortion in a case where a woman has been the victim of rape, the pregnancy is the result of incest, the continuation of the pregnancy would adversely affect the life or health of the mother, that as a result of the pregnancy the child was likely to be born physically or mentally defective and that the mental health of the mother or existing children might be adversely affected by the continuation of the pregnancy.

These first five recommendations of the Committee were accepted by the Methodist Church. The recommendations which it did not accept, which were that for socio-economic reasons for the termination of the pregnancy, or that the woman had been using a contraceptive which had failed, are not contained in the legislation before the House.

One church did accept that there could be an abortion where the woman had been using a contraceptive

which had failed. There was support, I may say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for every one of the recommendations of the Committee on the part of one church or another, including recommendations that have not been put into the Bill.

I want to deal with the position of the Roman Catholic Church, because a Roman Catholic Priest, who is bitterly opposed to the governing party, has made a very strong and powerful attack upon abortion.

I must tell you that the Roman Catholic Bishop, Bishop Dickson, communicated with the Government on the 15th January, 1980, and he explained the position of the church, and I am going to quote his words:

"The Roman Catholic Church holds strong moral convictions which do not permit or justify abortion. At the same time, we are committed to the upbuilding of the Barbadian society as a whole so that it may become as fruitful as possible for all groups within it.

"In suggesting recommendations for the proposed legislation on the relaxation of statutory penalties hitherto attached to abortion, it would be inaccurate to construe this as a weakening of our own unequivocal moral position with respect to the practice of abortion."

4.10 p.m.

But he went on to say:—

"Along with the Ministry, we are strongly empathetic towards the plight of those women who, themselves already in needy circumstances through no fault of their own, turn to back street abortionists as a solution of their dilemma."

And the Roman Catholic Church then objected to abortion on demand up to 24 weeks, which was how they construed the draft legislation. Not compromising their own convictions, the church asked the Ministry of Health to introduce real circumstances which would limit the Bill in such a way as to prevent the legalization of abortion on demand.

They also suggested that — well I take it as a suggestion — the Government can consider "at what point does an unborn child begin to enjoy legal rights and protection."

The Bishop referred to one or two sections of the Act, Section 12, subsection 4 as it then was — and suggested that it should be eliminated. That has been eliminated. It suggested that Section 14 gave the Minister too much authority, undefined authority, in establishing

Regulations. It suggested that under the Bill a woman should seek counselling which might propose alternatives to abortion, and the Bishop referred us to counselling services provided by legislation in Iceland. He also suggested that there should be post abortion counselling as necessary so that the total wellbeing of the women, including their psychological health, would be safeguarded.

There was also a suggestion that a woman's husband should have to give consent. I do not think that, on reflection, this is a proposal that would necessarily gain wide acceptance. They also asked to ensure that doctors and nurses, who do not wish to participate in abortions, would not be forced to do so. We accept this.

The conclusion of the Bishop's recommendations are these:

"The Ministry of Health and National Insurance should be complimented on its desire to eliminate the deadly poison of the unqualified abortionists by providing a legal alternative recognising the necessary imperfection of human laws. We nevertheless accept our responsibility to assist in making laws that are as little damaging to our society as possible.

(Sgd.) Anthony H. Dickson,
Bishop of Bridgetown, Kingstown."

So much for Harcourt Blackett!

Other Churches. In general, I am not going to name the other churches. I cannot handle the comments of the Anglican Church, Sir, because I could not say there was any criticism by that church, although its comments were substantial. I should say I would not like to deal with them.

On the churches which have responded — one church supports, as grounds for abortion — rape, incest, health of mother; another church — life of mother; another church — rape, incest, life or health of mother, failed contraception; another church — rape, incest.

I have extracted from the comment of the Anglican Church that abortion can be accepted under special circumstances, but there has been so criticism and, therefore, I do not wish to deal with this church now.

Another church — life of mother or foetus; another church — rape, health of woman; another church — rape, life of mother, mental health.

Generally speaking, Sir, virtually all of the Churches suggest that if a woman is raped, she should not be

forced to have a child, that the life of the mother should be of paramount consideration and a substantial majority of the churches accept the general health of the mother. Some specifically saying mental health, some physical, some just say health; a substantial majority accept that.

I mentioned all this, Sir, because I would not wish the country to think that the Government has been careless in Christian thinking in this matter. I mean Christian opinion, not the opinion of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

The Government has paid the most intense attention to the feelings of organized religion in this country, but it should not be thought that organized religion was the only body which we consulted. Naturally, we have consulted with the Barbados Association of Medical Practitioners and we have given their views the greatest consideration. On the whole, Sir, we do not accept that, for pregnancies determinable at an early stage, it is necessary for two doctors to give an opinion. We think that this would add unnecessarily to the expense of pregnant women, but, in general, we have accorded with views of the Association of Medical Practitioners.

Our views are not in complete accordance with the Family Planning Association, since that Association would support abortion on demand. In any society, especially on this issue in a society of men, there will always be different views, and the Bill before the House represent a compromise. There are different views within the Cabinet, different views within the Barbados Labour Party, different views within the Democratic Labour Party, different views outside.

I am persuaded that Barbadians are no different from other people and that what motivates the population in large developed countries will also motivate ours, and if there is one thing that judicial decisions and general legislative trends in the United States would tell you, it is that, no matter what the fundamental religionists say, there, is an undercurrent in favour of the Supreme Court's decision in the United States that a woman has a constitutional right to an abortion. If this undercurrent did not exist, you can be sure that, in some of the more religious, more fundamentalist States, anti-abortion laws would long ago have been enacted.

I am persuaded that the same undercurrent exists in Barbados, but I am also persuaded that we should make haste slowly in this matter. We must not right away rush to make Barbados even the abortion capital of Barbados, if you forgive the tautology. Do not rush at such a speed and in such a way as to give offence to many of our citizens, many of them far removed, I may suggest, from circumstances where they had considered abortion at a personal level, but, nonetheless, citizens whose opinions must be discussed and respected.

We would not wish to give them the impression that we are running in to social experiments out of character with the general moral principles of our people. At the same time, Sir, I am not going to attack the motives of anybody who has counselled courses that the Government has not adopted in this matter, and I regard it as a most unfortunate and wicked slander on a very distinguished deceased person, a great friend of Barbados, to suggest that, as a matter of business, he wanted to set up an abortion centre in Barbados which could carry out abortions for Latin American women and women from Catholic countries.

4.20 p.m.

It is that kind of remark that makes us on this side, and a good section of the general public, wonder about the suitability of certain persons for high or the highest office in our land.

A judgment on a most decent and distinguished man, whose widow visits Barbados regularly, that he supported abortion in Barbados because of potential financial gain, is a disgraceful slur; more so when made by a man who did not hesitate to frequent his house and accept his hospitality when he was alive.

I sincerely hope that the widow is not distressed in her declining years by hearing that a man, to whom and to whose wife she extended her friendship, has got in the House of Assembly to say that her husband supported abortion because he would have made money out of Latin American women and Catholic women, who would come to Barbados.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order, I stand by what I said. What I said was that an individual, who was involved in the International Planned Parenthood in Jamaica for many years, who contributed to that movement over many years, made the point that Barbados, if it alters the abortion laws and sets itself up in a proper manner, could benefit from the inflows from those territories.

I never said that he, himself, said he would benefit from it, but that Barbados could benefit financially from it, and that is a fact. As a matter of fact, Sir, that particular individual broke with the Jamaican branch of the Planned Parenthood Federation because of these particular views in relation to Jamaica, and that is a fact.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member must accept the hospitality of other private people and then come and attack them in the House of Assembly, and defend himself as he is now defending himself.

The gentleman concerned was a member of the local Family Planning Association until he died; a fine

and decent friend of Barbados, a contributor to many causes in Barbados. He contributed funds for the preservation of the Garrison; he was a great contributor to the National Trust, offered to supply money to buy properties in Barbados to be restored, at his expense, for historical reasons, endowed the University — and he has to be pilloried in here by a man that drinks his liquor and talks his name — because there is no doubt who the honourable Member meant.

The honourable Member can always be found on the side of finding something nasty where nothing nasty exists; where something can be dredged out of the sewer, whether it is there or not, the honourable Member's hands are down in the filth.

Anyway, Sir, I said when I intervened that this was a debate in which politics should not supervene.

I must say I know absolutely nothing about any member of the Barbados Labour Party who wished to add a wing to the hospital to carry out abortions. I do not know that such a doctor existed, and I know for sure that if he existed, he is not a member of the Barbados Labour Party, but it is a mere casual political slur.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I support this Bill very strongly indeed. I have no wish whatsoever to hide my opinions or pretend to hold opinions that do not exist, but if my views are asked, I would say that I might support a Bill that was more liberal. But I have presided over six years of consideration of this matter, and I have adopted a policy of consensus, as far as the Government is concerned, on the entire matter of abortion. I think that I have discharged my duty to the public by consultation with those interests that are concerned with social issues.

The Government was elected to govern, not hide its head in the sand. We were not put there to preside over continuing hypocrisies. We were not put there to preside over the continuing distress of the young women of Barbados, who, on the eve of a career find themselves pregnant and do not know what to do; but, of course, to turn to something which they believe to be illegal.

All kind of cases can be made.

I do not think there is anybody who would make a case against a curetage for a victim of rape, preferably the day after she is examined by the Police surgeon to determine her complaint, so that the question of pregnancy, perhaps, would never be known, although precautionary measures are taken. I do not think there is anybody who would disagree with that.

But the cases we have to look at, the cases like this girl who wrote to the Nation Newspaper "I was 17 years old, I was about to go up to the University, I found myself pregnant, I could not tell my mother, what could I do? From the day my boyfriend heard I was pregnant, he stopped seeing me, but he said he would give me some money to get rid of it."...

(Asides)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central is suggesting that I wrote the letters. It shows the kind of mind he has. Because he writes letters for E. R. Lorde or Forde, or whoever it is, and pays for them to be published in the *Nation* every Tuesday, he thinks that somebody on this side has to write a letter of distress from a 17 year old girl who finds herself pregnant.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member winding up on behalf of the Government?

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: No, but there is no time limit. The Prime Minister does not have a time limit in a debate on a Bill.

(Asides)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I wrote it when you were Prime Minister. I said "Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition" and Peter Morgan cut out the Leader of the Opposition. I wrote the rule for you and me.

Anyhow, Sir, I am, in fact, winding up my speech. These examples of human distress can of course be multiplied, but they are matters to which we must give consideration. Do not put this burden of guilt on our women. Support the Bill. Eight years is quite long enough in gestation for a parliamentary Bill. Support the Bill and let another area of social reform, so noticeable in the last six years in Barbados, pass into legislation.

Thank you, Sir.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want to go into any great detail with respect to the substance of the Bill. The case has been admirably argued by the honourable Members on this side, and I support the Bill in its entirety. But I believe that I would be failing if I did not try to keep a certain balance in the debate, particularly since the honourable Member for St. Michael West sought to use some bogus law to give the impression that certain types of abortion are legal in Barbados, and the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, in a remarkable display, admitted freely on the floor of this House that he was an accessory before the fact to an illegal act of abortion in this country.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West relied on the case of the Queen v. Bourne. It is my contention that the Queen v. Bourne — and I will give him the law as I understand it — is not a binding precedent in the courts of Barbados, and I will say why.

The Queen v. Bourne was a case of first instance, and the case was heard before a jury and the jury found Bourne not guilty, and, as the honourable Member well knows, juries are not required to give the reasons for their decisions. And one understands that only Court of Appeal decisions and House of Lords decisions are binding precedents in the courts of Barbados, and that courts of first instance, the *obiter dicta* of judges, statements made in the course of their judgments, are only of persuasive authority, which may or may not be accepted by courts of law.

The honourable Member knows that. I am not saying that what he said was based on ignorance. I am sure the honourable Member for St. Michael West knows that, and tells his students at Cave Hill that day after day, week after week.
4.30 p.m.

Now having said that, Sir, Bourne's case has managed to persuade a number of Commonwealth jurisdictions, New Zealand, I think, Zambia and one or two other countries, where individual judges have accepted the persuasive authority of Bourne's case. But the honourable Member knows that no Commonwealth judge must be bound by the *obiter dicta* in Bourne's case, and, therefore, it is misleading this Honourable Chamber.

I make my contribution not so much to clear up the word they keep using over there, "obfuscation" — it borders on ignorance, but they decorate it with a term of "obfuscation" — but I make the point only so that the media, the Press, will not go out and carry reports coming out of here that at the moment the law in Barbados is that a doctor, if he feels that in a pregnancy the life or health of a woman is seriously in danger, he has a right in law to effect the termination of pregnancy.

I am submitting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that is not the law of Barbados and, therefore, any doctors who, by their misunderstanding of the law have been carrying out these terminations of pregnancy over the years, must now know that they have been operating in breach of the law of Barbados.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member, in his interpretation of what I said, is misleading this Honourable House.

You will recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, when I made the submission, I specifically quoted from the case;

I quoted what the judge had said, and I then said that the issue had never come before the courts in Barbados and I said, Sir, that the commentators on the law were strong in their view that, as a result by that statement by the judge, and the subsequent decisions made in cases concerning abortions where the statement by the judge had been taken that if the matter came before a court in Barbados, it was likely that the statement in Bourne would be accepted as the law.

I do not believe that it is proper for the honourable Member, who is the Attorney-General, to indicate to this Honourable Chamber that I said or indicated otherwise.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is no intention of mine at all to misrepresent anything the honourable Member has said. I picked up the clear and distinct impression, from the contribution of the honourable member for St. Michael West, that he was saying that the judgment in Bourne's case was accepted by commentators and judges and constituted the law of Barbados. If I did not say that, I apologise, but that is the impression I picked up.

But I do know that the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central repeatedly, even when he was advised, kept saying that it was legal for doctors to carry out abortions in Barbados. The element of necessity has not been evolved in the basic prohibitive law of abortion in this country.

The right honourable Member for St. John always used to caution the honourable Members on his side, that they must not exercise themselves in matters that are too high for them, and I would think that in matters of law, laymen, if they have any sense, would rely on the assistance of lawyers, and those who are pretty new to it, would try to take a little while before they feel that they know everything about law.

So I make this contribution, Mr. Deputy Speaker, principally to clear up matters and let the Press and the public know that the impression which is being created, that already doctors in this country have a legal right to carry out abortions where they think the life or the health of the mother is in danger — that is not the law. The law in Barbados does not make provision for abortions of any kind, whether it is German measles, Spanish measles, Bajan measles or any other kind of measles. The law makes no provision.

(Asides.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: When the honourable Member for St. Michael West said not very long ago, Sir, that he was not saying that the judgment in Bourne's case was binding law in Barbados — he got up on a point of explanation — he was admitting that that is not what he

said and I was misrepresenting him. But now, from the security of his seat, he is getting over there and saying that it is nonsense when I say that it is not the law of Barbados that doctors can carry out abortions.

(Asides.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: But they can sue. Who says that they cannot sue? They cannot only sue the Government, they can sue the doctor who did it too. So if you do not know, do not argue with me. I tell you what the law says in Barbados.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West will sit down over there and keep saying foolishness. I stand prepared to sit down again and let him point out to me where the authority in law is in this country for legal operation of abortions. I am willing to give way.

Now the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central — let me just move away from this whole question of law, Sir — made what I considered a very alarming statement in here today.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way. On a point of elucidation: It is regrettable, Sir, that the Attorney General of Barbados would be indicating to the Press and all Barbados from the floor of the House of Assembly that all the abortions carried out in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, for any reason whatever, were illegal. According to what he has said, the law in Barbados says that any abortion carried out anywhere is illegal; and, therefore, if an abortion has been carried out in this country, it is illegal. That is what the honourable Member is saying. And he is saying that all those persons who had abortions in the hospital where the doctors believed they were acting properly, should sue the Government.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I made no statement that anybody should sue the Government. I heard the honourable Member for St. Michael West and the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central say that the people should sue the Government. I said that the law of Barbados makes no provision for legal abortions and, instead of the honourable Member getting up and shouting across the floor, I was giving way to hear him tell me what part of the law of Barbados allows for abortion in the hospital, out of the hospital, by doctors or by anybody else. I would like to know where that provision is made in the Laws of Barbados. I really want to know where it is.

I am not one of the honourable Members who profess to know everything. I operate within my own limitations, and I believe that I operate reasonably well within my own limitations, and if the honourable Member

knows something that I do not know, I am prepared to learn from him. But do not just make these statements all the time, and when you are invited to show where it is in the law, you cannot do it.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said an alarming thing, Sir. He will no doubt, too, get up and say that I am misrepresenting him. I am trying hard not to do that, Sir. I believe that the gist of part of his contribution is that the Government believe that, because you will bring these abortions in the hospital out of the back street, there will not be the same amount of complications, and he went on, Sir.

I sat down here and listened in absolute horror as he sought to infume, not only the integrity, but the professional skills of the doctors in the hospital, because what he was in fact saying is, "whether you get the abortion in the hospital or out in the back streets, you are going to have the same complications. In other words, the medical skills do not seem to matter. Being in the hospital, the doctors....."

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir: You may recall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I specifically pointed out that the 1976 or 1977 study done in the United Kingdom showed that, on a percentage basis, the number of complications occurring in abortions outside the medical sphere were about the same as those inside, but that the character of the complications were different, and that there might have been an inherent bias in the statistics, because those done within the hospital atmosphere at that particular point in time would probably have been done on those later in pregnancy and on those who might have had additional medical problems.

4.40 p.m.

I further said that there is no statistical base in Barbados for comparison, but, assuming that there were three outside in relation to every one done inside, that it looks to me that the complications might be the same, and that the study in the United Kingdom might be equally applicable to the one in Barbados.

It is just a matter of statistical analysis done by experts, and if he wishes to distort it, I can bring the British Medical Journal of 1967, which published the study. In fact, I think it came out of a study by a Royal Commission, which was extracted in an editorial in the British Medical Journal either in 1976 or 1977, and repeated in the Lancet as well.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not want to read the statistics nor do I want to read any report out of the United Kingdom in 1967. I am

dealing with what the honourable Member said in here today, and he has just repeated it.

What he is saying to the public of Barbados, what he is saying to the women of Barbados, is that the chances of your getting complications if you go into the hospital for an abortion are roughly the same as if you go and get the abortion in the back street. That is what he is saying.

It makes us begin to wonder what is wrong with the hospital, what is wrong with medical skills that, if a man in a back alley performs an abortion, you are likely to get the same amount of complications in the hospital as you would get out there. Now, that is alarming.

I am not blaming the honourable Member for saying that. If that is the way he sees it, Sir, I accept it. I do not know anything about the statistics, I do not know about anything that goes on in the hospital. I am only saying that, as a citizen of this nation, I find that alarming. I find it extremely alarming that it does not matter whether you go in the back street or.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I believe that, to any reasonable person, I have set out the statistical interpretation of what I said on the previous point of order and in my speech, and now the honourable Member is deliberately distorting what I said, or is totally ignorant of the whole question of statistical analysis and interpretation. It is total foolishness to come to the kind of conclusions he is coming to now.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not know why the honourable Member accuses me of ignorance. I have not studied any statistics. They tell me I am ignorant of statistical analysis. I have not seen any statistics. If I am confused, it is because the honourable Member, who did the analysis, has got in here and confused me.

But it is my fault, Sir, because I learnt a long time ago never to rely on anything the honourable Member says, and I am foolish now to rely on what he said in that regard, so I am off that.

The record is clear on what he says. In due course I will get a copy of his contribution in Hansard and I will repeat it word for word. I do not want to distort anything, because I still find it alarming, extremely startling, to hear that, however good he is at statistical analysis, and however ignorant I may be of them, Sir, the likelihood of complications is at the same level one versus the other.

The honourable Member says so much that he never remembers what he says. That is the way he is, Sir. I do not know why I bother with him, to talk after him, because he only confuses me; he is the authority on everything, he is in charge of everything and so on. He gets in here and he says that he is abstaining from this because, according to him, this puts a stamp of approval on abortion on demand. That is a peculiar set of wickedness that I find hard to comprehend, because there is no part of this legislation that has anything that can remotely approximate to abortion on demand: nothing as far as I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I had to certify that this Bill was in order to be introduced into Parliament, so I know what is in it, and, as far as I know, it gives three simple grounds for the legalising of abortion. One, a victim of rape. If a girl is raped and becomes impregnated, we are saying she should have an abortion. Two, incest. If a father — and we have had a few cases of that recently, Sir, has sexual intercourse with his daughter and she becomes pregnant, we are saying she should be allowed to have an abortion. Three, if the health or life of the mother or child is likely to be damaged seriously as a result of the pregnancy, we say that she should be allowed to have a termination of pregnancy.

Nowhere in this Bill is there any clause that says you can just walk across the road and say, "I am pregnant, I want to have a termination of pregnancy", and you can get it; nothing in this Bill. Moreover a girl cannot go and say that she has been raped and she wants an abortion, and she gets it. She must swear an affidavit. For the honourable Members who do not know much about these things, like the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central, you can commit perjury in swearing to an affidavit that is not true. That is what the law says you have to do. Do not just go and tell the doctor you have been raped, swear an affidavit which goes on record.

Those are the three single instances that are given in this Act, and you hear the honourable Member saying he is going to abstain. The honourable Member got on his feet on that side and agreed to all three of the provisions in this Bill, because he said that, as a doctor, he recommended people to other doctors for abortions on all three of these grounds. He said that in here. I do not know why he does not get up and tell me I am distorting him again.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member is having a very bad day today. You may recall, Sir, that when I dealt with Section 4, I pointed out the essence of the statement.

Certain remarks made by Dr. R. C. HAYNES were ordered to be expunged from the record by Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am quite peaceful by nature and I do not want to have any row. Section 4, to which he refers — and I do not know what subjectivity he is talking about, except in the use of criteria to arrive at the grounds for abortion. I have Section 4 in my hand. I went to school from the age of three, Sir, I could read from three years old, so I can understand this, and this was drafted in my office.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: You started to read on the first day?)

Hon. L. R. TULL: I started to read before I went to school.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central said in the election campaign in 1976 that he went to Workmans Primary School and he got four double promotions. That would tell me that by the time he was six years old, he would have passed out of the junior school. These things tend to rub off, Sir,

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: That is true).

Hon. L. R. TULL: He says it is true, and I want that down, Sir.

The Bill says in the same Section 4 the honourable Member refers to, that, "in determining whether the continuance of a pregnancy would involve such risk of injury or health of a pregnant woman, as required by subsection 1(a)," the medical practitioner may take a number of things into consideration.
4.50 p.m.

It does not say if your social conditions are bad he can do an abortion.

It does not say if the economic condition is bad, you can do an abortion. It says when you are trying to determine whether the health of the woman is likely to be damaged, among the things you can take into consideration are her social and economic circumstances. In other words, if you, as a medical practitioner, feel that the woman's economic and social circumstances might bring such pressure to bear on her as to cause her to lose her sanity, then you can come to this conclusion.

Suppose a woman has 11 children already and you feel that, with the pressure that she is undergoing with 11 children, when 7 of them do not have clothes to wear and all 11 of them do not have anything to eat for two or three days, and she is in the type of mental state that

if she has another child it is likely to push her over the bend, into the Mental Hospital, you, as a doctor, can take that into consideration to determine whether her health would be damaged or not.

Now, this is straightforward. This is not lawyers' language. This is the layman's language, straightforward language that anybody, who went to school for more than a year or two, can understand.

I do not believe that the honourable Member does not understand that, Sir. I am sure he understands what it says, but it is in the nature of the honourable Member to create these kinds of problems, to try to be different and to try to justify the rather stupid conclusion he has come to as to why he should abstain.

He has said in here today, Sir, that when he sees a patient who is suffering from — I cannot remember these fancy medical terms, Sir, he always come in here trying to impress people with all of these medical terms. If he is talking about a cold, Sir, he does not call it a cold; he gives you some fancy word and tells you how long he has been a doctor, twenty — this year, and when he was in charge of this Staff Committee, and when he was Consultant to this Board and when he was the big chief and all that to tell us a little thing.

He used some words, Sir, that I quite do not understand or remember, but he is saying, however, that he referred people to other doctors for abortions when he found that they were suffering from certain ailments, diseases, whatever; so he is agreeing with us about the health, that he has been doing that already, and that comes out of his own mouth.

He has also said in here that he agrees with the other one, rape. He said that, Sir. I do not remember what he said about incest. There are two things he has agreed to already, the one about rape and the one about the danger to the health or the life of the mother or the child, so he is already practising that against the Laws of Barbados, and he says he agrees with it.

The only other one that he has not spoken on to say he agrees on is the one on incest. I am quite willing to sit down and let the honourable Member say whether he feels that if a big, bad, ignorant father comes in drunk a Saturday night and drags his 14 year old daughter and have sex with her and that child gets pregnant; I want him, the good doctor, to get up and tell us in here today whether he would favour abortion in that case or not. I am willing to sit down and give way to hear what he is going to say on that. If his answer to that is, "Yes", that he favours abortion, then he has, in effect, agreed with all three of the provisions of the Bill. I would then have to

say that it is hypocritical for him to say that he is abstaining on it.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West. Well, unfortunately for him, he spoke after the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. If he had spoken first, he would have made a more intelligent contribution. I do not know what has happened to that side, Sir. He heard the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central take a very stupid line, which I believe he did not agree with, but instead of getting up, especially when we hear that the whip is off, it is a conscience thing now, and say what he has to say, he is looking over his shoulder at the big bad John nearby, and, therefore, he must change up his speech, his ideas and his feelings to suit the sort of nonsense that has been said by the man who spoke before him. That is how it operates over there. I saw it.

I should have been in that Party. I would bring some people over here around to christian thinking, like the right honourable Leader of the Opposition, who gets and bullies them around so that they are frighten to tell him what they have to tell him and so on. He would hear some things if he had me on that side.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West gets up and talks all around in circles. But the gist of his contribution, when you try and cut away all of the mush around it, was, "I would support this Bill if you go out there and talk to the people first." Now, I cannot understand a speech of half an hour to say that I would support this Bill before the House if you, the Government, would go out there first and hold meetings and talk to people about it.

Well, you have heard the right honourable Prime Minister. You have heard the Minister of Education, who was the Minister of Health at the time when the consultations took place. They talked to all kinds of representatives of the people and they got their statements in writing, and you also hear that the Commission that looked at the status of women in Barbados went around this country and talked to all sorts of people, and my certain recollection of it — I have not looked at it in four years — is that the recommendations in that report say that the women in Barbados who were consulted wanted abortion on demand.

Consultation was done already at all levels in the society. The women said, "We want abortion on demand." If there is any criticism of the Government on this occasion, it is because we are not going all the way with the women of Barbados. They say, "We want abortion on demand", and we say, "No", at this stage we are not giving you abortion on demand, we are only giving you abortion if you get raped, if the father takes

on the daughter, or if the mother or the child is likely to die if you do not have the abortion."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the things about public life is that a lot of people do not have the courage to stand up to their conviction and their principles. They are always worrying about a vote, about how I am going to look with the people if I take this stand or the other and, therefore, I am going to stifle my conscience and shift around and bob and weave to see if I can get in line with popularity.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would be in line with popularity if I tell you that you have one more minute to wind up your speech.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I will wind up, Sir.

That is one of the weaknesses in our political system, that people cannot say and do exactly as their consciences tell them because they are worried about a vote. I am supporting this Bill, and it can be getting loud and clear from one end to the other in Barbados that I am supporting this Bill.

I do not worry about the popularity contest. If I were worrying about the popularity contest, Sir, I would keep my mouth shut about a few cricketers going to South Africa. I would keep my mouth shut about that, but I feel just as strongly about that as I feel about this, Sir, and, therefore, I have no hesitation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in voting for this Bill.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise to make a contribution on this Bill, and I wish to state at the outset that, from a personal point of view, I take a very liberal view on this whole matter.

I believe that over the years we have allowed certain views and conventional positions to prevent the mind and spirit of this society, and other societies, from really examining the issues and coming to conclusions which would make our society a more humane society, one that takes in the realities and wishes of the people. I will develop that point a little further.
5.00 p.m.

At the same time I wish to say that I find this issue a most complex one. There are those who just dismiss this whole question of the termination of pregnancy as a minor matter, because, in their view, when you take the zygote or the embryo or fetus in that broad view, they may consider it as merely a piece of vegetating matter. On the other hand, there are those who argue that the

woman must be in total control of her body and whatever is, or maybe, inside of her body.

In between we have a variety of positions. There are those, therefore, who argue from the position of women's liberation, that the woman is in control. That is a particular position which, obviously, has to carry a lot of weight. There is another strand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in which the Church and the moralists speak in terms of the sanctity of life and that any particular position which interferes with what they consider to be the sanctity of life will meet the end of destruction and the return to Sodom and Gomorrah.

Indeed, they take us back, I believe it must be to the Book of Genesis, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in which — I do not remember what was the name — let me ask one of the experts on the Bible — somebody called Oran, or somebody like that in Genesis, according to convention of the day, was supposed to marry his brother's wife because he had died without a male heir.

According to the conventions of the day, the brother was supposed to take the widow as his wife and also to consummate the marriage, and he did take her unto him as his wife. But, apparently, I believe the Bible said, the seed was spilled or some such thing, and thereafter that form of contraception was deemed to be contrary to the word of God. Quite a number of churches took their position on these matters, against contraception and against the termination of pregnancy, on that kind of scriptural authority.

What we also do is that the matter is made even more complex because there are certain persons in the medical profession who argue that they are the ones who should be in control of medical decisions and the society should not really try to control their particular actions too much, or in too great detail, in respect of these matters.

There are psychological, sociological, economic, humanitarian, legal, all kinds of considerations which are raised by this particular matter of the termination of pregnancy or abortion, and when we look at the question, we ask ourselves, "But when does the problem actually start?"

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it starts when the woman finds herself pregnant and decides that she does not want to have this child. The question is, should she be free to have recourse to some means for the termination of that pregnancy which could be relatively safe from any complications, or should society say that, in the interest of a wider public morality, this particular matter should not be proceeded with, or only in a limited number of circumstances the pregnancy should be terminated?

I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this is not an easy matter to deal with. It is a most complex issue, and there is no point trying to simplify it; there is no point trying to say that the issues are clear, because, for several decades, even more than that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, societies in different places have wrestled with this particular problem and have always found that it has presented some very serious problem to the people as individuals and to the society as a whole.

The legal codes which deal with these matters, I believe, can be classified into three categories. There are those which are restrictive, those which may be termed moderate and those which may be termed liberal. The restrictive codes prevail in countries which do not give much leeway to this whole areas of abortion. The moderate one says that it is all right, in certain limited conditions, and I believe a country like Yugoslavia may have a very liberal approach to this whole matter, in which abortion may be obtained on a whole variety of grounds, including hygienic grounds, humanitarian, socio-economic; the whole lot. And not only that, they provide the kinds of infrastructure, in terms of counselling centres and all kinds of assistance, in order for people to go through this whole problem.

I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it is not because we on this side may not have a liberal position or a moderate position on this particular matter, but we are fully conscious that, as far as this society is concerned and as far as the issues involved are concerned, the society as a whole has not really had time to study the matter in detail, or it has not been put to the society in such a way that all of the issues can be studied by the rank and file, the masses of the people of this country.

Now this is not to say that the matter has not been around for some time. But our approach to matters — and I am not necessarily blaming the Government for this — has been that if we, as political leaders or as leaders of different groups in the society, generate certain views or ideas, then ask the Attorney-General through the sponsoring Ministry to draft legislation and then we send that legislation to certain groups and organisations within the society, a few associations of which the Ministry may be aware, that we have discharged our responsibility to the public, and then we come down and tell the legislators, "All right, you have this Bill in your hands for one week or two weeks, come let us take these decisions on this very major and fundamental issues".

5.10 p.m.

I am raising a question, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as to how we should proceed in our society to discuss these very tangled issues in such a way that the people really understand the issues involved; that they are able to ex-

press their views, and that after that, when we come in here as legislators, we will be able to know, through the public discussion that has gone on, that these are the issues involved; this is how the people see the matter and, therefore, as a result of all of that, we can use our judgment on the matter and come to a decision.

I must confess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this matter has not gone through that kind of process. The most that we can say is that it has been around for several years. But this kind of process, this kind of examination, this kind of analysis that we are talking about has not really been done. I think that we had better recognize that, because, suddenly, this society becomes confronted with certain grave issues; it may be the visit of some of our cricketers to South Africa. And when we believe that the attitudes which we would like to see guiding this society are falling, and when we find some — how, suddenly, that there is a different kind of thinking in the society altogether, and that there is a surprising number of people who think in a way that may be different from that which we would like to see, we express surprise; we express horror — and we condemn.

I am saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if we are to learn anything from these issues, it is that we must proceed with a great deal of caution; we must proceed circumspectly and we must proceed on the basis that we provide for this society all possible avenues for analysis, for understanding and for being educated in the issues involved and the matters which are of public interest, and which form the domain of public affairs.

Therefore, I am going to join my colleagues on this particular matter and I am going to call for the establishment of some body or commission, or whatever it may be called, to be set up so that members of the public at large can examine the issue — not only a few favourite groups who may be operating or those whom you can write to because they have a President, a Secretary or Treasurer, or a body of officials, and because you know where they may meet, or because they may get a grant or subvention from the Government.

We want the voices of the people on a broad basis to examine the issue, because examining the issue is not merely a question of getting the opinion of the Law Society or the Christian Council of Churches, or any particular body. That is not the only purpose involved. It is also a process of education, and we better understand that education now is not simply what goes on within the school, within a formal structure; it now embraces the entire society. It is both the formal and non-formal areas of our society. It involves all of those institutions which can get across to the people at large — the churches, the clubs and societies, the homes, the informal contacts now — all of those now must play a part.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am positive, and I believe I speak without any fear of contradiction on this when I say that this particular question has not been put to this society in this particular way. It is time that we stop trying to hurry all of these matters through and approach them in the right way, and in a way that will permit the people of this country to inform themselves of the issues and to give expressions to some of the views, so that those of us, who have the task of legislating on these matters, will be certain that those who we represent have had that kind of opportunity.

Now I do not know anything about the legal matters involved in this; I heard about Bourne's case. I heard about the Queen v. Bourne. I believe that is what the Attorney-General said. I do not know when this case came up, 1936 or 1937, I believe. Britain itself, as I understand it, had a very restrictive kind of code, relying on the Offences of the Persons Act, which went back to 1861, I believe, and then there was a reform somewhere back in 1967, I believe, or in the 1960s and those who have spoken from this side, as I understand it as a layman, were making a valid point that in the case of R. v. Bourne, that had an important part to play in the development of English law, which also had its effect on what happened here in Barbados. I am not getting into the question of whether it became the law of Barbados or not. Those matters are too high for me, so I will leave the attorneys to deal with that particular matter.

The point is that we have to look at this piece of legislation very carefully and do not fool ourselves. We must go into these matters with our eyes opened widely. It is a fact that in countries where the law was liberalized, the number of abortion carried out under the liberalized law increased substantially, and not merely because they were coming off the back streets, but because people felt a little freer, and perhaps they did not have to make use of the kinds of precautions — if anything resulted, which to them was untoward, they could then go and take the necessary steps or get it corrected at whatever the prevailing price might be at the moment. So, if we are doing this, we must realize that this will be one of the consequences of it.

I believe that in the 1960s in the United States — over ten states liberalized their abortion laws according to a moral code that was drawn up. I do not remember what is the name of the body in the United States. My learned friend, the Member for Christ Church West knows, and the Member for St. George South, too; he could enlighten me on these matters, too. Anyway a moral code drawn up, must be by the American Law Society or some such body, which formed the basis of the reforms which took place in the United States, and in virtually all of those states there was an immediate upsurge in the number of abortions carried out under

supervised medical conditions. So we have got to look at this matter very carefully.

I am not going to speak for an extended period of time on this matter. What I would say is this, and I will caution the Government on this — and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I will repeat myself, it is because one has got to do that in this society to be understood very carefully.

5.20 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: And that is against the Standing Orders.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is against the Standing Orders.

But I will say this much. There is no reason why the Government must stumble over itself to get this matter on the Statute Book at this particular time without going through all of the required steps. I am saying that what may have been good in the past is not necessarily suitable for the present, and we can all read the signs in our society.

I am advising the Government that they should take the wise words which have come from the Opposition, set up this body, this commission or committee to examine the matter in detail, allow the people to express their views on it and at the same time put forward the arguments for, against, whatever, by means of some background paper, green paper or whatever it is, so that the issues can become known and people can then argue from some kind of informed background and basis.

If we do not approach our national problems in these ways, we are going to find ourselves in very serious danger, because when we believe that public opinion is informed, when we believe that we have an enlightened society, when we believe that we are making progress, we will find that, in spite of our high rates of literacy, the views and opinions may not be in accordance with our ability to merely read and write. Make no mistake about it, literacy does not necessarily mean comprehension of the major issues involved, or argumentation, or anything like that. It is a basic skill, and I would caution the Government to proceed very slowly on this matter, harken to the call of the Opposition, and set up a body to examine the matter.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I will go a step further. I propose to move that further consideration of this matter be postponed on the grounds that have been so vividly elaborated on by previous speakers on this side.

I should like to say, as the Leader of the Official Opposition, that we regard voting on this matter as a matter of conscience, and the Democratic Labour Party has no mandate from our Annual Conference or from our General Council as to how we should vote on a matter of this kind, because, as has been pointed out by speakers on the other side, particularly the Prime Minister, there is room for differences of points of view largely due to our indoctrination either in the home or in the church, and, therefore, one cannot decide that this is a matter without which the Republic, the State — and when I say "Republic", I mean in the sense that Cicero would use it — that great detriment would befall the State if we did not pass this legislation.

My mind is completely open. I am neither for nor against abortion. That is a very ambivalent position to adopt, but I think it is a matter of what is required at a particular time in peculiar circumstances, and, therefore, I am not going to pontificate on the evils of abortion or anything like that, because my mind is completely open on the matter.

The need for abortion has diminished considerably since the introduction of the pill. I think the pill has put a lot of so-called practitioners out of work. But I agree with the honourable Member for St. Michael South that the general public would probably like to hear some of the contributions made in the public domain, such as the contribution made by the honourable Minister of Education here today, for which I have already complimented her.

I take the opportunity of complimenting her on coming to the rescue of the Minister and making a speech, I tried to rescue him and he did not want my assistance, but I suppose he would graciously accept the assistance of one of his colleagues. The honourable Minister of Education certainly made what I consider to be a very illuminating contribution on what has been done in Barbados relating to our child care and those areas of concern.

We could not be accused of being a society that wants to get rid of children, not from the vast numbers I see crowding the bus stands on evenings, and cluttering up the stores in Bridgetown after 3 o'clock in the afternoon instead of going home. As a matter of fact, we are very permissive in so far as our children are concerned; perhaps a bit too permissive.

I am not going to repeat what honourable Members have said. There are one or two points which I would like to comment on. It is not only that the public does not know of the kind of contribution which the Minister of Education has made, but the general public, even the members of the clergy, do not seem to be fully aware

of the very exhaustive report and contribution made by Miss Joycelyn Massiah, formerly, I believe, of the Institute of Social and Economic Research — her contribution in the Report of the National Commission on the Status of Women in Barbados — which started at page 714 and went on to the very end of that report. It has been thoroughly researched, the bibliography and references have been made, and what impressed me most about Miss Massiah's contribution to that debate — and she made the major contribution from page 714 to 762 — was the following recommendations on page 754. It says there:

"Any proposal to change the existing law in a more permissive direction should contain provisions not only for providing an abortion service, but for mounting an anti-abortion education programme."

Now this Bill to start with is defective in that particular respect, in that no provision is being made in the Bill — I do not want to hear about regulations — for an abortion service. If you do not wish to have any profiteering and making Barbados a kind of abortion capital of the Caribbean basin, it is essential that you set up an abortion service so that the unfortunate people who find themselves in this position would be able to go and have recourse to it and not have to go into expensive clinics. I think that is the first point Miss Joycelyn Massiah made.

The second point is:

"Before attempting to change the law efforts should be taken to ensure that the contemplated change represents the collective national desire and that the nation is made fully aware of the possible consequences of its choice."

This is where the honourable Member for St. Michael South has put the issue very, very clearly. This, since it is not a matter of political partisanship, must represent the collective national desire.

5.30 p.m.

Now, we do not expect when you say "the collective national desire", that you are going to have a referendum and that 98 per cent of the people in Barbados, who have reached the age of discretion and are entitled to express a value of judgment on an issue of this kind, would support the idea of the Bill, however it re-emerges in this Chamber. But we do not think that a few desultory contributions by columnists — I do not want to name them — a couple of letters from one or two of the more sort of — what kind of churches can you call them without in any way being derogatory of them? — regularized entrenched religious organisations in the country and an occasioned explosion from somebody who is obviously biased for or against the idea, or even the 85 per cent of the medical profession who were in favour of some kind of change in the law, would represent, either together or singly, the collective national expression

on a matter of this kind. That is why I said when I rose that I would be making a formal motion that further consideration should be postponed.

There are one or two other aspects of the Bill to which I will advert to in the fullness of time, but I do wish to point this out, Mr. Deputy Speaker — there is no law relating to abortion in Barbados. I must take issue with the honourable Attorney-General on this. There is the Offences Against the Persons Act, and nowhere in the statement of the offences does the word "abortion" appear; nowhere. Nowhere in the Statute Law of Barbados does the word "abortion" appear anywhere. There is talk about inducing miscarriages.

So what I am trying to assist the Minister with earlier is in pointing out to him that there is a divergence between the kind of Preamble, in italics, and the actual title of the Bill, which is accurate. This is a Bill to provide for the medical termination of pregnancy, but we jump into this talking about amending the law.

It is the same thing that I was pointing out to the right honourable Prime Minister, the honourable Member for St. Thomas the other day. You can only rise to a point of order when you have been sitting down. You can only amend the law if there is a law. You cannot amend the law relating to abortion when there is no law relating to abortion.

This is not a political point I am trying to make. It is a point of elegance and legal drafting, which has escaped the notice of the draftsmen and should not escape the notice of luminaries on that side. You cannot amend a law relating to abortion, because there is no such offence as abortion anywhere in the Statute Law of Barbados. This is a Criminal Law Amendment Bill relating to the medical termination of pregnancy.

I believe the Minister has indicated, although he was not very specific, that he would, at some stage or another, be a little more elegant in descriptions.

The third recommendation which Miss Massiah made to the National Commission on the Status of Women was that the service should permit abortion on the sole request of women up to the twelfth week of pregnancy.

It seems to me that there is a certain amount of squeamishness about this Bill. You want to liberalize the law. You want to, as the Minister of Health, himself, said, to assist certain classes of people; but you are not making it possible for them, for a young woman who unfortunately finds herself pregnant, partly because..... I have to stop because I might be misunderstood. The thing that you wave in front of the bull is that this business of abortion on demand should not be encouraged. I did

not want to say "red rag", obviously for squeamish reasons as well, but you do not want to say "abortion on demand" — so, then, who are you helping?

If a woman, up to the twelfth week when she believes that she is pregnant, cannot go to a Government institution, whatever you call it, an institution run by the Government — and if you are having a free Health Service, as part of the free Health Service — and say, "this is going to be an unwanted baby," then the same back street operators that you are railing against here on the floor of this House will be still in business. That is the point I make. You are not putting them out of business, because it is this type of termination, the termination of a pregnancy for a person who does not want a baby, that you should liberalize, liberalize it all the way.

If you do not like to call it abortion on demand, do not call it abortion on demand. Call it "a trimester abortion; do not call it abortion on demand; give it a pretty name. But when you are telling me that I have to go — when I say "I" I do not mean me, because I am not in any way in danger, no matter what the Minister of Education might think; I am in no danger of having to go either by demand or by compulsion — but do not tell a young woman that she cannot go — she does not want her parents to know, she does not want her boyfriend to know — let us liberalize it. Let us liberalize it all the way but set up a Government place where these people can go, and put the back street operators out of business.

You are telling me that over 800 abortions are being done in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital alone, not in the clinics, and yet you are telling me that it is not legal. "D" and "C" is legal, but an abortion is not legal. A "D" & "C" supposed to be dilation and curetage, I believe.

That is legal, but what is it but abortion when you are finished; no matter what pretty words they enter in the records in the Hospital that somebody came in for a D & C. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital has been carrying out abortions with the consent of Governments — not necessarily with their knowledge, but with their consent — so that is another reason.

I really do not wish to spend a lot of time on it. I have a completely open mind on it. But let us go now and see how far we can go and see if the mischief that we are trying to prevent is really being prevented by this Bill.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am not amending it. My motion is that further consideration should be postponed and let us have a free for all outside; everybody, whosoever will may come. Unless somebody knows somebody who is in mortal danger of giving birth immediately, there should be no hurry about this Bill. We

started it in 1974. Way back in 1974 we set up a committee on this thing and, as the Prime Minister said, there has been eight years gestation — even elephants do not take eight years.

Another two or three months will not make a great deal of difference, so I am making a formal motion. I will be making a greater contribution, maybe, when the matter comes back before this Chamber to engage our attention, but I seriously think, since I am very open-minded on the subject, that we need a little more public discussion. I make a formal motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has to give notice of a formal motion at this point.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: For postponing consideration?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are suggesting that the Government should postpone further consideration. It is not a motion.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: How come I made a motion, Sir?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You said you are making a formal motion. The honourable Member has to give notice of a formal motion at this point.
5.40 p.m.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: For the postponement of consideration? I do not think so.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are suggesting that the Government should postpone further consideration. It is not a motion.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I have made a motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are making a formal motion. The motion would require notice.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You cannot give notice of a motion for further consideration, not from my recollection. The Prime Minister was on the Standing Orders Committee. I did not agree with him in what he said a little earlier, that he made a provision for the two of us to have open end discussion. I cannot find it in here, but I do not think you will find that a motion for postponement of consideration requires notice, subject to correction and your guidance, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to second the motion.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

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

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

The question was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER suspended the sitting accordingly.
5.45 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

When the suspension was taken, the honourable Member for St. John moved a motion that further consideration of this Bill be postponed and the motion was seconded.

Standing Order No. 21(2) says:

"A motion for the adjournment of the House or of any debate can be given without notice."

It therefore appears as if the honourable member was correct and his motion is in order.

Asides.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Under Standing Order No. 30(5) the debate on such a motion shall be confined to the matter of the motion.

The question that further consideration of the Bill be postponed, was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing as follows:

Ayes: Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM; Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW; Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN; Mr. B. M. TAITT; Dr. R. C. HAYNES; Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD; Mr. P. M. GREAVES; Mr. N. K. SIMMONS; Mr. M. A. KING and Mr. L. A. WEEKES — 10.

Noes: Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS; Hon. L. S. CRAIG; Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE; Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER; Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW; Hon. H. deB. FORDE; Mr. A. TRUSS, Mr. J. G. ODLE and Hon. H. B. St. JOHN — 9.

Abstention: Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE — 1.
6.05 p.m.

BANKS (TAX ON ASSETS) ACT, 1983

Order No. 4 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to provide for the imposition of a tax on the assets of a bank and for related matters.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a tax matter. I introduced a tax on the assets of commercial banks in the 1982 Budget to charge bank assets to an annual tax at the rate of one fifth of one per cent. The tax applied from the last calendar year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, the commercial banks are making very substantial profits and building up their assets. Most of them are foreign banks and the Government feels that they can make some contribution by way of revenue to the development of the country. All this I set out in my Budget.

We have spent a long time bringing this Bill before Parliament because we have been trying to find a form of words which would serve the purpose not only of imposing the tax but encouraging some inflow of foreign funds to the banks. As Hon. members may be aware there has been a wide discrepancy between rates of interest abroad and rates of interest in Barbados for a number of years, the gap having been closed only perhaps within the last twelve months as our rates rose and foreign rates fell.

I do not want to enter too wide ranging a debate about banking and interest rates. So I will just say that commonsense coincides with reality in the matter of the flow of funds, and that we have observed that the local banks at first were very willing to borrow money from the Central Bank for their immediate needs rather than from bringing it in from outside where the rates of interest are so much higher. Even when we raised the re-discount rate of the Central Bank we still found an unwillingness to bring money into Barbados to onlend. We therefore sought to give a further incentive to the bank to borrow money abroad because we are deducting their foreign liabilities from their total assets in calculating the tax base for this proposal. We feel that any incentive that encourages banks to raise money abroad for on lending in Barbados is economically useful to the country.

Hon. members will be aware that the Central Bank has the general power of control over the commercial banks which operate in this country, including the Barbados National Bank, and we have had to take certain steps to ensure that some funds are directly available to the Government from the assets of the banks which operate in Barbados. There, have therefore been some movements in the reserve requirements of the commercial banks as the Government has felt the impact of the recession on Government revenues. With effect from March 3

last year the general reserve requirements of commercial banks were 27 per cent of their deposit liabilities, 8 per cent in cash and 19 per cent in Government securities of which at least 5 per cent should be held in debentures or other approved securities.

I am thinking of making some changes in these amounts and proportions. Representations have been made to me that the needs of housing in Barbados are not being adequately met by the banking system. A part of this has come about because it has simply not been economical for banks to provide funds for on lending at the mortgage rates on which government is insisting in Barbados. Up to recently the maximum mortgage rate was 12 per cent, which for a considerable time was less than the average lending rate permitted to commercial banks. It has now been reduced to 11 per cent and I am looking at the possibility of advising the Board of the Central Bank to advise me to concur in its further reduction, because I think that there is some room for a reduction of interest rates generally. But with interest rates as low as 10½ per cent or 11 per cent for mortgages, it is still very difficult to raise money, and I am giving consideration to a specific appropriation in the reserve requirements for the holding of securities of approved mortgage institutions which initially would be the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company.

I think that, if the government of the United States can perceive the housing needs of Barbados to the tune of \$20 million, we should be able to perceive our own needs to an equal or greater amount; and I think that the distortions which have undoubtedly been introduced into the market by the government's policy of keeping down mortgage rates will inevitably have to be matched by some specific policy initiative if we are to continue to obtain mortgage funds.

Before I leave the subject of mortgage funds, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would want to issue a warning to insurance companies in Barbados. Companies which for the greater part of their life never imagined that they would deal in mortgage rates in double figures, we now find to be the most recalcitrant of lenders in bringing rates down to reasonable levels. We have a situation where insurance companies grasp at flexible mortgage rates but they seem to understand only flexibility upwards. I am told that the Central Bank is now trying to make them aware of the fact that the government's policy is that, when the general rate on mortgages falls to 11 per cent that insurance company mortgages, the old as well as the new money, must also fall to 11 per cent. I would warn them that if they obstruct the Central Bank in this matter that I will have no hesitation in legislating a regime that will remove from them the possibility of any obstruction of either the Central Bank

or the Ministry of Finance in reducing mortgage rates in the future.

6.15 p.m.

The cash requirements and stipulated securities at the present time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, show that the banks are holding approximately \$10 million more in securities than they need. This has a whole set of implications for Government policy in respect of the interest rates on our own treasury paper, and also in the size of the reserve fund. There is clearly some possibility of increasing the reserve fund generally, and consideration will be given as to what measures we should operate through the market to bring down the cost of borrowing by the Government.

Interest rates generally have been falling, but although the Central Bank has not been bidding for Treasury Bills to any great extent, the last figure of Central Bank's holdings in Treasury Bills, which is last Friday's shows that they are down now to something like \$40 million, which must be the lowest figure in a year and a half, or perhaps two years. Despite this, the bid interest rates when an issue is offered remain unacceptably high in the general climate of falling interest rates at the present time.

The Government voted \$100 million last year for charges of debt. It is proposing to vote another \$100 million for charges of debt this year. That is the present proposal now going through Estimates Committee. I believe that our debt profile is by no means either at present or in prospect so gloomy that we have to think in terms of so substantial a vote for charges of debt, but we have to work first of all with our own interest rates on Treasury Bills if we wish to bring down these funds.

Lenders in Barbados, Sir, are very avaricious, and it is our institutions that are more avaricious than the others. The National Insurance Board is perhaps the most avaricious of all; the private insurance companies come after that. From one point of view, when you pay the National Insurance Board a higher interest rate you are merely taking the money from one pocket and putting it into another, but equally there is another point of view. Despite the nonsensical remark that the wages policy followed by the Government of Barbados is equivalent to devaluation, the rate base of the National Insurance is now over \$700 million, which means that this is the annual wages bill being paid out in Barbados. From that point of view the National Insurance Board is making plenty of money from its collections of premiums and contributions every week, and perhaps it does not need to shake the Government down quite so severely for interest on their accumulated reserves.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think the House wants to be addressed on the whole gamut of banking policy, but if there is any question any honourable member wants to raise on the credit restrictions enforced, I will be glad to give what answer I can.

On the question of interest rates, I would point out that there have been two reductions of interest rates, not just on mortgages, but generally, since six months ago and as I have mentioned a third is planned very shortly. High interest rates have been a feature of inflation control in the more developed countries in the world. Whatever honourable members or the economists who observe our economy may think, there is little doubt that the policy of high interest rates both abroad and in its application to Barbados has been followed by — I will not even use the words 'resulted in' — a very sharp fall in inflation in Barbados.

Inflation last year was less than 7 per cent, and if it had been calculated on the old index, it would have been less than it was in 1976. The old index is out of date, but food last year rose no more than 2½ per cent or 3 per cent in Barbados. We have been beneficiaries of a very low inflation rate indeed, and I would like to think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am seeing the benefit of it in recent Union negotiations, and that we will see a further benefit in Union negotiations in the future. It is worth noting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that even what was described as a derisory increase for the Public Service has turned out to be a real increase since inflation has been so low in 1982; a real increase not only at the bottom, but one or two rungs a good way up the ladder as well. Of course, for the rest of the society 1982 was a year in which there were real wage increases. In Barbados you cannot put it all down to high interest rates that were prevalent in 1981 and 1982, because we take many of our prices from abroad. Therefore, in the same way that you sometimes have to blame foreign price movements for local inflation, you have to recognise that a moderation in local inflation may be due to a moderation in export prices abroad.

The honourable members opposite never recognised that 1976 was a year, with the most moderate world inflation seen for some time — 1 to 3 per cent — and in 1976 in Barbados there was therefore moderate inflation. There has been slightly higher inflation abroad in 1982, than in 1976 but we have come just a little under the average world inflation rate. The honourable member, the Deputy Prime Minister, was showing me a summary in the financial columns pointing out that annual rates of inflation of 35 per cent are common at this time in non-oil developing countries.

I think we should be very proud to have reversed the trend over which the honourable member for St. Michael West presided in 1974 when he managed to turn the world inflation rate of 10 per cent into a local rate of 40 per cent. We have a local rate of 7 per cent where the average for our class of country, a non-oil developing country, is 35 per cent. (Mr. B. M. TAITT: I was still presiding in 1975). The honourable member has reminded me to tell the House that he was still presiding in 1975 when the rate of inflation was 20 per cent point for point, but not 40 per cent as it was the year before. (Mr. B. M. TAITT: And 1976). And he presided for a part of 1976. (Mr. B. M. TAITT: When it went to 2 per cent). It was about 5 per cent. I may as well tell you that over the last three months it has been negligible. Prices have actually fallen in the last three months in Barbados. I dare say they will rise again. They may have to rise in April or May, but I think there is room, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for another fall in interest rates.
6.25 p.m.

I do not think that the high interest rates damaged the economy as people feared they would — the chief area of damage was in the area of mortgages. You could not get mortgage money because the mortgage rate was much lower than the average lending rate. The very concept of the average lending rate may also need revision, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There are two Banks, Barclays Bank and the Barbados National Bank, who because they have a large number of agricultural loans at lower rates of interest are able to charge very high rates at the other end of the spectrum and therefore are quite often able to pay very high deposits on savings and this has a generally elevating effect on average lending rates throughout the Banking system.

The Central Bank is looking at this and it may very well be, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that some changes will be made in the way we administer interest rate control for the commercial banks.

Despite 1982 having been generally a year of recession in Barbados, I am happy to say that the assets and liabilities of the commercial banks increased by more than the inflation rate so there was some positive growth in the banking system during the year 1982. I have not

got the money supply figures to hand but Honourable Members will find that the money supply was kept under very reasonable control during the year and this, perhaps more than the interest rates themselves, has probably contributed to the moderation in inflation.

It is worth noting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I conclude that on this point of inflation, the two most significant items during 1982 were of the nature of personal emoluments — doctors' fees and masons and carpenters wages. You will find that they are the things that went up most.

You talk about fuel and light. Fuel and light have hardly risen in price for years. In three years, the index for fuel and light has gone up between 16 per cent and 17 per cent, hardly risen. When, however, you look at housing of which the wages of artisans is a principle component. The housing index has risen by 63 per cent and this very much bears out figures that the Honourable Member for St. Philip North has presented to this House about wages, materials and so on from time to time. It is very interesting to note that his observation on the ground, untrammelled by fancy fears, can point to facts subsequently fully justified by statistical evidence. The Bill now before the House, if we pass it and the Other Place passes it, will bring in \$1.8 million in respect of arrears and another \$2 million in respect of next year's tax and this money will be well spent in the development of Barbados.

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

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

Also, Sir, I wish to draw to your attention the appropriate Standing Order where Members are not allowed to read newspapers, Sir. I see the right honourable Leader of the Opposition.....

(Asides.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I do not mind you. I am not minding you.

I see the right honourable Leader of the Opposition reading a newspaper — and of all the newspapers, the *Nation*. I heard him with my own two ears, say that he would not read the *Nation*, nobody should buy it, that he

gets people to cut out clippings for him and all of these things — and he is sitting down here now reading the *Nation*, Sir.

I beg to second the Bill, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was very interested in hearing the reasons put forward by the honourable Prime Minister in relation to this matter now before the House.

Before dealing with the substance of the matter, I would just like to state for the record that we disagree with his assessment of the impact on the differential rates of interest in relation to capital flows in and out of Barbados, but that is another area.

Secondly, I hope that he will not allow external forces to influence him in relation to this nonsense about distortions between the interest rates and mortgages and general interest rates in the community.

Thirdly, if there has been any fall in the rate of inflation in Barbados, it certainly is not due to interest rates *per se*, but certainly would be partially due to external influences and the heavy deflationary impact of the total programme to which Barbados is committed, and on which interest rates, plus strict control of the money supply, would be the only two monetary contributing factors.

Those are the three main points that I wish to make and I just want to put it on the record that we are in total disagreement.

We also feel that the interest rates, which were raised unnecessarily in Barbados following the increase in the Treasury Bill rates in 1981, was totally unnecessary, has been destructive to the economy, but, however, these matters, I am sure, will be exposed in a forthcoming debate.

I want to say Sir, that it is my feeling that this Bill now before the House is brought now as a pre-emptive strike because the Minister of Finance has no option but to forego certain revenues which would have accrued to the Central Bank. And since the post appropriation profits of the Central Bank are paid into the Consolidated Fund, he is seeking to recoup on that revenue that he has to lose by making certain adjustments in relation to the abandonment of certain charges

on certain foreign exchange transactions within the banking system, as required by the agreement with the International Monetary Fund.

He will lose about \$2 to \$3 million. As a matter of fact, it is interesting that I calculated last night that the exact figure that they will be charging today would be approximately one-fifth of one per cent — I have it written down here on these notes I made last night — in order to recapture the money he will lose as a consequence of foregoing that revenue.

It is a simple calculation. Looking at the September figure of the total assets of the commercial banks, one came up with a figure of approximately one billion dollars, and if you work out the probable revenue accruing to the Central Bank on the charges accruing from those transactions, it would just about even out, or would probably be just about a little under.

Now, Sir, it also is important to recognize that this is not merely a matter of taxing banks that are making large profits in Barbados, an emotive position which I anticipated would be taken here today. It is the question of making sure that you raise revenue from that source in order to offset revenue that you will lose within the banking system by adhering to one of the requirements of the International Monetary Fund Agreement.
6.35 p.m.

But it is interesting, Sir, how small things like this can have widespread effects throughout the community. What are the assets of a commercial bank? As I can see them, they consist of cash, lodgements with the Central Bank, lending to other banks, Government bills and debentures, loans and overdrafts, foreign investments, and, of course, their real property, furniture and so on. What would this mean, one-third of one per cent? Let us take a bank like Barclays Bank, whose assets would probably be somewhere in the region of \$350 million. It would mean that, according to this piece of legislation, Barclays Bank would have to find somewhere in the region of \$1.4 million during this year. That is what one-fifth of one per cent would mean to Barclays Bank this year: \$700,000 and \$700,000.

I am saying, Sir, that this particular tax will constitute a disincentive to the banks to lend money. I say it for this reason: there are three ways in which the banks can minimise the impact of this tax; one is to reduce their assets, which means, of course, they would reduce their lending. A second way is to fund some of the lending through associated institutions that might not come into the range of this legislation, and it would be interesting to see whether a bank like Barclays Bank would probably pass more money to BARFINCOR or some other associated branch rather than face the full impact of this tax. That is one way of reducing it.

The other way of reducing it of course is to make more money by way of interest rates. That is controlled by the Central Bank and, ultimately, by the Minister of Finance, who has just said that he has at last seen the wisdom of reducing the interest rates and the past folly of having increased them unnecessarily in Barbados; so it would appear that high interest rates would not be the mechanism available to the banks in order to recoup the increased taxation consequential on this tax on their assets.

It would, therefore, seem to me, Sir, that the tax is going to be passed on, as most other taxes, to the community at large — and you are going to get it almost certainly by way of various commissions, commitment fees, draw downs on loans and the whole gamut of things you will probably find within the banking system.

So I, myself, do not see any particular benefit accruing to the community at large by the levying of this tax. Indeed, Sir — and this is what happens when you find yourself acting as an agent for international agencies who follow a doctrinaire position — I am satisfied that the Government would find itself foregoing income in a more reasonable manner without affecting the banking system, and which would have a wider spread — that is the way in which a tax was previously charged on various foreign exchange dealings — and now going for a form of taxation that can have a widespread effect within the banking system and certainly can have direct effects on those areas in the economy that could serve a productive function.

There are one or two other points I want to make. We are going to find ourselves in a ridiculous situation. I do not want to get into his assessment as to whether he is going to increase the reserve requirements or not. That is a problem for him. I know exactly what is going to happen — he is just going to dry the economy up even further.

I did mention earlier that one of the assets of the commercial banks consists of the cash and the balances with the Central Bank of Barbados. Ask yourself, what is that primarily used for? It is out of that pool of funds that the Central Bank is able to finance agriculture in Barbados, some aspects of manufacture and, also, contribute attractive interest rates to the developmental sectors of the economy. That amount of money would be removed from the community; and then you are going to be taxing that, because that is part of the assets of the commercial banks.

It seems to me to be a kind of nonsensical arrangement, and that is the kind of situation where the Minister of Finance often lands himself in when he has to adhere to doctrinaire principles by external agencies rather than being able to use flexibility in responding to local

demands in terms of the use of the resources of the country.

If you look, Sir, at how the assets of the commercial banks can be computed for the purpose of taxation, all it is is that they are omitting, basically, the foreign assets of the commercial banks — they amount to very little; I think it was between \$17 million and \$28 million in relation to \$1 billion — and that is omitted not to encourage any capital flows. I will tell you why it is omitted. It is omitted for the same reason: no tax on the foreign assets; that would be omitted for the same reason that the multiple currency practices would be abandoned, because it is part of a doctrinaire position of the International Monetary Fund.

You know, I feel insulted when I hear this kind of presentation, that you are going to tell me that the foreign assets of the commercial banks were somewhere in the region of \$17 million and you are omitting to tax \$17 million in order to encourage further flow — when you have a Central Bank, and when you look at the balances of the commercial banks, you will never see it rising above more than probably \$20 million, \$25 million or maybe \$30 million, and at the end of any month you will hardly even find balances in excess of that.

It is just completely ridiculous to come to this House with this kind of argumentation. It is a fact that he cannot tax it. There is no way he can tax that, because of the same principle relating to transfer payments and relating to taxing of foreign exchange dealings, just as it applies to multiple currency practice, would also apply to the tax on the foreign assets of commercial banks in Barbados.

The next point I wish to get to is the question of treasury bills and Government debentures. These constitute part of the assets of the commercial banks. There is no question in my mind that what the honourable Member is complaining of is what he, himself, encouraged and what he, himself, agreed to under the Article IV Consultation with the International Monetary Fund — to push up the treasury bill rate, to remove money from circulation by making treasury bill rates exceedingly attractive, even in relation to the interest rates that were existing then, and, therefore, moving away money from the private sector to the public sector.

Now he comes and finds he has a difficulty in getting the treasury bill rates down, or a difficulty in persuading the various organisations in the country to look towards a lower interest rates regime. He, himself, has created that kind of irrelevant atmosphere not only in relation to treasury bill rates, but in relation to interest rates in Barbados.

Then, Sir, I would believe that a substantial proportion of the assets of the commercial banks in Barbados must be in real property. It is going to be very difficult for him. I see here there is a column "Other", and I presume that under that column would come the real property of the commercial banks. I presume they pay property tax already. That forms part of the assets, so now you will probably find that you are taxing them doubly.

I will tell you this: the net effect of all this is that the banks will find one means or another to recoup on this. They will either seek to reduce their liability as I said earlier, by reducing their lending and therefore reducing what would formerly be part of their assets, or, in the alternate, they will seek alternative routes of lending their money through associated institutions in order to reduce their tax liability in this area, or they will do exactly what happened in Guyana when this was done; and what happened in Guyana is that they looked at the quickest and most effective way of reducing overheads, that is, looking at personnel, and you found that staff was retired, for people who left their jobs the vacancies were not filled, you had a whole amount of layoffs within the banking system — and so the story goes on and on again.

This is not the first time that this kind of tax has been imposed in countries, in this kind of programme, who have been forced to abandon other sources of revenue by minimal charges or selective charges on foreign exchange dealings within their jurisdiction.
6.45 p.m.

The fact that the Bill was contemplated sometime ago makes no difference, because the first commitment by the Government to abandon the revenue from that source occurred in September 1981. It does not fool me. The first approval was to continue until December 1981, then there was a further extension until December 1982, and then a promise to remove it not later than the Budget of 1983–84.

That is the context in which this is taking place and I have heard a speech introducing this that bears no relation whatsoever to the purposes of the matter before the House, and I can assure honourable Members that I will continue to probe these things as deeply as I can in order to come up with reasonable positions so that Members will realize that the kind of position which I have taken on this matter is much more in relation to reality than what they were told by the honourable Prime Minister. It is instructive also to the members of the Cabinet and members on the other side, and they will realize that the time has come when they must not swallow all sorts of statements and take them for granted.

How do you think that I could walk in here this morning with a piece of paper and tell you that the tax has got to be not less than one fifth of one per cent. Nobody told me that! You simply work out the revenue that the Central Bank would have got; you work out what would be the probable reduction in post appropriation profits that they would pass on to the Consolidated Fund and you work out what percentage of \$1 billion minus the \$17 million or \$28 million whatever it is — in fact, it was almost \$1 billion, because it was one billion, thirty-four thousand or something like that, and you could subtract the \$28 million — and you can come up with the net figure that would be taxable as the assets of commercial banks, plus or minus 1 per cent or 2 per cent, then you could work a percentage on that and you could come down to the figure of about \$2 million or thereabouts. It is a very simple calculation.

I could have told you before the honourable Member opened his mouth that it would be one fifth of 1 per cent, and I could tell you why, because I would know the revenue base to which it would have to be linked, what he is trying to correct and what he is trying to protect. That is the only way I could know it is one fifth of 1 per cent. If Members doubt me they can come and inspect my notes here. It is embodied in notes that have been written here on this particular subject.

It is a matter of interest, because nowhere in that presentation, and this is what I am dealing with, will Members realize exactly what was the purpose of this Bill before the House. We have heard all sorts of rambling statements about interest rates, about reserve requirements and the whole lot; but now we know, and now the whole thing has been exposed, and that is the position. Respond to that.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is quite amazing that the honourable Member, finding himself in the position in which he proclaimed to the world that the Government has entered into a programme with all kinds of conditionalities, which he is unable to prove, now finds himself today having to continue in the same vein to seek to explain a budgetary measure which was introduced long ago, long before any question of a programme with the IMF was ever entered into.

The honourable Member repeats in his speech today that measures, which were introduced in 1981, were part of a programme which was entered into in 1982. The fact of the matter is this, Sir. Many Governments have found that the taxation of banks.....

(Asides.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is no point of order. I am not giving way to a point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Read from the document. What does that say in 1981? You agreed to that in 1981, and I said it.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The honourable Member is only trying to redeem his own reputation when he seeks to repeat, as though it gives force to facts, that measures, which were introduced in 1981 as a result of the Government's own voluntary will; the honourable Member, because he has been exposed as having excited the population that the Government had programmes with all deleterious conditions; now he has been exposed and he is unable to produce them, he seeks now to justify his position by saying, "Oh, I am not talking about programmes produced in 1982. I am talking about the ones that were produced long before, in September 1981." It is nonsensical. Only a twisted and distorted mind would try to justify a false position in that manner.

Sir, the position is that many countries have found that it is difficult to get your just due from the taxation of banks because banks have an allowance in Income Tax Law for bad debt provisions, and it is exceedingly difficult to challenge deductions from revenue. The Inland Revenue cannot prove with any degree of accuracy in a recessionary period of time whether the bad debt provision is generous or non-generous.

If honourable Members will follow me, the Chancellor in the United Kingdom in his Budget last year made a lot of play of this fact, and there in Australia, if you are following what is going on around the world, you will see that Australia's Treasurer also had to deal with this. Because there are two things that happen in a recession with banks: One is that they make profits greater than normal, because although historically they would have some money in there at low interest rates, when interest rates rise, they make a bigger spread. But, at the same time, they try to reduce those profits by making extraordinary provision for bad debts because they say there are so many bankruptcies around that they have to make provision to take care of their shareholders' money. That is the rationale of it.

I defy the honourable Member to prove that it is impossible for this Government to introduce charges for processing foreign exchange. I defy you to prove that. I defy you to prove that.....

(Asides.)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, for us to introduce charges for processing. It is impossible. I defy the honourable Member to prove that. This has absolutely nothing to do with that. This Bill was part and parcel of the Government to capture some of the legitimate gains that banks make in a period of recessionary economy.

Now, Sir, I want to draw to the honourable Member's attention a very important fact. The honourable Member has missed the gist of the whole thing, that this Government has a policy where we would like to see more and more indigenous institutions in existence, supplanting some of the role that banks have played in the past.

6.55 p.m.

One of the most amazing things about that spokesman on the other side is this. I have been in here with him now four or five years, and I have never yet heard that honourable Member, as the spokesman on Finance, say what he would do if he were in power and what alternative programme they would have. I have never heard the honourable Member say that. He has never put forward anything, he is an arch critic, he adds nothing constructive to it. Speech by speech of the Democratic Labour Party, and that Member in particular, on any matter at all, all he does is to get up and criticise. He never says that if the Democratic Labour Party was in power the Democratic Labour Party would do A,B,C, or D. He has never said that yet.

Let me tell you what we have done. We have created the National Bank. You do not like it, but we have done it. We have created the Insurance Corporation. You do not like it, we have done it. We have also, and this is very significant, introduced measures to encourage trade unions and credit unions in Barbados to perform the role which, in other societies, similar institutions perform. In the United States of America, the savings and loans association provides more credit for housing than the commercial banks. What is the policy of the Democratic Labour Party in that respect? Why doesn't the honourable Member advert to that policy of the Government? Because the honourable Member is bankrupt and empty of policy! He has failed to realise that the greatest revolution that has taken place here in banking is what this Government has introduced.

Let me say this, Sir. Any trade union or any credit union that can get up and say that this Government has done nothing for them, their heads want examining. In a short space of time since that special measure, since that taxation relief that was given by the Government in the budget — why does he not talk about that one? Why does he not say that the IMF caused that, too? — you will see that the Public Workers' Credit Union can now boast of a share capital of \$3 million.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member be able to conclude his speech in another ten minutes?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: No, Sir.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now 7.00 p.m. This sitting now stands suspended until 8.00 p.m.

On Resumption:—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. When the suspension was taken, the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central was speaking.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was trying to reply to points raised by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. It is regrettable that he raised these red herrings and departed, but I still want to restate the position.

Contrary to the honourable Member's contention, the motivation for bringing this Bill has absolutely nothing to do with any revenue that will be lost as a result of the removal of any charge in relation to foreign exchange. This Bill was foreshadowed in the Budget Speech; the percentage that was to be charged, as the Minister of Finance will say, was long ago outlined.

But the point that I really want to get at is the point that the honourable Member did not advert to, and that is, he made no alternative suggestion as to how the Democratic Labour Party would finance housing.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Do you want ideas?)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: It is not a question of wanting ideas, we have the ideas, we implemented the national housing policy. The honourable Member who made that *sotto voce* remark had the dishonour to hold that office for all the years — and did nothing about it. We were the ones that implemented the scheme whereby private builders were given a reduction in the tax rate for housing. The honourable Member in all his 15 years as Minister of Housing never did that.

Secondly, Sir, we implemented the scheme whereby credit unions and trade unions can have their members sign a stipulated amount of their salary, and that is deducted off Income Tax. The proof of the effectiveness of that is, as I tried to point out, that, in a very short space of time, \$3 million in share capital has been raised by the National Union of Public Workers.

It is a great shame, it is a great pity that the largest workers' union in Barbados has not been able to encourage its members to take advantage of that. I am sure that the honourable Members on the other side agree with that. Can you imagine that they boast and claim that they have 35,000 members? We are willing to

forego the Income Tax. Can you imagine what a potent force they would be in this community if they could only get their members to have trust in them as financial managers and use the tax deductions? In a short space of time I would expect that they could have \$10 million, and I am sure that the Minister of Finance would look favourably towards a scheme whereby National Insurance money would be used as a supplement to what they raise on their own.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do you hear the honourable Member talking? The more the honourable Member (Mr. Greaves) talks, the more he is going to remind me of the things the Government has done. It has done so many things that, of course, you cannot remember all.

Look at what we have done with the Mortgage Finance Corporation. We brought it under public ownership. In your time you were quite satisfied to have the Englishmen run it. In the time of the honourable Member for St. Michael North, you were quite satisfied to have CDC run it, because you, as a member of the Democratic Labour Party, believed that the people in Barbados, as black people, should have nothing to do with money. That is the philosophy of the honourable Member for St. John. He said not to go in for banking, do not go in for insurance; once you let black people in it, they will carry away the money. The honourable Member believes in that. That is why, for all the 15 years the Democratic Labour Party was in power, the honourable Member has never had the courage to convert.....

Mr. P. M. GREAVES rose.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER rose.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two honourable Members on their feet. If the honourable Member for St. Michael North would stop shouting across the Chamber, the debate will continue. The honourable Member will have an opportunity to speak in due course.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Speak? The honourable Member cannot talk on housing. He was the Minister of Housing at the time when they had Cave Hill Heights under his regime. He was one of those who bought lots at Cave Hill.
8.05 p.m.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order. That is untrue. I never bought a lot or put my name down for any lots at Cave Hill. That is untrue, and a deliberate untruth. It is untrue and it should be withdrawn. It is an untruth.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Untrue and withdrawn? Look, Johnny Yearwood, a former Member Not you, you and your wife, you and your then wife

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER stands.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, Please.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Look 90 000 square feet of land. You had 90 000 square feet of land on reserve.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two honourable members are on their feet. Please.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I am on a point of order. The honourable Member is misleading the House. I have never reserved any land for myself at Cave Hill, for my wife, or for anybody. I have never done it. I have never reserved anything for anybody. I have not. He is misleading the House.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do not jog my memory. I will tell you about Mitchell Construction.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: About who?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do not jog my memory.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER stands.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Two honourable Members are on their feet. The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central please address the Chair.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Let his memory be jogged. I want him to talk about it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central stick to the Bill and do not start a housing debate at this time.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I do not want to promote any debate, but if my memory is jogged, it is long and it keeps a lot of things in it. In St. Philip, too? The honourable Member must not mention about St. Philip. I will remind the honourable Member that if his policy on housing, which this Bill deals with, was such, he would have never ended up with the land at Mangrove, you call it?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on a point of order. I draw to Your Honour's attention the rule concerning the conduct of debate, Sir.

The honourable Member says that this Bill is about the policy on housing. One would have to stretch the imagination far and wide to get a policy on housing out of a Bill which is to deal with taxing assets of a bank. I submit that the honourable Member is out of order to suggest that this is a Bill dealing with a policy on housing, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I accept that the Bill is not a Bill dealing with housing and I would ask the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central to contain his debate within the four corners of the Bill.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I will do that, Sir. But in the introduction of the Bill, the Minister of Finance stated very clearly that one of the objects of this taxation was to ensure that not only would the Government get revenue, but it would be used as a device, by the definition of the net assets, to ensure that if a portion of the reserves which are now in the Central Bank and held in debentures or Treasury Bills, were held in certain instruments relating to housing, he would consider exempting them — and that is how the housing talk come in.

The honourable spokesman for the Ministry of Finance never adverted to that point at all. The Opposition spokesman, the Shadow Minister of Finance, never adverted to that point at all, never did. Of course, the fact that the honourable Member is not here again is only another indication that his whole style in this House, and outside this House, is to make the wildest allegations and to run when the time comes when he has to face the answers to those allegations. Today is no exception.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I had absolutely no intentions whatsoever of joining this debate. In a way I have been dragged into it and, to some extent, Sir, I am not at all sorry. I have sat here and heard all kinds of wild allegations repeated in this House, and I believe they were repeated in my absence, when I was not a member of this House. I say, Sir, they are very wild allegations.

Before I get to that, Sir, there are one or two points about this Bill to which I would like to advert, Sir. I understand, Sir — I am not too sure if from the right honourable Member who moved the Bill or whether it is from the honourable Member from Christ Church East who last spoke — that this measure arose out of the Budget of 1981, and there is one aspect of this matter that gives me some cause for concern.

This Bill, here, appears to be a bit of retroactive legislation collecting monies from organizations from the year 1981. Now, Sir, we are in the year 1983. I do not know, Sir, if this is the thin edge of the wedge. I know that the Government is in a difficult financial position. I know that they will try legitimate ways to collect money. I am not saying that collecting money retroactively is an

illegitimate way, but, in a way, Sir, I will have to question its morality.

Normally, companies would have closed their books at a particular time of the year, and when the books are closed, it means that they have made all the entries that they should have made in respect of that year and taken into account all the taxes that they should have paid. All of that would have been entered into the books of that particular corporation.

Here we come now, Sir, in 1983, and we are imposing taxes for the calendar year 1981. I hope, Sir, I am only expressing a hope, that this is not the thin edge of the wedge, because companies, Limited Liability Companies, cannot feel comfortable if they read that taxes are going to be imposed. I have my doubts, Sir.

There might well be some good explanation to this, and it might very well not be the case that the Government intended to make this their pattern, but all I am saying is that companies cannot feel comfortable if, after their books are closed and all the legitimate taxes at the time have been taken care of, a law is passed through Parliament and then they are expected — or they have to, because it then becomes the law — to look for funds, for which they have not budgeted for a particular year, in order to satisfy the demands of the Ministry of Finance. I hope, Sir, that this is just the case. It may very well be that it arose out of the Budget of 1981 and this is therefore an isolated case, and I would hope that that is the case.

8.15 p.m.

But during the course of this debate, we heard how the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central made wild allegations. I did not know that wild allegations are made in here, although I should not say that, because I heard some here tonight. It was said that he made wild allegations and ran. Whatever he says, he is an arch critic; he says nothing constructive; he has said nothing constructive as Shadow Minister of Finance from the time he has held that position; this is what we have heard.

Then he went on to say what the Government has done in terms of the banks and, it would appear by association, what it would have done in terms of mortgage finance, because it was said that in the United States of America we have savings and loans associations, and those savings and loans associations have put more money into the mortgage market in the United States of America than any of the commercial banks. That, Sir, is a fact. Then the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central went on to ask, what is it that they have done on the other side?

Well, I will explain what we have done on the other side. The Caribbean Development Corporation, with our blessings and with an equity input from the Government when we were in Government, started the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company. The Government of Barbados was a participant, had equity in the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company when I was then Minister in charge of the Urban Development Corporation, and they were dealing with me at the time. I was not then Minister of Housing. We put a considerable amount of money into it and we made a decision at the time that we were going to take over the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central knows this, but he chose not to say it. We had a vote in the Estimates called "Acquisition of Assets" and Barbados Mortgage Finance Company was one of the things that we were taking over. At the time when we demitted office in 1976 we had Mr. Harcourt Lewis negotiating the take over of the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company from the Caribbean Development Corporation that ran it, or if you like, the Eastern Caribbean Housing. It was a combination of Eastern Caribbean Housing Limited and Barbados Mortgage Finance Company.

It is all right for the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central to stand up here and befuddle his own members, who do not know the truth, but I am sure he knows it and he knew it at the time when he said it. He knew the truth — and he is there smiling. Let him get up and admit that what I am saying is the truth. The others there will now know it. I do not believe many on the front bench would know it and the total back bench would not know it; but he knows it is the truth, that we, at the time, had plans to take over — and not only had plans, but were actually working on it at the time when we left office. That was our policy, and that was well known.

(Asides).

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: The National Insurance? It is all there.

Anyhow, Sir, it is not a matter of, "What have you done?" That is what we have done and it will be written into Hansard. If it was not said before, it is being said now, because this is a fact, this is history, and you are in a position to know. So let it now be said and let the world read it.

It is a deliberate untruth that I was purchasing any property from the National Housing Corporation. It is a deliberate untruth.

(Asides).

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Of course I did not purchase it. I did not purchase it, agree to purchase it, took it nor anything of the kind. I had no intention of purchasing. How could I take it?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As the honourable Member was attacked by the honourable Member on this side about this housing policy, I have deliberately given the honourable Member time to reply to that attack, but I would like the honourable Member to come back to the Bill before the House, because I believe you have had about enough time to respond to the attacks made on you by this time. So if the honourable Member would care to come back to the Bill before the House, I would be very happy.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Yes, Sir. I appreciate your ruling. I accept that. I did not like the imputation of the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central that I had land at Wanstead or Cave Hill, or wherever it was. I am sorry about that, but I had to say that, it had to be said.

I think I have made the points that I rose to make because, quite frankly, I had no intention at this point of getting into the debate on this particular matter, and I thank you, Sir, for your indulgence.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wish to make a very brief contribution to this particular debate on this Bill, the Banks (Tax on Assets) Act, 1983.

First of all, it appears that this has all the hallmarks of a budgetary matter. Just looking at it as an ordinary legislator, this matter appears to me as a budgetary matter and I really would raise the question as to why this particular measures does not come, or will not come, within the framework of the budget for the next financial year. I refer to this.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, I may help the honourable Member. I do not want him to make himself as stupidly ridiculous as the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. This was in the last Budget, right down to the one-fifth of one percent and the \$2 million.

At this stage certain remarks made by Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS were ordered expunged from the Record.

Sir, I do not want the honourable Member for St. Michael South to come and put himself down on record with any ridiculous speech, because he is more sensible than that.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am thankful to the Minister of Finance, and I would certainly wish to get a copy of the last Budget from the Clerk so that I could get that particular reference identified.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Would the honourable Member continue his speech?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was really trying to get hold of this document, which is a document of this Honourable Chamber. We would really like to see that specific reference. I wonder if you could assist me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am really trying to get a document which is germane to this particular debate at this particular moment.
8.25 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will accept the statement of the honourable Prime Minister, and I will leave that.....

Asides.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: But, Mr. Deputy Speaker I am prepared to.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member must decide whether he wants to speak on the Bill now or at a later date.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: No, I am continuing my speech. I will reserve my point on the budgetary matter for a later date and time.

I am grateful to the Minister of Finance for drawing to my attention that this was part of the Budgetary Proposals for 1982 for the financial year of 1982 and that this is merely the implementation of that particular matter.

Secondly, I am concerned also about Clause 4, which is part of the principles of this Bill, which gives the power to the Minister of Finance to fix the rate at which the tax would be imposed. This is part of the general principles of the Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I can steer clear pretty close. I am concerned about that, because it is fundamental to the very principles of the Bill that we are talking about.

This matter of the Minister of Finance being able to fix the rate at which this tax will be imposed simply by an order, I believe is putting too much power in the hands of the Minister of Finance without a specific affirmative reference to this Honourable Chamber. I believe we are talking now about a principle, about the raising of public revenues, and about precise specific

accountability in the absence of any kind of a committee of this Honourable Chamber to look at the area of delegated legislation and those areas.

I think that this is a very important principle that we are talking about and, as a legislator, I do not believe that, from this particular position, I can knowingly acquiesce in that kind of authority being invested in the Minister of Finance. I am a parliamentarian. I believe in the rule of Parliament and I believe that Parliament should not be treated in this particular way in these matters. I believe we should retain control, positive affirmative control, over these matters.

The last point I wish to make relates to the point made by my colleague, and it refers to the area of retroactive or retrospective legislation. I have spoken on such matters before, and I am generally against that kind of provision in legislation as a matter of principle. I have not been persuaded so far in this debate that there are any special circumstances which would require retroactive legislation in this particular regard, and in the absence of such compelling reasons, I must say that I have great concern, great reserve, and must express my grave disquiet over that particular aspect of the bill.

I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to make a small contribution to this debate. I must confess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that in recent times, whenever there has been anything akin to an economic debate, the issues seem to be reducing themselves to what could be described, in economic terms as, "the trite." I am really disappointed sometimes when I hear the kinds of issues which emerge from what have been euphemistically described in this Honourable Chamber as "economic debates".

I believe, Sir, that there are certain aspects to this Bill which were not sufficiently explained by the Prime Minister in his introduction of this Bill. But I will want to make this point before going any further into that. The Prime Minister, in the course of his introduction of the Bill, made some statements concerning the role which high interest rates have played in the economic development of Barbados over the last year or so.

I wish to say that I do share his view that the high interest rates would have contributed to benefits which he sought to suggest. The fact that inflation is coming down in Barbados should not, in my view, be attributed to the imposition of high interest rates.

I recall that when, indeed, he did indicate to this Honourable Chamber — or, I believe, it could have been

on television — that interest rates would be rising in Barbados, the reason given at that time, Sir, was that, in order to avoid the flight of capital from Barbados, or in order to prevent capital that otherwise would have come into Barbados from failing to do so, it was necessary to allow some increase in the interest rates in Barbados. Now, today, Sir, it seems as if he is indicating that the interest rates have played some role in checking inflation in Barbados.

It seems to me, Sir, that he should recognize that, across the whole world, aggregate demand is necessarily falling, must necessarily fall, as a result of those high interest rates and, therefore, whenever aggregate demand begins to fall, it is trite economic theory that inflation, or prices, will tend to come down.

The honourable Member has for some considerable time in the embryonic of his schooling in the field of economics, which he has had the pleasure of doing from the position of Minister of Finance, been putting out a heresy which he is the author of and, perhaps, the only believer in. He has been saying that you can add the rate from year one to the rate from year two to the rate from year three, and if that figure comes to 120, he says that, from year one to year three, there was inflation of 120 per cent.

Now, Sir, if I did not know that he has a finer acquaintance with mathematics than he does with economics, I would say that he was mistaken. I believe that he deliberately does this in order to confuse a large number of people in the community in terms of comparative analyses of the behaviour of the economy in one year as compared with another year.

The honourable Member continues to add the 40 per cent inflation in 1973 or 1974, or whenever it was, with the 20 per cent of the following year and says that that was 60 per cent inflation in the two years. This is the only place I have ever seen that analysis done; he is the only person I have ever heard saying it; and I believe that he must be the only person, who describes himself as an economist, who believes that it is valid.

But the fact is that without high interest rates, when indeed the economy of Barbados saw inflation going to 39.8 per cent in 1974, when, indeed, the whole world had been hit with the economic crisis and the so-called fuel crisis, and they had had no experience in dealing with those matters, and when in fact the impact on Third World countries was being felt for the first time ever, the managers of the economy at that time had to find answers.

8.35 p.m.

I can stand here and say, Sir, that we did not find it necessary to resort to the International Monetary Fund.

I can stand here and say that we did not find it necessary to increase unemployment in the community, and I can also stand here and say with impunity that, from the high of 39.3, we were able, through skilled management, to bring the inflation rate in this country to 2 per cent in September 1976.

The honourable Member, when he is talking about the honourable Member for St. Michael West who presided over the economy when it rose to 39 per cent, has never given reasons why it rose to 39 per cent.

I look forward to an honest and sincere debate by the honourable Member on economic matters where what he says can be accepted as serious argument by those whose business it is to study these matters. I understand that when he is making political points on the platforms there are certain excesses, which have been accepted as the norm on the political platform in this society, but I believe the time has come for him to address economic debate in serious terms and stop trying to give the wrong impressions concerning the period of management in this country which was unique to Barbados.

I think that, even though he himself, might not so do, there are many persons, who are serious economic thinkers, who accept that between 1974 and 1976 Barbados had a high degree of serious economic decision making which allowed this country to weather that storm. I do not feel pilloried by his mouthings on this matter, but I feel somewhat grieved that each time he finds himself in a bind concerning a particular line of argument, he considers it necessary and desirable to resort to that line of argument which, quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is, at the highest, fallacious.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a lot of what passes for economic theory in this Honourable Chamber has been admirably and succinctly summed up in an issue of *Time Magazine* recently. A bit more of it can be found in the *Economist*, and, indeed, a document, which has been put out by the International Labour Organisation recently, sums up the situation in terms of the international money market and the world financial situation. A lot of what we are forced to receive as verities in this Chamber and in this community is accepted as commonplace in other more enlightened societies where they read these matters, ponder upon them, and recognise that even in a society like the United States where economics has been brought, in quantitative terms, to the finest degree of analysis, there is a large number of profits on one side of the equation and an equally large number of profits on the other side.

I do not intend to become involved in sterile discussions about the economy of Barbados. What I do say is this: Our economy is a special kind of economy. It is a very small, open economy and therefore it is sus-

ceptible to a high degree of calibration at the decision making level than perhaps some other economies in the world. We cannot, for example, take note of inflation in a place like Barbados without also taking note of the levels of employment.

Sometimes it might be desirable to have a slightly higher level of inflation in a community of this size and have more persons at work, because what I like to call "the quality of life index" in a society of this kind requires different kinds of decisions from those which may be made in a society like, say, the United States, which is so wide and diverse that a pocket of poverty in the Appalachian Mountains, or a continuous pocket of poverty in Harlem, would be totally removed and extraneous to the normal everyday progress of the economy in one direction or the other.

Unfortunately in Barbados, we cannot allow such pockets of poverty, or such pockets of degradation, to exist in this society, because, in strict terms, we ourselves, add up to no more than a pocket in the total scheme of things. When, therefore, the honourable Member, as Minister of Finance, seeks through the Central Bank to impose a tax on the banks, the issue does not relate only to the banking system in Barbados or to the banks *per se*, the issue must relate to the effect which that decision is going to have, the multiplier effect if you will, on the society as a whole.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in my experience in Barbados, there is not, as there is in the United States and other larger economies, any susceptibility of absorbing loss on the part of those who are in the business of making profit. The people who are in the business of making money in this country, unlike their colleagues and friends in, say, North America, do not know about absorbing a loss in the first quarter of a financial year, riding out a loss in the second quarter, so that they can help to pick up the economy and make their gains in the fourth quarter. They have a consistency of approach that they must earn their profits, that their profit levels must remain at the same point throughout their operations, and indeed to show increases on an annual basis — or otherwise they have not succeeded in their ventures.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the imposition here, which is a revenue earning measure for the Government, will be passed on to the community. I do not believe that the Prime Minister will be able, through any measures he may take, to prevent this taxation measure from being passed to the community by way of services, by way of the approach which the bankers will take, and by way of the psychological result, which I will explain this way — the bankers will be the first to indicate that, the Government having taxed their assets, they are in a worse position than they would have been if the Government

had not taxed their assets, and therefore they are forced to increase certain charges and certain costs to their customers.

Needless to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, once their customers absorb these increases, their customers will pass them on to he and she who bears the ultimate burden in this community, the ordinary customer. Thus, this measure, while it seeks to recognise that the banks will make some additional profits through high interest rates, will at the same time be inflationary to the extent that the banks will seek to pass it on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is another aspect to this Bill which causes me some concern. The Bill says that it seeks to provide for the imposition of a tax on the assets of a bank. Sir, when one tries to find what is meant by the assets of a bank, one finds that the assets as described in the Bill can be found in the Schedule. The Bill itself says that the word "assets" in the Bill means what is described in the Schedule. When one looks at the Schedule, however, one does not get a clearly defined definition of assets, and one gets the definition which suggests that the Central Bank will have the hegemony on the decision as to what constitute the assets to be taxed. I wish to suggest to the Honourable Minister of Finance that, at the least, this is untidy.

8.45 p.m.

When one has looked at the word "assets" in the dictionary, one finds, among the other definitions, "All the property, real and personal, of a person, of a corporation or of a partnership which is or maybe chargeable with the debts or legacies of such parties or persons."

When one looks at Chap. 323 (C) of the Laws of Barbados, which is the chapter governing the operations of the Central Bank, one does not find therein any definition of assets. And while the Minister of Finance may have in his mind a clear picture of which assets he wishes to tax, I believe that this issue can go beyond the passing of the legislation here, when banks seek to question the assets if and when the Central Bank may make a decision contrary to the bank's own views. If I were a banker, I would seek to make sure that those assets which the Central Bank would designate would be the least possible value of my total assets.

We have an indication that foreign net assets will not be touched, and, therefore, we are dealing with the assets as they relate to the local situation. Now, the banks in Barbados, as I understand it, apart from their deposits — and, as you know, Sir, they are not required to keep all the money that comes in from deposits — keep their assets in real property. Real property, for the purposes of this area, add up to more than plain mere house and land and, therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the question as to

whether a bank is going to be subject to taxation twice on the same assets is a matter on which the House should have clear and unambiguous directions or information.

I, myself, am not ever going to be a spokesman for the banking system in Barbados because I do not believe, that, except for a short period in the history of banking, the country has benefited sufficiently from the vast assets which have been accumulated by those who have practised banking in this country.

If one would look at the profit and loss accounts of the major banks in Barbados, one would find that they have, indeed, made handsome profits over the years; and when one looks at the charges which have been imposed on customers, and when one further looks at the conservative approach which banks have tended to use — even in times when there were no restrictions on credit, and when one looks at the discriminatory approach to development financing which one had found in the banking system in Barbados, it would be extremely difficult for one to stand here and be a spokesman for the banks.

But, at the same time, there is a certainty in the affairs of commerce which is necessary if one is to attract additional capital, if one is to maintain the atmosphere, or create the atmosphere — which, I believe, on both sides of this Honourable House it has been sought to maintain in Barbados — of a very highly sophisticated area in the field of finance and in the field of banking and commerce, then I believe that when the Government is about to impose taxation, the Government should make sure that that taxation imposition is not subject to any misinterpretation or not subject to any misunderstanding by those who might not have been privy to the explanations given, for example, in this Honourable House.

It is for that reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I am suggesting to the honourable Member that “assets”, as described here in this Bill, needs some further elucidation and some further definition. I am not, as you will recognise, Mr. Deputy Speaker, attempting to discuss the details of the Bill. But, as I said, I cannot find, from looking at the parent Act of the Central Bank, where assets are defined; and if the Central Bank is going to be given a discretionary power, because that is what it will turn out to be, both on the side of the Central Bank and the side of the banks that will have to be taxed, there is need for further clarification.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my colleagues have referred to the retroactive legislation, as they have put it, I think my position on that is sufficiently well known, and I will indeed look forward to hear the Prime Minister's explanation as to where he has imposed this particular banking levy in his Budgetary Statement.

I see where he said — and I am quoting from page 1362 of the official document, House of Assembly, Wednesday, March 31, 1982 —

“I have decided to introduce a new tax of one-fifth of one per cent chargeable annually on the assets of commercial banks in Barbados calculated on an average basis over the previous year as certified by the Central Bank.”

I have seen that now, Sir.

Now, in those broad terms, one understands what he is saying he will do. But, as I believe one of my colleagues sought to point out earlier, now that the tax is imposed, unless the issue is clarified in the terms which Your Honour would appreciate, the banks will necessarily squabble over what constitutes taxable assets under the Corporation Tax Act and what constitutes taxable assets under this Act, and I, myself, would be grateful to the honourable Member if, after consultation with his officials, they can tell me what, in fact, will be the assets that will be taxed. Because merely to say “as certified by the Central Bank” is, in my view, opening the door for creating some problems.

I wish to make one other point on the retroactive legislation. If, in fact, it was made in the 1982 Budget — I do not believe in the 1982 Budget he indicated that he would, in fact, be taking it off the 1981 income, and we are in 1983 — it may very well be that he intended to introduce this towards the end of 1982 — but I would like to ask the Prime Minister and Minister of Finance whether he had indicated to the banks that they ought to reserve payment on their certified assets, as we put it, for 1981.

8.55 p.m.

If that is not so, if the banks have made no provision for it — and if I recall correctly there is a regime which has been established for paying the 1981 amount and the 1982 amount — all of this would occur in a relatively short time. You may say that the amount from each bank would not be a large amount, but I think that the banks can

Asides

Mr. B. M. TAITT: There, Sir, is the point I was about to come to. I was going to say that one-fifth of one per cent is not small for those banks that have a lot of dealings and, therefore, whose assets are going to be large. What I am suggesting is that imposing a tax now, because he is late, assuming that the lateness is his fault, means that they in fact would be paying in one financial year the equivalent of two years' taxes. That is bound to have, bearing in mind all I have said before, a deleterious effect.

Now it is not that the banks might not be able to absorb it. The banks would have been able to absorb it. I am not making a case that the banks may not absorb it. I am suggesting, however, that the method which he is using for collecting it could in fact be spread over a longer period. It may very well be that his requirements do not permit that kind of generosity and, therefore, he is going to have it from the banks as he needs it; he is going to take it one time.

I cannot argue with him if he says that is what his requirements and what the requirements of the community are. There are those, however, who will raise questions about the efficacy of this kind of measure being imposed as a result of tardiness on the part of the Minister of Finance in bringing to fruition something which he hinted or indicated he would do in his budget.

I recognise, Sir, from your indications, that my time has run out, and I am grateful to Your Honour for your indulgence in this matter.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to reply to this debate which except for one drool contribution has been an interesting and useful one to the Government. To deal with a serious contribution first, the contribution of the honourable member for St. Michael West, he has unerringly put his finger on the very reason why this Bill took a long time to come.

MOMENT OF INTERRUPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now 9 o'clock, the Moment of Interruption.

Will the Prime Minister be able to conclude by 9.30 p.m?

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Oh, yes, Sir. I can conclude my speech. I do not know about the Committee stage. The continuation is not controversial because I am just winding up.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West has put his finger really on the very point because it was this very discussion over the definition of "assets" which caused the Commissioner of Inland Revenue a great deal of concern over a period of months, because the Central Bank's definition of assets and his definition of assets are not the same. But I would with respect point out to the honourable member that the tax is not a tax on income and profit at all; it is really a capital tax, a capital levy you may call it, and so its retroactivity really is unimportant. The retroactivity is a measurement, it is not a relation back. Once you decide to make a capital levy, you have to fix a base date for the capital, and you could, fix it five years ago if you felt like. That being so, I do not think that the retroactivity worries the banks.

The Commissioner of Inland Revenue comes in because he is administering the Act. The Central Bank is not a tax collecting body and there was perhaps some friction between the two bodies relating to the definition, but I made it clear to the Commissioner that this was not an addition to the corporation tax on the banking system. It is a different tax, and therefore a different measure was to be used. The present measure is the one used in the ordinary course of dealing between the Central Bank and the commercial banks. It will be found in Table B.1 of the Central Bank's Monthly Report. The assets shown there are cash; balances due from the Central Bank; from other banks in Barbados; Treasury Bills; other Government paper; private investments, real property and the like; loans and advances which is the largest single item by far; foreign assets usually coming in between six per cent and 10 per cent of loans and advances; and other assets. These assets are already returned by the banks monthly to the Central Bank. The banks know the Central Bank's view of assets, and it is agreed with the banks that the Central Bank will determine the assets on the basis of their monthly returns. There has already been a long course of dealing, and the Central Bank has satisfied me that they will have no difficulty in determining assets on this basis, and we must remember that the calculations of the tax have been made on the basis of the assets returned from the Central Bank. So whatever system is in force is accepted now by all the parties.

Nonetheless, the honourable member's point is very well taken indeed. The definition is well nigh tautologous because it refers you to something that you cannot really determine. This is an open ended bridge with no bank on the other side. Assets "has the meaning prescribed in the Schedule," and the Schedule says "Assets means what the Central Bank says it means and determines", but it would not, I think, have been a good system to say "assets means what the Central Bank publishes in the Monthly accounts", but that is really what it means.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is very little more to say about the whole debate. The talk on housing occasioned some heat. The honourable member for St. Michael North defended himself with some force, but the honourable member for St. Michael North must not be drawn. He is the only member of the House who has been specifically criticised in a Commission of Enquiry for infelicity in his ministerial dealings. He should beware of opening himself to debate on his duties and the performance thereof while he was Minister of Housing. The honourable member thinks he has nothing to be worried about in the report of the Commission on the Housing Authority, and I suppose he can say that 179 voters agree with him that he had nothing to worry about, 179 votes against Mr. Ezra Alleyne. I will not

deal with the two acres at Husbands that was set aside for nominees of the Minister.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to remind the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, I am on a point of order, that at this time he should not be into any controversial areas, and I believe you are aware what we are talking about, and if he wants the tolerance to continue, I would suggest that we leave the controversial matters out at this stage.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: All right, Sir. It is really quite unnecessary. The speech of the honourable member for St. Michael South Central was a ridiculous speech. You see, long ago I heard Lloyd Smith say in here "the higher monkey go, the more he show his tail!"

Now the honourable member has had a long run of coming in here and congratulating himself on his own cleverness, his own industry, his own capacity for finding things out, his sources of information, his intellectual powers of deduction. He congratulates himself every time; he says "oh what a clever boy was I!"

I sat upstairs, I was talking on the telephone to my mother, God Bless her. She has not been well, but instead of being able to find out how my mother was, I had to listen to some ridiculous nonsense on a loud speaker about, "how do you think I came in here with a piece of paper. It is because I have made deductions and I know the tax would have to be one-fifth of one percent. It is exactly equal to the amount that will be lost to the IMF."

9.05 p.m.

Now the first thing is that the Hon. member would have to know that the tax is one-fifth of one percent because I sent the Leader of the Opposition and the Hon. member with my compliments a copy of the brief prepared for me by the Central Bank to introduce this measure today. It is marked there "Dr. R. C. Haynes with compliments J. M. A.," and the Leader of the Opposition has one, the "Rt. Hon. E. W. Barrow with compliments J. M. A.," and the opening words of the brief are: "Government introduced the tax on commercial Bank's assets in the 1982 Budgetary Proposals to apply to bank assets at the rate of one-fifth of one percent." So that when he got up to make his speech I would have known, whether he remembered the Budget or not, that it was one-fifth of one percent.

I would point out that research about a tax should surely start with a budget. The Hon. member was in the House in the last budget. He replied on television and I said in the last budget, March 31, 1982, reported on page 1962 of the Debates of Parliament the following words; "in addition I have decided to introduce a new tax of

one-fifth of one percent chargeable annually on the assets of commercial banks in Barbados calculated on an average basis over the previous year as certified by the Central bank. This new tax is to come into effect from this year and will be payable annually in July with respect of the previous year's assets." I went on to say that because I had introduced some other banking fees these changes to banking fees are expected to yield additional revenue of \$2.1 million gross in a full year. That meant the new licence plus that.

Hon. members will now — and I am addressing particularly Hon. members opposite, because all of us on this side have seen through the old fraud long ago — Hon. members can now estimate and the general public can estimate how much credit should be given to the Hon. member for St. Michael South Central when he makes one of his spectacular revelations derived from his great intellectual powers, for his burning of the midnight oil, his deductions, his conclusions, and his secret sources of information. Something which was in the budget, he comes in and declares he *knew*. Of course he knew. It was in the Budget and in a document I sent to him today by the Marshal. He says it is part of the commitment to the IMF, but it is something which happened long before the IMF was in it. He says that the fees are to replace the fees which will be lost on Central Bank's transactions of \$1½ million. The Central Bank's fees come to about \$300,000.

There was never any stage when I introduced this that I contemplated for one moment the question of the IMF, the Central Bank's fees, the loss of anything referred to by the Hon. member.

(Asides.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: All we knew is that we wanted around \$2 million in new banking in revenue from the banks. That is all we knew. It would be ridiculous, if it were not for the newspapers that take this foolish man so seriously. The Nation newspaper has regarded the man as a serious purveyor of information, a person whose arguments must be treated with some kind of respect, but he is a charlatan as has been demonstrated here today — false arguments, impressions rather than truth.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. I am submitting that it is a breach of the Standing Orders to refer to a member of this Honourable Chamber as a 'Charlatan.'

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not rule that unparliamentary.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, I have finished with the Hon. member for St. Michael South Central. He has made himself a joke over this tax. I cannot deal with it anymore. The point I would make finally in answer to the Hon. member for St. Michael West is that the banks will undoubtedly take this into account when calculating the charges they make to customers. But the Hon. member will recall that it is possible to control the spread of interest rates of the banks and the Central Bank will be looking at that. We are fully aware of the fact that any business likes to pass a tax on to its customers. But with banks it is a little more different.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is really, I think, no other point to be answered that hon. members have made. The Hon. member for St. Michael South, I cannot handle that Sir. The House has entrusted the Minister of Finance with the right to change the rates of many, many taxes by order. If you cannot change any tax by order.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation Sir, I believe the point that was made was not that the Minister should not get it but in all the others the order is required to come to Parliament. The suggestion here seems to be — this is the point that was made — that there was no provision for the Order made by the Minister to come to Parliament for negative or other sanction. This was the point that was made. It was not questioning whether the Minister should have the power but that no provision was made here for the usual coming to Parliament of the Order.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is a point of elucidation.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes. That is what I said Sir.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I think Sir, that the Interpretation Act may provide automatically that it is subject to negative Resolution. The Attorney General's off the cuff opinion is that certainly it has to come to Parliament — as we know, Sir, from the Deportation Order litigation when the courts ruled that had to be laid in Parliament. My impression is that this has to be laid in Parliament too. I will have to give Parliament an assurance that the Order will always be laid as part of general subsidiary legislation.

Sir, I have no objection to its becoming the subject of negative Resolution. I do not think that an Order changing the rate of taxation on banks need command a debate in Parliament. If the Opposition wants a debate they can have a debate. But I myself would not support its going to affirmative resolution. But since I gather from the managers that we are not going to be in Committee there will be the opportunity between now and Friday for the lawyers to consider it. But I have absolutely no objection to its being laid in Parliament subject to negative Resolution, no objection whatsoever.

9.15 p.m.

If the lawyers advise that a further form of words should be used, I would have to agree to that. It is not normal with rates of interest to bring them to Parliament, because they may be changed often, but this is a tax and I can understand that. I would be prepared to concede negative resolution if this is insufficient to command it.

I beg to move the 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.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, at this point I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 21st January at 2.00 p.m.

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

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

9.18 p.m.

On Resumption:

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Order No. 5, Sir.

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

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

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clause 1 was called.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on a point of order, Sir. As I understand it, we have gone into Committee to deal with Order No. 5. Order No. 5, as I understand it, is to move the Second Reading of a Bill to reform the law relating to abortion. My understanding of the procedure.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir. I would like to draw to Your Honour's attention that the point which the honourable Member is making, or is about to finish making, can only be raised when the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker is in the Chair, Sir. The House is now in Committee and, therefore, that point cannot be raised at this point and time, Sir.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am quite sure you have always depended on the Clerk at times for advice if there is any doubt in your mind, Sir. That point cannot be raised in Committee; only when the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker is in the Chair, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The fact is that I have not yet heard the point that is being made.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Precisely.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rose on a point of order concerning the procedure of this Honourable House and our being in Committee at this stage. When this Bill was being considered, there was a motion that further consideration of this Bill be postponed.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I must draw to your attention that the House is now in Committee. Clause 1 has been called and the honourable Member can only speak on Clause 1 at this time, Sir.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It has not been called.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Clause 1 has been called by the Clerk.

(Asides.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot and I am not prepared to entertain this sort of conduct today. Two honourable Members are on their feet at the same time.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: A point of order can be drawn to the Officer or the Member sitting in the Chair at anytime.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will entertain the honourable Member in a short while. Just give me a chance.....

A long pause.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I fully understand, I believe, what you are seeking. The honourable Member for St. Michael West is about to draw the attention of the Chair to some matter.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Concerning the proceedings of this Honourable Chamber. Sir, we are in Committee. I am submitting that the manner by which we came into Committee is not in keeping with the procedure customary for this Honourable House. The Order which was called, Order No. 5 on the last occasion when that Order was being debated, there was a motion, it was a dilatory motion, which was that further consideration of that Bill be postponed.

At the time, an honourable Member was on his feet. The honourable Member who moved that, under May's and in the procedures that have gone in this House, is the honourable Member whom Mr. Speaker would normally say he has not seen in his place or call upon that honourable Member to resume debate, and he would acquaint other honourable Members that debate on that Order is about to resume.

The motion cannot be, "I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time." It is out of order, I submit, Sir, and it is not in keeping with the highest traditions of parliamentary proceedings. If the Government feels that that is the way it wishes to proceed, it may do so.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Just a moment. The honourable Member began by saying that the House is now in Committee and then goes on to tell us of a matter which should have been dealt with at an earlier stage. I cannot now entertain the submission of the honourable Member.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. I am submitting that we are entering into a travesty of the rules of this House. How can we go into

Committee on a matter which the House, itself, has accepted, by Resolution, should be postponed. I am submitting, Mr. Chairman that we cannot debate this particular matter in Committee, because the Committee has no power to debate this matter, because the House itself has already passed a Resolution for further consideration to be deferred.

In addition — I am making a point of order Mr. Chairman — I am submitting that it is not only inconsiderate and discourteous to the Leader of the Opposition, and indeed to all other Honourable Members of this House, in terms of the Resolution that was passed for further consideration to be postponed. And I am submitting that this particular Committee has no authority to deal with this Bill in these circumstances.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. In my respectful submission, the Chair cannot hear a point of order which reflects on the conduct of the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker. That is the first point. Arising out of that, I would submit that the correct time to have made the point would have been when the Order was called.

But apart from that, and this is very important for the Press, because when the Press hear the Opposition say something, they give it a flattering report that it does not deserve, it is commonplace in Parliament that you postpone an Order and you resume it later in the session. Let either honourable Member opposite say that he has not been in the House and seen an Order postponed in the morning and returned to in the evening. Let either honourable Member put his hand on a Bible and say that.

(Big uproar in the House with several Honourable Members on their feet.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order! Please take your seats.

Certain statements made at this stage by Mr. B. M. TAITT and Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD were ordered to be expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, can I continue? I was on a point of order.
2.20 p.m.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I rise on a point of order. Do not try to outsmart the country. This is what you are trying to do.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member must take his seat. The House is in Committee.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, can I be heard? There are procedures contained in Erskine

May's and available to anybody who wants to postpone consideration of a matter longer than a session.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: You should be ashamed of yourself).

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. The honourable Member is interrupting.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, Erskine May sets out that if you want to.....

Shouts.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I can talk, I do not mind them.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will have no alternative but to take the steps which I am empowered to take.

Shouts.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, there are procedures by which.....

Shouts.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS:.....procedures by which if you wish to get the motion delayed for a period of time, you make it in the proper form.

Shouts.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am managing all right.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We cannot have this in here. Order, please.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, if you wish to postpone consideration of any measure for longer than the session, you may move a motion that further consideration be postponed for one month, that the consideration of this bill be resumed this day six months hence, whatever. Erskine May has in all that. A simple motion that further consideration be postponed, all that happens, if it is passed, is that it does not go on at that minute and the intervening piece of business spends that Resolution.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: You do not do it by saying Order No. 5, and you know it).

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am very sorry that the honourable Members are so inefficient and incompetent that they find themselves incapable of handling the matter. I am sorry, but they cannot tell me I

am immoral if they are fools and do not know what to do.

(Asides.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Honourable Members must behave themselves.

Shouts.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I have made my point, Sir.

Shouts.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: At this point I shall report progress and ask leave to sit again.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee.

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

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker,.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On what has the honourable Member risen?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am rising on a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have been dealing with a matter, the House went into Committee; we were dealing with a matter, Order No. 5, relating to the Abortion Bill.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member cannot report to the Speaker anything that took place in Committee unless the appropriate matter is brought to the House at a full sitting of the House. Matters which take place in Committee must be dealt with by the Chairman of Committees and reported straight to the Chair on resumption.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order. There is no such point.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are two members on their feet. Is the point of privilege to deal with an infringement of the right of the honourable Member in his dealings in Parliament?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I so perceive it, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is my understanding, Sir, that when one becomes an honourable Member of this Honourable Chamber that one is entitled to all the rights and privileges accruing to Parliament, and those rights and privileges include the method of style which tradition has brought to the conduct of Parliament.

I am submitting, for Your Honour's consideration, that where a matter is being considered and a dilatory motion for postponement of that matter under the rules has been moved and passed, and the House has made a decision on that matter, that on resumption when that matter is to be resumed, it having been postponed that it would be the privilege and the right of all other honourable Members who are attending the House to be aware that that matter is being resumed. The manner in which that is usually done, even where a matter has not been postponed, and before the winding up speech on the Bill, is that an indication comes from the Chair indicating that other honourable Members who may wish.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member casting aspersions on the Chair as to the conduct in which any matter has been dealt with in this Chamber?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. I am drawing to Your Honour's attention a set of facts for your consideration. I have no quarrel with the respectable manner in which the Chair has handled all the proceedings today. However, Sir, as you know, if it has not been brought within the ambit of the Chair's consideration, the Chair may make a perfectly proper decision on the basis of the information which the Chair has.
2.25 p.m.

I am merely submitting, Sir, that, had the Chair been given, as it ought to have been given, the full implications and parameters of the proceedings, possibly the Chair might have ruled differently. I am not questioning or reflecting...

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member, as I can see, is raising a theoretical problem which does not now affect the Chair at this point in time, and, therefore, I will not care to rule on a theoretical matter. If the honourable Member has some incident which affects him, he must tell the Chair exactly what he is speaking about.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The incident arises, therefore, Sir, from the fact that, the Chair not having been brought fully *au fait* with all of the circumstances, the honourable Members, including myself on this side.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What are the ordinary circumstances? What are we dealing with?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am suggesting that the procedure by which the Chair was brought *au fait* with an Order to begin with during a session that had already started.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the Honourable Member speaking about Order No. 5?

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Was Order No. 5 called by the Clerk?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It was called incorrectly, and that is the point I was trying to draw to Your Honour's attention.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Was Order No. 5 called by the Clerk?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Early in the session on Tuesday.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Was Order No. 5 called today?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Strictly speaking, no, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the honourable Member says "no", I will ask the Clerk to give me a copy of the Hansard recording of the beginning of the sitting to see if that statement is correct. In the meantime, the honourable Member will take his seat until I get that, so I will be able to see if we are going on the correct course.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, while the Clerk is doing that, I wish to speak on the motion. I am not on a point of order, on a point of privilege, a point of information or a point of elucidation. I am speaking to the motion as it is my right, just as it is the right of the Opposition, and I think that I must tell the House, including those on both sides who voted for the postponement of Order No. 5.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the honourable Member is now speaking on the motion to go back to Committee, the House goes in.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: It is correct. That is what I am speaking on, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But I do not want to reopen anything that happened on Tuesday.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: No, Sir, I am not reopening anything.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am not going to any reopening of the Bill at this point in time.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I am just telling the House and the public

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member must speak to the House. The public will get it by way of listening or reporting.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If they are very fortunate, Sir.

The Cabinet considered the effect of the postponement of further consideration of this matter. The honourable Member for Christ Church East gave me an explanation of his vote. The Cabinet decided that the Rules of Parliament permitted the resumption of this matter because no time limit has been placed in the motion.

The motion was a simple motion for postponement. As a matter of policy, the Cabinet decided to attend the House at 2.00 o'clock. The honourable Member for St. George South, who was to leave at 2.45 p.m. today for Cuba, has made special arrangements to be present, and the Cabinet decided to proceed with this matter today; and, as far as we are concerned, we have obeyed the rules of the House — but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we will obey any decision of the House in this matter.

We have done no more than the rules permit. I am very sorry that honourable Members opposite did not know what Order No. 5 was. I am very sorry if they were too slow to respond. We would have accommodated them if they wanted a debate on the postponement. We would have accommodated them, but you have ruled, it has gone through and it is too late now. That has nothing to do with me, whether it is too late or not.

But we have not come here today to oppress anybody. We have come to do the Abortion Bill — make no mistake about that — and to do the Government's business, but we have not come here to oppress anybody.

Honourable Members are shouting, beating their briefcases, stamping their feet, behaving like children because they do not.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have not.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: You were not in the House Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No honourable Member has shouted, beat his briefcase, etc.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sorry, Sir. But they have done that because they do not know the rules. We have not come here to prevent debate. There is a

Third Reading. There is Committee. We are going to move amendments.

(Asides.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I do not break the Rules of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, please! Order, order! The honourable Member for St. Michael South must not shout across the Chamber. The honourable Member will have ample time to make his point.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Thank you.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member can speak for half an hour, I think the rules say.

I really am very sorry about the position that honourable Members opposite find themselves in, in a competitive party, but we cannot help that. The Government cannot do the Opposition's work for it. The Government cannot protect the Opposition against its own ignorance.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member for St. Michael South.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: And I would just like to repeat in the House what I said in Committee and Your Honour did not hear. It is commonplace that further consideration of a matter is moved and carried in the morning and the matter resumed, without a specific motion, later in the evening and I challenge — I repeat the challenge I made earlier, Sir — any honourable Member for him to say that he has never been in the House and seen consideration postponed in the morning and resumed in the evening; resumed in an hour.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael North.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I am on a point of order, Sir. As I understand it, Sir....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you on a point of order or are you speaking.....

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: I said I am on a point of order. That is what I said, Sir.

Sir, at the time of the suspension on Tuesday — and today is still Tuesday as far as the House is concerned — we were on Order No. 4. When the House resumed after suspension, we would have had to resume on Order No. 4 unless there is a motion to suspend that Order and then deal with something else.

We cannot have two matters before the House at the same time. This is precisely what we are doing now. We are doing Order No. 4 and 5 at the same time without a motion for suspension or at least that further consideration of Order No. 4 to be postponed. That is where we are. That is precisely the point, so it is a question of who knows the rules, not who is ignorant of the rules.

We will first have to have a motion that further consideration of Order No. 4 be postponed before we can go on to Order No. 5, because we are in a suspended meeting. We cannot have two motions before the House at the same time.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Honourable Members must recall that, according to the Clerk's record, further consideration of Order No. 4 was also postponed at the end of Tuesday's sitting at that point.

The Clerk's record, by which the Chair must rule and must accept, is that further consideration of Order No. 4 was also postponed at that point in time — and we must accept the Clerk's record.
2.35 p.m.

It would then fall under May's Parliamentary Procedure, at page 619, which, by a decision in 1924, resolved,

"In order to avoid the inconvenience which sometimes arises, it was resolved that further consideration of the Bill might, on the motion of the Member in charge of the Bill, be postponed until after the next Bill on the list."

So if the Government felt that Order No. 5 should be postponed, then deal with Order No. 4, according to May's Parliamentary Procedure, they are in order to continue Order No. 5.

When Order No. 5 was called and there were to be any objections, I would have thought that objection would have been taken before the House went into Committee. If anybody allowed the House to go into Committee on Order No. 5, I do not see how that matter can now be raised after the House has gone into Committee on Order No. 5.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Could we have from the honourable Member

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Thomas caught my eye.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Order No. 4 is,

"To move the Second Reading of a Bill to provide for the imposition of a tax on the assets of a bank and for related matters."

When the Second Reading is moved, Order No. 4 is spent.

The honourable Member does not know the rules. Rule 45 of the Standing Orders of the House says:

"When a Bill has been read a second time, the House may on a motion then made, without notice, by any member, commit the Bill to a Committee of the whole House or to a Select Committee".

A lawyer would know, Sir, but obviously the honourable Member for St. Michael North does not, that, since 1966, the verb "may" is permissive and not directory, and these rules were drawn in 1973.

The House is not obliged to go into Committee after a Bill has been read a second time. The Order does not say, "To move the Second Reading and then to go into Committee. Order No. 4 says

"To move the second reading of a Bill"

and when the Second Reading is moved, that is the end of Order No. 4, and the Leader of the House can go on to another matter.

Rule 45 permits the House, not directs it, to go into Committee. We choose, I choose since I moved it, not to go into Committee at this stage. The House "may", and I say that it is permissive, and I am not going into Committee, and anybody, except the honourable Member for St. Michael North, knows that I am right this time.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: No, no, no! I will not let him get away with that foolishness. All it says is that we do not go into Committee automatically. It has to go on a motion. You do not even understand what you are reading. The House can only go into Committee on a motion; there is no automatic movement into Committee, because there are several Committees to go into. It can be a Select Committee or a Committee of the whole House.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, during this sitting, when we dealt with Order No. 4, the House did the Second Reading on the Bill. It is then the duty — it is not automatic — of the Leader of the House, or whoever is dealing with the Bill, to determine if he wishes it to go into Committee then, next week or next year; so, therefore, his argument about Order No. 5 and Order No. 4 is not valid. The Second Reading was done. Then, the Leader of the House, or the Minister who is moving the Bill, may decide at that time if the House will go into Committee, or he may, if he feels like, call another Order. On this occasion, we called Order No. 5 again.

So why all the shouting? I know opposition politics well too. As a matter of fact, I practised it for ten years; you have practised it for six. I know it too well, and, of course, I am a little, I would not say disappointed with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I believe that he is anxious to get away and would like to be sent out, some-

thing that I know he is not familiar with. Forget the others; you are dead wrong on this. I did not move the House into Committee, therefore I called the next Order, which is Order No. 5. At this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that the House go into Committee on the Bill under Order No. 5.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Now, Sir, without prejudice to your ruling that we will await the transcript, I believe I am entitled to speak on the motion to go into Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member going to speak on the Bill before the House and the action which took place on Tuesday?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I wish to speak on the motion, arising out of what the honourable Member for St. Thomas and then the Leader of the House said, concerning Order No. 4.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 4 is not now before the Chamber.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the greatest respect, he moved that this House go into Committee. I want to point out.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: On order No. 5.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I want to point out the irregularity, in my view, on the Order.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If the honourable Member would give way — I do not want to rise on a point of order, because what I would have to say lacks humility to some slight degree — if the honourable Member would give way, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the honourable Member wants to debate the desirability of proceeding with the Abortion Bill, in the light of the vote of the House, would he not be in order to do it now? We are moving the House into Committee; it is not open for him to say "All right, we have passed the Second Reading, but public opinion should be consulted and therefore do not go into Committee".

Why are we wasting public time with a lot of procedural matters and shouting across the Table and abusing each other and the Chair? Why don't honourable Members use the House of Assembly for what it is meant for instead of for behaving like children. Is anybody in the public interested in Order No. 4?

Any honourable Member is entitled to say, in my respectful view, at this time, "Don't go into Committee because we want the public to take account of it", and we will answer that the public, over eight years, has been

taking account of it. Do not make any mistake, we will answer. But is there any purpose to be served by sterile pursuit of the Rules of Parliament by a few people who have failed to make an intervention at the time when they thought they would have the opportunity to make it?

On our part, we are perfectly ready to justify further debate on the Abortion Bill. We are ready to justify it now and to justify it clause by clause in Committee if we win. I do not mind spending the hour and a half that it would take the three Members to speak and the hour that it would take honourable Members over here. We are prepared to be here until the Clerks and the Reporters have to go home.

But I do not think the public respect the House of Assembly when people, who have been defeated through their perhaps lack of knowledge of the rules.....

(Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: You were defeated in the House last Tuesday).

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I was defeated and I took my licks, but I did not quarrel. I did not stamp on the Table.

I defeated you at the polls twice, that is what I know, and you never beat me at the polls yet.

We are perfectly ready to deal with any matter of substance, as well as procedure, but is it not unreasonable to the public to be pursuing all the procedures when the public wants to hear. I will be quite willing to tell the public why we decided to proceed with it today.
2.45 p.m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have asked for a copy of the record of Hansard. The copy reads as follows:

"Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

"Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Order No. 5, Sir.

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

"On the motion of Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, seconded by Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee....."

This is now.

Following on that, when the Leader of the Opposition moved a motion that further consideration of this

Bill be postponed, I suspended the House for ten minutes to do the necessary research, because I, myself, was doubtful about whether or not the Leader of the Opposition could have moved such a motion.

In order to exercise restraint and to protect the rights of the minority, I accepted the motion of the Leader of the Opposition and the question was then put that further consideration be postponed.

Our rule is defective in that it does not spell out the procedure in that regard. I further checked Rule 44, and it seemed to me that the operative word in all amendments and postponements is the word "now." And if "now" is left out of a motion, it then follows that the mover of that motion can move that further consideration be postponed upon this day six months hence, or whatever time he so desires. If that motion is carried, that binds the House. No such time limit was placed upon the postponement, the word "now" was left out, and, therefore, based on my research of May's Parliamentary Procedure, the Government was entitled to resume consideration of the Bill at any time it saw fit.

When the House was resumed today, based on the Record, I rule that the proceedings of the House are in order to resume Order No. 5. I will, therefore, not be entertaining any further debate on that aspect of the proceedings of the House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would not, could not, raise a question on a matter that has been decided by Your Honour. May I ask Your Honour a question for my own edification?

You indicated earlier, Sir, that when the House was suspended on Tuesday, the record of the Clerk indicated that there was a motion that further consideration of Order No. 4 be postponed. I wonder, Sir, if it is possible to discover who moved that motion, who seconded it....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: With all due respect to the honourable Member, I am not going to reopen a matter which has been considered by this House. The Rules of the House prevent me from doing that. Therefore, it would not be justifiable to reopen Order No. 4, which has been closed to a certain point.

If the honourable Member has doubts about the accuracy of the proceedings, that can be raised when the Minutes for the particular meeting has been circulated and come before this Chamber. The honourable Member can then exercise his right in relation to those Minutes.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: With respect, Sir, the only point at which an honourable Member could, in fact, raise a

question relating to the instant Minutes, would be in the circumstances where the record has, in fact, been read.

The point made by Your Honour, that the question concerning accuracy can only be raised *ex post facto* is, indeed, the only reason why I raise it. Since the record has been made known by the Table, if that record appears to be inaccurate, it is the right, and the duty, of any honourable Member to draw to the Chair's attention that, in fact, the record as reported is inaccurate.

I am therefore seeking information, because on this side of the House, none of us can recall that motion having been put — that further consideration of Order No. 4 be postponed. We are not saying.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If the honourable Member is saying now that none of the Members on that side can recall that, when the Minutes are published he would be in the same position, because he would then be trying to contradict the Minutes of the Clerk without being able to give accurate evidence as to what happened. I, therefore, suggest that the honourable Member wait until the Minutes of that meeting are published and then raise what objections you have.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I will take Your Honour's guidance on this, and I will end by saying that I have to state for the Record that I do not believe that motion was put. I do not believe it.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Speaking on that motion, Sir, I think that the rights of the Opposition must at all times be upheld and we must know what particular item we are going into Committee on.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already read the Record of the House. The House went into Committee on Order No. 5.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is precisely the issue at state, and it appears to us that.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already ruled that I will not entertain any further debate on Order No. 5. The House went into Committee on Order No. 5. I have read the record of Hansard to the House. The House is already in Committee on Order No. 5, the Chairman of Committees has reported progress and has asked for leave

to sit again and the Government is asking that the House revert to Committee on Order No. 5.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the whole of Barbados knows that the Government was defeated last Tuesday. The Government now appears to be trying to correct that particular matter. The Press knows it, the whole public knows it. The Government suffered a defeat, and all that we are going through now is merely a means of getting the shame, or whatever it is, out of the Government's face. That is what it is.

And we are not going to participate in that kind of thing. It is a travesty.....

(Asides.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir.....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: it is a travesty of the rights of the Opposition, because nobody expected that this matter would have been resumed today.

(Asides.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: As far as lamenting over whether the Government was defeated, that is neither here nor there. The country is aware of the fact that the Government lost on a motion and the Commonwealth countries are aware of the fact that we beat you all twice. What is this big thing? What is this all about?

(Aside: It can't happen again.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: What do you mean it cannot happen again? You should hush your mouth, because you may lose your seat. You feel you have something put down?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg that Your Honour do now leave the Chair and the House go into Committee on this Bill.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to second that.

The question that the House do now go into Committee was put and resolved in the affirmative, the House dividing itself as follows:

AYES: Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS, Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Hon. L. S. CRAIG, Hon. L. R. TULL, Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, Hon. B. A. MILLER, Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Hon. H. deB. FORDE, Mr. A. TRUSS, Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. J. G. ODLE — (12).

NOES: Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD, Mr. B. M. TAITT, Mr. P. M. GREAVES, Mr. M. A. KING — (4).

(Opposition Members walked out in protest).

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

2.55 p.m.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive were called and passed.

Clause 4 as amended, was called and passed.

Clauses 6 to 7 inclusive were called and passed.

Clause 8, as amended, was called and passed.

Clauses 9 to 11 inclusive were called and passed.

Clause 12, as amended, was called and passed.

Clauses 13 to 15 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill, as amended in Committee, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on Order No. 4, Mr. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.
3.05 p.m.

Clauses 1 to 13 inclusive were called and passed.

The Schedule was called and passed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that you do now report the passing of one Bill in Committee.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In seconding that, Mr. Chairman, I will say this. When this matter was being debated on Tuesday, relating to the honourable Member for St. Michael South, he did raise a matter and I gave an undertaking that it would be examined. If he wishes to have the clause recommitted, I would not object to its recommitment, but he will just have to give me one minute to speak to the legal adviser to the Central Bank.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, during the Second Reading there was a little matter relating to one of the clauses, the Order being made by the Minister, and I am asking that that particular clause be amended so that the matter would be subject to affirmative resolution of this House.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I cannot agree to affirmative. We do not mind having a subclause in Clause 4 saying such Order be subject to negative resolution, but I cannot agree to affirmative; not a taxation rate on five banks. That is not something to call for an affirmative resolution. All that we are prepared to do is to make it subject to negative resolution. That is all.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, we would feel happier with affirmative resolution. Normally, when the Prime Minister is not annoyed or hurt by something, he is fairly logical and cogent and can advance the reasons, but in this case, all he is saying is he cannot agree. I wonder if we could press the Prime Minister for the reasons why he could not accept affirmative resolution. It is not really contentious as such, but we would like to hear some reasons.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I am too bankrupt of ideas to give to the honourable Member an account of why. The people having elected me to govern, I decide to govern banks by negative resolution rather than affirmative. That is just my decision, that there are many things which are dealt with by negative rather than affirmative, and I judge that this is one. I have given the honourable Member every opportunity to put his case. I went outside in the tea room and called him. I have a lawyer from the Central Bank here, we do not agree, it will have to go as it is, I beg to move....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, just before he moves, my colleague is not going to press him to the wall where he feels he has to come out fighting. If the honourable Member says that he will accept negative resolution, I seriously believe that a negative is better than none at all. If the honourable Member would do the

negative, we will go along. I think, in his interest and for his successors, he should agree to negative.

While I am on my feet, Sir — and I know that the Clause has passed, I am craving you indulgence — when he spoke in Second Reading, the honourable Member had given the assurance that he would examine the desirability of placing a definition of “assets” in the Bill.

He knows, and the Central Bank knows, what the assets are. I would like to suggest to him that he reopen the clause so I can offer the suggestion — it is not difficult — to put in the definition clause a definition for “assets” as outlined by him in Second Reading, because nowhere in the Central Bank Act itself, or in this, do we, in fact, have that definition, and I think it would be good for the Central Bank, and as it relates to the banks, if the draughtsmen agree to put in that simple definition which spells it out in some detail. He, himself, took the point toward the end of the debate. If he agrees to reopen the issue, then I am suggesting that to him.

I know that Chapter 323 C, unless I miss something, does not carry a definition that would deal with the issue as it arises in this Bill. He, himself, recognised that there is a tendency towards tautology in the Bill, because when you look at the first part of the Bill, you see that “assets” is as defined in the Schedule, and when you look at the Schedule it is rather circular.

I raised that point, and he had taken it. I do not know if he has given any consideration to it. I am grateful to you for your indulgence in allowing me to raise this matter at this stage.
3.15 p.m.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to recommit Clause 4.

The question that Clause 4 be recommitted was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In Clause 4, Sir, I beg to move that Clause 4 be amended by deleting the full-stop at the end and substituting therefor “a comma”, and adding the words “such order to be subject to negative resolution.”

The question that Clause 4 be accordingly amended was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, I would have to hear the honourable Member on his argument, so, in moving to recommit the Schedule, which I do, I do not give any undertaking that I will necessarily amend it. I beg to move that the Schedule be recommitted.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am grateful to Your Honour and to the honourable Member for recommitting the appropriate clause. I will speak, because I believe he can still hear me.

Chapter 323C, Section 37, is the only section, as far as I can make out, which attempts to define or deal with the assets. Section 37 says:—

“A bank shall maintain assets consisting of claims payable in the currency of Barbados, and other assets situate in Barbados in such minimum proportions of its deposit and similar liabilities payable in Barbados as the Bank may prescribe.”

Now, that is the only section, I think, that adverts to assets. I do not believe that that section was meant to deal with or to shed any light on the assets as outlined in this present Bill.

When the Prime Minister was doing the Second Reading, he first indicated, after I had made the point, that the question of the definition of assets had prolonged the bringing of this Bill to the House because there was a difference between the Commissioner of Inland Revenue and the Central Bank as to the definition of assets. He then went on to outline what was intended by this word “assets” as used in this Bill and in the Schedule.

I am suggesting to him that, for posterity and for ease of the administration of this Bill — or this Act, when it becomes an Act — the assets be delineated in the description and/ or the Schedule so that there would be no difficulty in the future, either for the banks or the Central Bank, or indeed the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, as to what precisely is meant by this Bill.

As you are aware, Sir, the Schedule says in 2 (1) “In computing the average total assets of a bank, the following provisions shall apply”,

and then it lists the provisions. But it does not, in my humble submission, identify what the assets referred to actually are.

Those assets are well known to persons who are familiar with Central Bank documentation. However, I would submit that a bank, which felt that it was probably being taxed twice, could arguably make the point that assets, as outlined in this Bill, had no meaning. It is arguable whether the word “assets” as used in the Bill *per se* can be said to carry the meaning which the Prime Minister outlined in his Second Reading. I am therefore suggesting to him that it is desirable that “assets” be defined.

I think that is all I have to say on this, Sir.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The solution, Mr. Chairman, that I am advised might be possible to this problem, and I do give the honourable Member an assurance that it will be pursued, is to schedule to the Central Bank Act the form of returns which banks are required to make.

I have enquired whether it would be possible to schedule it to this Act, but I am told it would not be appropriate, because this Act only covers a very small thing. Also, I am told that the returns are quite substantial, and that the honourable Member's argument does not only apply to this Act but it applies, really, to the whole framework of the relationship between the Central Bank and the banks.

It is a sound and cogent point, because the form of returns that the Central Bank sends out apparently has no statutory authority. It is the Central's Bank form, and they send it out, and it is filled in.

It might possibly improve the law as to banking if this was actually in the Central Bank Act itself. If this was in the Act, the banks first would know that they have to make it out accurately and, also, they would know exactly what information is called for. If the honourable Member wants to see it

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way — and to speed up the business of the House — I think, on reflection, now that he has given us the benefit of his advice, that would, in fact, be the better way, because, as he said, it does apply.

So I am grateful to him for having pursued the point and I hope that, *pari passu* with the coming into force in this Act, he will seek to have the method of return scheduled to the Central Bank Act.

I am satisfied that putting it with the parent Act is a better and more efficacious way and I am really grateful to the honourable Member for having taken the point.

Thank you very much.

The question that the Schedule be the Schedule to the Bill was put and resolved in the affirmative.

On motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG seconded by Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill, as amended, in Committee, and Mr. DEPUTY 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.
3.20 p.m.

THE CIVIL ESTABLISHMENT GENERAL (AMENDMENT) ORDER, 1982

Order No. 1 in the name of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister was called — To move the passing of a Resolution to approve the Civil Establishment General (Amendment) Order, 1982.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the continuing work of improving the organisation of the Public Service goes forward, and it comes to the House regularly in the form of Civil Establishment Orders. The Order now before the House, for which approval is sought in this Resolution, contains a number of corrections, which are set out in the Addendum.

It contains the provision of new posts at the Labour Department, which represent the beginning of the organisation of the Ministry of Labour and the Labour Department, and it deals with a number of adjustments in the Ministry of Trade, Industry, Tourism, Civil Aviation, the making of some posts permanent, the changing of titles in other cases; there is a redesignation at the Prison, redesignation at the Ministry of Finance and the Met. Office and the Ministry of Education, and the provision of additional posts at the Polytechnic.

I will not deal with the posts at the Polytechnic, Sir, and indeed I will touch only briefly on the posts of the Labour Department. The Minister of Labour should be available to answer any question from honourable Members, but I would indicate that the reason why the changes are being made is a matter of Government policy of generally upgrading of our approach to labour affairs.

As the honourable Member for St. Michael West will know, the last World Bank team to visit Barbados paid particular attention to affairs relating to labour relations and labour matters in Barbados. The findings of the report were many and varied. Its finding, that we consistently overestimate the rate of unemployment in Barbados, is well supported by the fact that since unemployment relief has come into force, not more than 200 to 400 people ever seem to avail themselves of it at any given time.

We had for some time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, been considering the reorganisation of the department, and I think that the World Bank's general findings on labour relations and the situation of Labour in Barbados accelerated the process. The conclusions that that team reached were that the facilities at the Labour Depart-

ment for arbitration and conciliation needed upgrading. That was one of the things we took into account. We discovered of our own volition, that the system of factory inspection would not be adequate when the new Factories Bill came into force — indeed, it was only marginally adequate under the old provisions — and we have also considered that not only will new staff be needed, but some upgrading of staff would be appropriate if we were to improve the conciliation process.

On submission from the Minister of Labour, I therefore decided, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to create posts of "Factory Inspector", to be filled by the persons who are presently carrying out factory inspection functions from among the ranks of labour officer, to make it clear the emphasis which the Government is putting on safety in factories. We have created five posts in all and abolished two posts of "Labour Officer," so that three new posts have been provided in that particular area. The remaining posts of "Labour Officer" have been regraded so that we can attract a better quality of recruit to the Ministry of Labour and the Labour Department. Along with this, certain posts which had been temporarily frozen in the Ministry of Labour, regarding planning for labour and labour statistics, will be reopened and filled so that the Labour Department will be able to do its own employment analysis in the future.

I think, Sir, that, although we have a very good system of estimating unemployment by sample at the Department of Statistics in the Ministry of Finance, we suffer from not only the natural drawbacks of a sample system, but also from some element with Barbadians of unwillingness to admit to an income at certain times. The Statistical Department has never had any doubt that people who are working do tell the statistics officer that they are unemployed, and we have some evidence of this.

Now the Statistics Department cannot handle the whole range of labour statistics. We, and I say "we" because I have ministerial responsibility for that department, are only qualified to ask questions, fill out questionnaires and report on our findings. The Deputy Prime Minister has long said that Barbados needs a proper manpower survey. The honourable Member for St. Michael West has made this point on a number of occasions.

We really do not know what workers we have available to fill what jobs. I personally think that the explanation which is given for the minimal use of the Unemployment Scheme, to the effect that people do not know there is a scheme, is a trivial explanation. I think that people in Barbados who are unemployed know perfectly well that there is an unemployment Fund to which they have been contributing and from which they can get \$60 a week. It may be difficult to fill out the

forms, but I think they know it quite well. The fact that only a few hundred people ever qualify for unemployment benefit where the Statistics Department finds varying numbers, between 14 000 and 17 000, depending on the season and the state of the economy, to be unemployed, is surely indicative that we really need a proper manpower and employment survey, not just as a one shot exercise, but as a continuing exercise.

3.35 p.m.

When I was in Bermuda, I was most impressed to find that they have their population on a computer, not only for electoral purposes, but for manpower purposes as well. They, of course, suffer from a population shortage. They consider that the population is not increasing itself in the numbers necessary to fill all the jobs that are available; Barbados is far from that situation. In that situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one can understand that a manpower survey is an actual economic necessity from the point of view of keeping the wheels of industry and tourism going.

We have not got there yet — we will, but we have not got there yet — but I think that we have to start with the survey, even while we are in a situation of unemployment, so that we can know how to target our industrial and tourism efforts. We can know whether our assumption, that there is an unlimited volume of white-collar labour in Barbados, is true or not, and we can furnish the Industrial Development Corporation and the Ministry of Trade with the kind of statistics that will enable them to do really serious industrial and employment planning as part of the Government's general development efforts.

To do all of this, I think that the Labour Department must be upgraded; its status in Government, and that of the Ministry of Labour, must be improved, and it must add to its ordinary functions. It should be able to carry out a proper industrial conciliation, a proper industrial arbitration, but it should also have a positive function, of assisting the Ministries of Planning and Trade and Tourism to plan properly for future development.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, apart from the Polytechnic, where a staff is being provided to run it, there is really very little in this Resolution that I think would require deep analysis; but the Ministers concerned stand ready to answer any questions from honourable Members about their departments.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not be long on this Resolution. I would, first of all, like to deal with the Labour Department.

I have felt, for some time, that our approach to the management of human resources in this community, at the public sector level, has left a lot to be desired. And in the same way that, in economic theory, as it relates to money, it is suggested strongly that one ought not to throw good money behind bad, I believe that successive Governments have tended, by attempting to reform piecemeal — and necessarily so, taking into account the resources — to throw good resources behind bad.

I say that, not in a negative way, Sir, but to point out that what the honourable Member has said about the need for a manpower survey is so elementarily obvious that it has never ceased to amaze me that we in Barbados, and other Caribbean territories, continue on the process of modernisation without doing that very simple and fundamental, and very necessary, act of having a thorough manpower survey.

When I was involved in the purchase of the first computer for Barbados, so many years ago when I functioned for the Government outside of Barbados, one of the things I anticipated on our becoming computerised was that, in fact, a manpower survey would follow the computerisation of some of the governmental sectors. That it has not been thoroughly done can be blamed partly on a thorough misunderstanding on the part of some officers, in the public and quasi-public sectors, who insisted that they had the expertise to do a manpower survey.

The fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that a manpower survey requires a specialised capability. And what is interesting, is that we have in Barbados, at the moment, resources with the necessary skills to at least design the framework for such a survey.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the other day I noticed, from a publication by BIMAP, that a certain gentleman had returned to BIMAP — I was under the impression that he had left and gone back after an OAS secondment here, but I notice that he is back — and my recollection is, that that particular individual had, in fact, as his dissertation for his doctorate, specialised in manpower survey preparation. In fact, if I remember correctly, he was the expert, or part of a team, that carried out a manpower survey for the Government of Jamaica sometime in the late 1960s or early 1970s.

Now, Sir, he is engaged as a lecturer at BIMAP, I believe — and I think that the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central will know of what I speak, he having had contact with BIMAP as well — and I believe that when the recommendation was made that BIMAP be responsible for doing the manpower survey, the Ministry of Labour felt that, somehow, it would be

infra dig to have another agency carry out the manpower survey in Barbados.

I would like to submit — and I am speaking now not of the Ministry of Labour under either of the Ministers; I am dealing with it more at the Public Service level — that the services of the Institute of Management and Productivity, and more particularly the services of the expert in the field, be seconded to the Government *per se*, if it is felt that BIMAP is not the agency to do it. But I think that it would probably be better, initially, if BIMAP, as an agency, or a team of consultants, including those with expertise drawn from a cross-section of the Public Service, undertake the project.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you are putting together such a team to do a manpower survey, I would be surprised, in fact, if we could not find all the ingredients for such a team, or task force, to use the preferred phrase of my distinguished colleague. All of the ingredients can be found here, Sir, and a substantial number of them would be found in the public sector at large.

I believe that it is very necessary for us, as we go into the last quarter of the 20th century, to start indexing the professional skills which are available to us. I make bold to say that we still, because of the structure of the Service, have a number of square pegs in round holes — or is it round pegs in square holes, Sir? — who, not through their own initiative or through no fault of their own, but because it is desirable to earn the most money possible, will accept promotion and transfer upward in order to better themselves, in positions where, indeed, their expertise may not be used to the maximum capacity.

I believe that it is very necessary and desirable, therefore for us to do a preliminary survey; identify the requirements to do such a survey and get on with the business of doing it. I really do not believe that we can go toward the 21st century in the piecemeal manner that we have tended to go in our public administration in Barbados.

The fact is, I would say in the last fifteen years, great strides have been made towards a modern approach to public administration in Barbados. But I think that that last stride toward implementing a management approach to the public sector is always resisted by traditionalists, and, as a result, we have not made as much progress as I think we could.
3.45 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a few other areas relating to the decisions made in this Order which,

perhaps, could bear some comment. But I am always very reluctant to make certain comments from the floor of this Honourable House, where those comments are likely to be recognised as an inherent criticism of certain aspects of the public sector. I recognise that there are individuals who fill the posts in these fields, and, as a result, however well one may try to mask one's approach to an assessment of the way the public sector operates, the individuals, who perceive themselves as having been addressed by your comments, become aggrieved, and it is really not my intention to cast aspersions on the performance of any particular individual in the public sector.

I think it is fair to say, however, that if one examines the number of Orders that have been made of this kind over the last, shall we say, twelve years, so I will span the gap, one will see that, to a large extent, we do what the French says, "The more we change the more we remain the same."

Now the honourable Member, who is responsible for Establishments, is today making certain changes which he thinks will upgrade the performance of the respective ministries. I am sure that, if we examine the record, we will find that other Ministers responsible for Establishments have made practically the same speech while coming to make certain changes in the Establishment.

I want to say now, and fire a shot across the bow, because I intend to deal with it in its entirety and at length when we come to do the Estimates, that I believe that part of the problem in the public sector, and why we have this kind of piecemeal approach, is that we continue to have a separation between, or of, something that is really inseparable. We continue to have Establishments over there, the Personnel Department over here, and the Training Department somewhere else. And the fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those persons who have spent some considerable time examining this particular subject matter, are satisfied that this is guaranteed to ensure the kinds of difficulties, for want of a better word, of which I speak.

When Sir, for example, you recruit a person, that person is being recruited not at the level they actually receive their emoluments — or they ought not to be recruited at that level. What you ought to be doing is planning for that person's growth and development, ten, fifteen, or twenty years hence, and hence, Mr. Deputy Speaker, recruitment forms an integral part of promotion and it forms an integral part of your management capability in the years ahead. It forms an important part of your growth and development of the organization and, therefore, it is germane to your total Establishment.

I find, for example, that the Government's attitude to training, which, in my view has diminished — the public sector plant has diminished — I find that their view, which seems to suggest that training is a very small part of the development sector, tends to reduce the morale in the service as a whole. When, indeed, the training sector is removed from the rest of the public sector, in terms of the management aspect of the public sector, then the necessary coordination between training and the objectives for which you train is bound to be absent.

As a result, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we get departments arguing for a certain officer to fulfill a certain role and the Establishments Division not being capable of understanding the role for which a department lays claim — but, even understanding the role, having as its specific task the duty to reduce the cost of administration. Hence, the Establishments Division will tend to think in terms of keeping the cost to a minimum, sometimes at great cost to the management of the total plant.

I believe that where the personnel services, and I say "personnel services" — I am not talking about the Personnel Department, I mean the personnel services — where those services are integrated, then the totality of the development strategy within the public sector becomes clearer and, hence, is amenable to a better direction and more efficacious policies.

I am satisfied, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then, that to take either one of these sectors as adumbrated in this document here, and to raise questions about them specifically, would be to defeat, indeed, my own thesis. I suspect that we ought to have a full debate on the question of personnel policies for the public sector in Barbados towards the 21st century, and I look forward to such an opportunity presenting itself sometime in the near future.

I will make the point, Sir, that at the first opportunity which presents itself, I will be urging on my colleagues, and I now urge on the Government, that they ought to set public management as an area where we can examine the country's needs in the same manner, indeed in greater manner perhaps, as we examine the country's financial needs.

I make bold to say that if a country has a large proportion of financial capability and a small proportion of management capability, that that country is infinitely worse off than one that has adequate financial resources and great management skills. I believe that if there is something that is lacking in Barbados today, it is an understanding of the need for a cohesive approach to the question of management, especially as it relates to the public sector.

What is unfortunate about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that, on an individual basis, we have some of the better people you can find in any society functioning in the public sector. It is ironic! We have some of the best people in the region functioning in our public sector, and yet, when we examine our system, when we examine our methodology, we cannot boast that we have the best system or, indeed, that we get the best results.

We moved from being mere bookkeepers and note-takers a long time ago — certainly if we had not taken cognizance of it before — and coming to Independence in 1966, it should have been clear. Now fifteen or sixteen years later, it should be crystal clear that the management of our own resources is the most important aspect of our public sector management at this stage.

I believe Mr. Deputy Speaker that I have taken the point, and I do not wish to detain the House to air my own views merely to hear myself. As I said, I intend, at a subsequent time, to raise these matters in somewhat more detail. I do not believe that this particular Resolution is the basis for it.
3.55 p.m.

I would hope, however, that what I had to say would not fall necessarily on deaf ears. I would hope that the Prime Minister's commitment to a manpower survey would go beyond the mere introduction of a Resolution in this Honourable Chamber and will take quick form by way of a serious attempt to establish the basis for such a manpower survey, and I hope that, together with the honourable Minister, the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central, the Minister of Labour and Social Services — these days I am not too sure who is handling what — but I hope that the Minister who, himself, has been exposed.....

Aside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Unlike my colleague from St. James North, I know the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central has been exposed to these areas. I am not sure if he has absorbed as much as the honourable Member for St. James North, because he has absorbed even where there is nothing to absorb. He is a great absorber, and he has learnt very well, and I am always very careful of him when he seeks to interfere with me because I know that he is merely interfering with me to see if he can get me to retaliate, so he could say how unreasonable I am. I had promised myself that as he comes to the evening of his days — his hair is looking better and better as it gets white — I was not going to allow him to offend me so that I would have to say anything to him which I would regret.

As I was saying, I hope the honourable Member, who is the Minister responsible for Labour, will take

these matters to heart, and I would like to hear him on his plans for the further development of the human resources of this country.

Thank you very much.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just have a few observations to make, and I wish, first of all, to say that this particular matter that is before us now is one which, of course, we will not oppose. We do not necessarily oppose these measures because, more often than not, it is very difficult from the information that is provided to be critical, or, indeed, to find out exactly what is the drift of the amendment being proposed and the improvements to the Civil Establishment in this country.

What we do know, however, is that there has been a call for an examination of the entire Public Service of this country, that such a Resolution to that effect was actually passed by the House of Assembly but that the Government has not seen it fit to implement that Resolution, even though it was moved, and eloquently moved, by a member of the Government Party.

We believe that there is need for an in-depth and extensive examination of the Public Service of this country, and that is borne out because, from all of the evidence being accumulated, it is clear that there is a growing dissatisfaction in almost all departments of Government with the functioning of those departments.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am not talking at the ministerial level. I understand the Ministries are working beautifully. I am not talking about the Ministers yet.

The index of dissatisfaction in the various Government departments is increasing, and it is time that the Government seeks to come to grips with all those festering problems within the Public Service by carrying out a thorough-going examination of that Public Service.

The Public Service is an essential part of the economy of this country, they contribute to the production of goods and services in this country, and it is therefore important that they should operate as efficiently as possible. The piecemeal Civil Establishment Orders may deal with specific problems in specific departments at specific times, but they do not get to the core and the heart of the problem.

Specifically in terms of this particular Order before us and the Resolution, if I may give an example, we are saying that the Prisons Department does not have a post of Typist. It may not have that, it may not have other

things. What we do know is that there was some dissatisfaction erupting into a breakdown of order within the Prisons. As we understand it, an enquiry was set up. But to this day, to the best of my knowledge as a member of Parliament, I have not seen a copy of that report to understand what are the problems and the solutions suggested to those problems in respect of an important area of the Public Service.

I think that it is time, and I am making a call, for that report to be laid in Parliament so that parliamentarians and the general public can be informed of the contents of that report. I do not see why it must be kept as some secret document, and I do not know if the provision for an additional Typist means that it is a typing problem or what, but I am calling for the publication of that particular report. It is time that it be made public.

The other observation I would wish to make relates to this area of manpower survey, and this is purely a historical note, because sometimes the impression is given that there has been no kind of manpower survey or manpower projection in this country. I would just like to make a correcting note to that, and indicate that, to the best of my recollection, the University of the West Indies in association, I believe, with the Ford Foundation, did carry out some kind of manpower projection or manpower series, and did come up with certain projections which, certainly, I found very useful in the Ministry of Education, in terms of projections for training needs in the vocational and technical areas and in terms of the establishment of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic.

I, myself, also welcome the provision of additional staff for the Labour Department. I would not be surprised if the World Bank team, which examined matters relating to the economy of Barbados, did make more than passing comment on the state of industrial relations in this country, and adverted to the need for the Government to do something positive about it. I would not be surprised if it was not merely a passing comment, but that considerable views were expressed in that regard. 4.05 p.m.

I do not wish to go on any longer. Those are my observations — brief, but I am certain to the point as well in this particular case.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Ministry of Labour, Sir, has been mentioned very frequently under this Civil Establishments Order, and I listened with as much interest as one could be expected to muster to the honourable Member for St. Michael West, begging that his words do not fall on deaf ears.

Well, Sir, it is a hard job for those of us on this side who have to listen to it — and I do not think he, himself, pays a great deal of attention to what he says — and, in spite of the fact that I listened as carefully as one could have been expected to listen, I cannot, Sir, confess that I have heard anything of substance coming from across the aisle.

I do not believe that the honourable Member for St. Michael West is at all informed about the activities of the Ministry of Labour over the last 18 months, and even before that, because if he had been keeping abreast of what is happening in the Ministry of Labour, he would, Sir, have been aware that the Organization of American States supplied an expert, Mr. McVoy, who came down here and presided over the setting up of the Manpower and Statistical Services Unit in the Ministry of Labour.

He would also have been informed that our resident manpower expert in the Ministry was sent to Washington, where she was exposed to modern manpower statistical methods for a period, and has since returned to take up her post in the Ministry of Labour where she now is actively involved in the further revamping of that department. The Minister responsible for Establishments recently gave us permission to set up the department with more professional staff than we had before. As a matter of fact with staff, because, frankly, we in the Ministry of Labour for a long time have been operating at less than optimum efficiency.

The honourable Member for St. Michael East, when he was Minister responsible for Labour, started the redesign of the Ministry of Labour and that redesign is continuing under my administration. There are things to note in the direction of the further professionalism of the service. One is that we now have in place a new Chief Labour Officer, who came to the Ministry at the beginning of this year.

The gentleman filling that position, Sir, was formerly in charge of the Establishments Division. I specifically requested him for the post of Chief Labour Officer because I was aware of the level of efficiency and proficiency that he generally brings to his duties in the Public Service, and I have every expectation that under his direction the Department of Labour will measure up to the expectations which we all, in a modernising society in Barbados, expect from it.

In addition to that position, Sir, we requested of the Minister responsible for Establishments the institution

of a third position in the hierarchy Department of Labour, and that position has been Assistant Chief Labour Officer. That is a post that, although it has not been established, has been instituted on a temporary basis, and we expect that with a Chief Labour Officer, a very competent public servant; a Deputy Chief Labour Officer, which post is in the process now of being filled, and the position of Assistant Chief Labour Officer, we will be able to further strengthen and streamline the services of mediation and conciliation normally offered by that department, together with the further generation of manpower information which is so vital in our society.

Now, Sir, my concept of a Ministry of Labour is that it ought to preside over the employment situation to the extent that it covers every aspect that would reasonably fall under that umbrella, and we have been successful, partially, convincing the Prime Minister that we need resources in order to effectively discharge the duties which we regard as a normal function.

I believe, Sir, that it is futile and foolish in a day like this for a country like ours to continue drifting in the dark, with respect to employment trends, without chart or compass, and it is for that reason, therefore, that we have placed great emphasis upon this manpower and employment statistical unit. I firmly believe that the responsibility for collecting unemployment statistics and forecasting employment trends ought to be the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, and I have so indicated this to the Minister responsible for Establishments.

As it now stands in the Public Service, the Statistical Unit in the Prime Minister's Office has responsibility for employment surveys, out of which we generate unemployment information or employment information. My view is that that is a function for the Ministry of Labour. Because we are the ones who are looked upon as the ones primarily responsible for generating a climate in which healthy employment situations prevail, it seems to me only reasonable, therefore, that, in the circumstances, we ought to be in a position to know precisely what level of services we have, the quantum of services we have, what are the projections in various job classifications in the future, in order to be able to effectively plan and forecast and project, in order to steer the information into the direction that will allow us, always, to meet any eventuality.

To give you only one example, Sir, the recent activity in heavy construction in Barbados was an activity that was not, in my view, altogether analysed for all of its consequences. A simple function like providing drivers for heavy equipment, the men who drive the heavy caterpillars etc., posed a problem for Barbados. We were not in a position when the Cement Plant first started to be able to supply all of the drivers that were required to handle that heavy equipment, and we were

meeting demands from the people at the Cement Plant, the engineers responsible for that project, to give them permission to bring in people from abroad who would operate this equipment.

4.15 p.m.

In addition to this, we had great difficulty as a consequence of the lack of planning in the area of employment as well with highly technical welders. We had to permit some people, who are specially skilled in high technique stress welding, to come here in order to assist with that project because we did not have the number of sufficiently qualified workers to undertake that particular activity.

When I speak about welding, I do not mean those people who tack two pieces of iron together. The kind of welding to which I am referring is welding that is supposed to endure stress at various heights, is able to subject itself to certain stresses in water and pressure testing, the kind of welding that would be able to pass X-ray scrutiny. That is the kind of sophisticated welding activity to which I refer, and we do not have sufficiently trained people in this island to deal with that.

So in the process of planning for the further development of the Ministry of Labour, it is essential that we, in analysing each new situation and forecasting for the future, be always in a position to predict with a fair measure of certainty the kind of skills that will be in demand, so that we can put in train those activities that will give us the proficiency to be able to supply that kind of labour demand.

The National Training Board, under the umbrella of the Ministry responsible for Labour, is now in the process of conducting a series of apprenticeship training sessions with the expectation that we will have available and on stream a number of people who will be able to meet some of the demand for the future, and in the face of well designed information on unemployment statistics, or employment statistics to be more precise, we will be in a position to answer the demand for the future.

Further, the Ministry of Labour has undertaken the upgrading of what has been commonly called the Labour Exchange. Not too long from now we expect to come before the House with a mild amendment to the Act dealing with exchanges in order to allow for an expanded concept of the functions of the Exchange Department. We propose to rename the Exchange the National Unemployment Bureau, and its present functions, which merely have to do with the placing of persons in relatively low-skilled jobs, will be expanded appreciably to cover all classes of job vacancies, the placing of people of all categories and in all levels of employment.

In order to do this job effectively, we have had to undertake some renovations to the building itself. These

renovations are currently in progress, and those persons who visit the Exchange will be able to see renovations going on which are designed to better allow us to carry out the new responsibilities which we have designed for the new Unemployment Bureau.

A further reason for the revamping of this particular institution is the fact that the Unemployment Benefit Scheme under the National Insurance programme is coming on stream, and part of the responsibility for the National Bureau of Employment will be the screening and surveying of unemployed persons who call upon the Bureau for unemployment benefits. These persons will have to be monitored on an ongoing basis to ascertain, in fact, that they are searching for alternative employment, and we, at the same time, will be actively involved in the process of assisting them in finding alternate employment.

So the whole gamut of activity at what we now familiarly call "Verona House" will be appreciably expanded, and in that new agency we will have professional guidance counsellors, etc., who are going to be able to assist young persons in determining what area of employment would best suit their particular interests.

When the present Administration took up responsibility, we decided that we needed to take a careful look at the responsibilities of the factory inspectorate, and again, Sir, I approached the Minister responsible for Establishments for additional staff to man the factory inspectorate. Under the new Factories Act that was passed in this House only very recently, the factory inspectorate will be expected to carry out a large volume of responsibilities aimed at safeguarding the work place, so that persons who work in factories will have a reasonable expectation of working in an environment that is safe for them to work in, and we have therefore increased the number of persons in the factory inspectorate.

The factory inspectors will benefit from new training opportunities that are developing. Only this week I approved an application from the Chief Labour Officer for one man to go to Australia to undertake a programme of training in labour conciliation matters.

In addition to that, the Organisation of American States, during the course of this year, will be providing an additional service for approximately five months. They are going to be providing the services of an OAS expert in unemployment and employment generating information data, and his function will be to assist us further in the second phase of the redesign of the employment and statistical information service. So we have employment opportunities afoot which will this year see us providing a vastly improved Ministry of Labour and Social Security for Barbados.

Now, Sir, one area which still is a subject of great confusion in the minds of the public is the question of work permits. I listened to a radio programme only two or three weeks ago in which I heard a young man warming up, so to speak, on the Ministry of Labour for failing to provide an opportunity for him, with his technical competence.

4.25 p.m.

Sir, at present, it is not the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour to issue work permits to nationals of other countries. It should be recognised that there is hardly any country in the world which can function solely on its own resources and that, from time to time, it will be necessary to issue work permits to persons from abroad who have various skills. However, at the Ministry of Labour it is our view that a further look at the present work permit situation will have to be taken, because a Ministry of Employment, which the Ministry of Labour is, ought to be responsible for work permits. At the moment we are consulted, but I believe that the responsibility for work permits ought to reside in the agency primarily responsible for employment matters.

We are going to keep pressing until we are able to convince those persons responsible that the concept of a modern-day Ministry of Employment, in Barbados called the Ministry of Labour, is to look after the total matter that deals with all aspects of employment, including the granting of work permits, because we are better placed than any other agency in the island to provide information on the level of skills available. Therefore, Sir, in the interest of efficiency and streamlining these services, we are going to make further representations until we are able to bring to the Ministry of Labour a totalised professional concept, which certainly I feel is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour.

I mention these things, Sir, because I believe that Members need to be informed about what our programme is so that they would be able to form impressions about whether we are involved in any work at all or whether we are just sitting down, maintaining the *status quo*.

We are going to continue this year, particularly in the area of training, to provide the depth of professionalism that we think will be necessary in order to effectively discharge all of the areas I mentioned during the course of my speech, and I, Sir, am particularly happy to associate myself with the Establishment Order, particularly as it relates to the provision of new staff for the Ministry of Labour and Social Security.

SUSPENSION

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to move that this sitting be suspended for twenty minutes for tea.

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

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

On Resumption:

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 2.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 2.

RESOLUTION TO INCREASE ANNUAL SALARY OF GOVERNOR-GENERAL

Order No. 2 was called in the name of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister – To move the passing of the Resolution to increase the annual salary payable to the Governor-General with effect from 1st April, 1982.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 3.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 3.

STAMP DUTY (AMENDMENT) ACT, 1983

Order No. 3 was called in the name of the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister – To move the Second Reading of a Bill to amend the Stamp Duty Act, Cap. 91.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the definition contained in the Stamp Duty Act, which came down and was passed by Parliament after the Budget, resulted in some difficulties in respect of the importation of machinery valued at more than \$100 000. We also had some difficulties because importers, hearing the words "petroleum products", started applying for exemptions for vaseline, lubricating oil and so on, Sir, and we did not mean that at all; we mean things in the nature of crude petroleum; the things, indeed, which appeared in the Bill.

There were one or two typographical errors, and we have decided that \$5 is not enough as a fee for processing a Duty Free application. We are, therefore, raising it to \$10.

Honourable Members may, perhaps, want to know that the collections of Stamp Duty have been a little more successful than we had predicted, and that we can expect to collect probably \$11 million in the first full year.

Barbados, however, has been going through a period when our imports are falling. I think this is a tribute to the monetary measures and restrictions of credit which the Government has been using to control our balance of payments rather than seeking to impose direct import controls. I have always tended to believe that direct controls have failed in so many countries that it is a waste of time thinking that you are going to be able to manage a balance of payments problem just, or at all, by forbidding imports into the country. And I am very glad to have been vindicated in terms of the Government's policy.

We have indeed freed-up imports a little bit; motor cars being the most noticeable, and we will have to brace ourselves for a very substantial quantity of imports of motor cars during the next three months. I do not know whether the motor car importers have correctly judged the capacity of the public of Barbados to pay, but they have applied for, and have been granted, \$19 million in motor car imports in the first quarter of the new year, Sir, which is so far and away a record that the previous record cannot even be quoted.

This will improve the revenue, but that is not the Government's purpose; the Government's purpose has been to free-up the bottlenecks and shortages. I would, however, advise, that if there is any excitement, if people behave as if motor cars will never come to Barbados again and try to buy every motor car in Japan during the year 1983, we might well have to reimpose the controls, because our roads simply cannot take unlimited importation of cars.

We are trying to improve the highway system. We will have two fine new roads completed soon and we have two more on the drawing boards now which will be finished within three years. But until our road system is drastically changed, we will not be able to allow unlimited imports of motor cars into this country – to pack them into the already over-crowded highways.
5.00 p.m.

I digress from that, Sir, because that would be a very substantial area of collection of Stamp Duty. I think I have explained the purpose of this Act, and I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

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

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 Hon. H. B. St. JOHN, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee on the Bill, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 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. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION AT WELCHMAN HALL, ST. THOMAS

Order No. 6 was called in the name of the Hon. Minister of Housing and Lands – To move the passing of the Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Welchman Hall, St. Thomas for the purpose of constructing a Police Station and Magistrate's Court.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Development Plan of 1979–1983 provides for the construction of a Magistrate's Court and a Police Station in the parish of St. Thomas. It was recommended that the existing Magistrate's Court and Police Station should be replaced by a new building to accommodate those facilities. An area of land was identified at Welchman Hall, St. Thomas, adjacent to the land on which the Post Office now stands, and it is proposed that this land should be acquired to facilitate the construction of the Magistrate's Court and the Police Station.

The owners have been approached, and although we have not had a positive reply from them on a settlement on the question of compensation, it is hopeful that this would be arrived at.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would very much like to second this Resolution and to make a few remarks concerning the building of another Police Station, and particularly one in the Welchman Hall area.

I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you are very familiar with the condition of both the Police Station and the Court now existing in the other area of St. Thomas, which is often referred to as District 'D'. That station is in a very bad condition and, in my opinion, should have

been condemned a long time ago. Therefore, it was always on the card that this Government, in making better provisions for the Police Force in this island, would have given early priority to the building of a station at Welchman Hall, and I recall that during the time when I had the responsibility for the Ministry of the Attorney-General, the plans for this station and for the expansion of the Magistrate's Court were laid.

More and more, Welchman Hall is perhaps becoming one of the sub-town areas for the rural districts feeding and assisting the rural districts. With the establishment of a station at Welchman Hall, I think it would be necessary for us to re-organise and rationalise the distribution of police forces throughout the whole of that region.

Belleplaine is an important area and I would hope that, in due course, the Government would see fit to expand the facility at Belleplaine, so that policing under "the hill", in the Horse Hill area, will be done on a lateral basis: the police forces at Belleplaine would have responsibilities for under the Bathsheba area and expanding right up to St. Peter and back up to St. John on the border of St. Philip.

It would then be necessary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to reorganise the Welchman Hall area to take care of some of the problems of law and order above "the hill", co-ordinating with Charles Rowe Bridge, and also to upgrade the station at the other part of St. Joseph to take care, along with District C, of the St. John-Four Roads area, expanding back up to Bayfield to accord with the responsibility of the Station at District C. I hope that the Government would pursue this programme with all the intensity that is necessary.

You would have noticed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the establishment of the station and law courts at Oistins which, in my view, has set a model of what a Police Station should look like. It has the utmost security provisions there, and I am sure that, with the security arrangements provided and the accommodation to the public, it is an improvement on anything that has been done in Barbados so far. The same goes for the Magistrate's Court in Oistins.

I hope that the Government, in implementing the programme in the Development Plan, would pay regard to the need to upgrade the facilities – that they cater for the public, for the Probation Officers, for the lawyers for the clients whom one must see, as well as for the other people who use the court facilities from time to time.

I trust that the passing of this Resolution is a precursor to the construction beginning shortly, either in this financial year or in the next financial year.

I hope that the Minister would be in a position to clarify what is being done in Holetown. Holetown is bursting at the seams, but I seem to recall that when I was there arrangements had been made for acquisition of a further area at Holetown.

The position of the Police in this country is pivotal, and will remain to be crucial for the balance of this century with the new methods of criminals. I think that if policemen must spend long hours away from their homes that they ought to be provided with the best facilities, as any of us would have in our offices.

I want to congratulate the Government for beginning to implement this plan and the Minister for bringing this Resolution before the House. I hope that I will see speedy action, despite the recessionary economic conditions existing.

5.10 p.m.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 7.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 7.

RESOLUTION TO AMEND THE RESOLUTION No. 31/1979

Order No. 5 was called – To move the passing of the Resolution to amend the Resolution No. 31/1979.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on 25th May, 1979 Resolution No. 31/1979 received parliamentary approval. It was later discovered that there was an error both in description and in the area of land. The area of land was purchased in order to accommodate the building of some 50 terraced units which are completed at Bonnetts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the purpose of this Resolution today is to amend that Resolution of 1979, and I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish, of course, to make a few remarks in relation to this Resolution.

The Resolution is of great importance to the residents of the Bonnetts, Clapham, Club Morgan, Brittons Hill area. It is on this area that, some years ago, the then Minister of Housing and Lands, the honourable Member for St. James North, visited with me to look at an area of land that was considered suitable for improving housing conditions in the Brittons Hill area, and he had

not long gone on the land when he said to his officials move ahead with full speed. He was well satisfied that the area was extremely suitable, and I think that, after a survey which his Ministry had carried out, he was satisfied that 54 per cent of the people in that area did not have adequate water-borne facilities – most of them were senior citizens – and they were in need of this sort of assistance.

When people criticise the Government, they fail to take into account that, despite the limited resources and with the world economic situation affecting our economy, the Government has taken steps to upgrade facilities wherever possible and to have a programme for housing that I think does credit to the Government.

I wish to congratulate the past Minister of Housing for the foresight which he showed in planning for this project which is now nearing completion. I wish, too, to add to this the present Minister of Housing, who has given full support to the project, and who has personally been on the site from time to time to iron out some of the problems which have occurred, and, where there has been a bottleneck, to give directions in policy areas to the officials of the Ministry of Housing, and through them to the National Housing Corporation, in order to get those bottlenecks sorted out.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there have been some features of the Government's execution of this project that ought to be commended publicly. In particular, the people of Bonnetts are very pleased that no houses have been removed from the area and that the Government has been able to accommodate all of those houses which had to be resited and relocated to make arrangements for roads and to make arrangements for the new housing units.

But it is not only the relocation of the tenants, the Government has taken the opportunity to improve the houses for the tenants and to give them modern toilet facilities, and I have had nothing but congratulation for the actions of the Ministry and of the National Housing Corporation from the people living in that area.

There has also been an improvement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the road conditions which existed in that area, and I am hoping shortly that the Ministry, in conjunction with the Ministry of Transport and Works, will see fit to instal lights, and in conjunction with the Ministry responsible for Energy, and particularly the Chairman of the National Petroleum Corporation, would see fit to put in natural gas.

I have raised this matter before, Sir, we are in dire need of natural gas in all that area, the people are willing to pay, and I am going to make a speech every time that I see something come to the House to press the case for that area, as well as for the area of Christ Church West,

to have natural gas facilities. It seems to me in planning new housing areas where natural gas is near, as it is in the Brittons Hill area, it is about the easiest thing to bring in the facilities at the same time.

I am also hoping that very shortly public telephone facilities will be installed, and I have the assurance of the Minister that, within a short while, beautification of the area will start as well.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was in the Bonnetts area last Sunday night. I always try to get around my constituency. After speaking at a meeting for the honourable Minister of Transport and Works, a very outstanding constituency meeting too, with the inspiration in my soul I visited my constituency, and I was pleased to hear the happy comments of those people who have moved into the houses for the outstanding work done by the National Housing Corporation and the Ministry of Housing and the Government in this respect.

Almost all of the units, I believe, have been allotted. All have not gone to people in my area. That is to be expected, since other areas have needs as well. But I understand that we have not got into next year's programme. There is very good land there, it is on solid rock, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the cost of construction is low, the needs for housing in that area are great, and — I hope the Minister is listening — I want the Minister to tell me how soon, if not in the next financial year, he will be able to complete the project for the building of another block of houses in that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my experience is that if I see 47 people on a Saturday in my constituency, at least 38 of those are asking for housing, and of the 38 I would classify at least 85 per cent as in dire need of housing.

My view is that the worst problem confronting Barbados today, despite the recession is certainly not employment; it is overcrowding housing conditions, and housing conditions that in many respects are not adequate.

It is a fallacy to assume that constituencies such as Christ Church West have not got pressing needs. In fact, Christ Church West is probably a microcosm of the whole macrocosmic problems confronting Barbados, because we have not solved all the problems. When I was a Minister my colleagues helped me, particularly the honourable Member for St. Andrew, to solve some of the problems, and I am still getting assistance from some honourable Members, as well as from some Ministries.

But I have problems, and they are problems particularly among the lower economic stratum of the society in a constituency such as this. I think that, just as

my colleagues have been surprised to know that in an area of Christ Church West you could find 54 per cent of an area in Bonnetts without even water-borne facilities, Members may still continue to be surprised if I show them areas in the constituency of Christ Church West in which there are not adequate roads, adequate water facilities, adequate housing facilities, or adequate sewerage or other facilities, as well as, of course, the lack of natural gas and energy.

I do not want to wait until an election to be making any pork barrel speeches. I know that the whole island is in need of this sort of facility, but I want to re-emphasise the strong need to continue a progressive programme for housing, as well as for upgrading the facilities available for people, particularly in this lower socioeconomic rung of the ladder. So whilst I congratulate the Minister for coming to the House, although it is merely correcting an error in a Resolution, I want to congratulate him for the work which he is doing, and has done, in the Bonnetts area.

5.20 p.m.

I think the building is a tribute to both himself and his predecessor in office. I think the landscaping which is being planned is excellent. The facilities have been improved. I believe that he and his predecessor have shown a progressive approach to housing construction and providing the sort of amenities that people should need in housing areas — not too much cramping, a good deal of air, excellent roads, water improved, sanitation improved and — I trust that this programme will continue.

I hope to hear from him, Sir, that he might be acquiring another right of way and getting his colleague, the Minister of Transport and Works, to link up another road to the west of this area, which is a mud area, as he would recognise, and where the people who have resided there for some time want to know if they have been forgotten. I am sure they are not, Sir, and I am hoping that, within the next couple of days, the Minister of Transport will find it possible to go on a tour with me so that I can point out to him some of the areas that need this type of upgrading.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wish to reply to the honourable Member who just sat down. He has asked how soon the additional block will be built at Bonnetts.

I would like to inform him that I have not yet given any serious thought to this, because the policy of the Ministry surely will be directed to trying to provide more house spots for persons to build their own houses. I think that it is time that we realize that Government's policy and thrust will be in providing home ownership and, in this direction, we have decided on a policy to make the land that is presently available at Bonnetts

available for house spots. I think the honourable Member will be indeed heartened to hear that. I do not need to refer to a number of other points raised by him.

I just want to say that the Ministry is looking at lands in every available part of the country with a view to putting in the infrastructural services and providing sites. Funds will be made available to people to borrow in in order to construct their own homes, and I think that the policy of the Ministry is well known in this respect.

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

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 8.

COMPULSORY ACQUISITION OF LAND AT
BAYWOODS, ST. JAMES, FOR THE PRO-
VISION OF RECREATIONAL
FACILITIES

Order No. 8 was called — To move the passing of the Resolution to approve the compulsory acquisition of land at Baywoods, St. James for the provision of recreational facilities.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Resolution seeks to acquire an area of land at Baywoods, St. James. I do not wish to speak very long on this. All I want to say is that the honourable Member, the Minister of Health, who is also the representative for this part of St. James, has urged Government to acquire this area of land in order to provide recreational facilities for the residents of this area.

With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have already spoken on this matter at some time or another in the past and therefore do not wish to add much more, except to thank the honourable Member, who has just introduced this Bill, and the Government for its willingness, and ready willingness, to accede to the requests of the good people of Baywoods, Orange Hill, St. James, for the acquisition of this land with the property thereon known as Buccaneer, for recreational purposes in that area.

That area is an area that is rather thickly inhabited; it has a considerable amount of people. It is unfortunate that over the years very little has been done in that area, and it was very gratifying to me to know that the honourable Member for St. James North and the present Minister of Communications and Works, at the time responsible for the Community Services, were both very responsive to the

requests made to them at the time in order to bring some form of recreation to that area.

I sincerely hope that the honourable Minister will look further afield within that constituency, which is very much a scattered area — as a matter of fact, that constituency offers more problems, in terms of your ability to traverse it, than any other place I can recall in this country. I recall, very well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on one occasion while out with you looking at that constituency, you said to me that you did not know if you would want to have those problems which I have by way of traversing such difficult terrain.

There is also an area known as Rock Hall in St. Andrew, a place that is completely cut off and very much isolated, for which a request was made for certain facilities in order to give a form of recreation to the people there. Because of the land terrain we will not be able to have a playing field or anything of that kind, but I think it might be possible to have a Community Centre whereby boys and girls, men and women as well, will be able to enjoy themselves.

I again want to thank the honourable Member, the introducer of this Bill, for having acceded to the request in the purchasing of this property in order to give some facilities, in the form of recreational facilities, to the good people of that area.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the objective of this Resolution really poses no problem to me, since I am in complete agreement with any policy for the purchasing of land that would provide recreational facilities for the people of Barbados, but what I seek to find out from the Minister is the criteria he uses in deciding priority for the purchase of the individual parcels of land in the particular areas in Barbados.

It is well known, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the national sport of Barbados is cricket, but because a cricket field uses a fairly large track of land, at this time, it is almost impossible for Government to acquire the appropriate sizes of land throughout Barbados, in all the areas, that would allow a cricket field to be used by the residents.

Giving a thought to this particular area, I have arrived at the conclusion that Government's aim and objectives in sporting activities throughout Barbados should be one whereby it seeks to provide an area of land that would be large enough to provide facilities for a netball court for the girls, basketball court for the boys and, maybe, some facilities for road tennis or something — in the absence of the ultimate objective to providing facilities for cricket.

5.30 p.m.

What has been bothering me for a long time is the selection of these places for these facilities, and I would seek to find out from the Minister if, in arriving at the priorities for the purchase of these individual places, the population in the area, and therefore the overall fill-in in this particular situation, is taken into consideration? I ask this for the simple reason that the area facility for Baywoods will serve, if I am as acquainted with the area as I think I am, if you take the population that would make use of the facility in this area, it is certainly a much smaller population than lots of other areas in Barbados that I am certain have no facility whatever of this type.

I know that funds are limited, and, in a situation where there is open competition for funds available to the Government, that sports might be downplayed. But I think any Government that thinks that the lands and the funds that they apply for the provision of sporting and recreational facilities are of secondary importance is making a very serious error, in that our young people in Barbados need this type of recreational facility.

It has been long accepted that the provision of recreational facilities does two things: (1) it improves the physical health of the people that we are aiming to help in Barbados; and (2) it improves the contact situation whereby you have children going into these playing fields and by doing this you find that you improve the community situation, because the parents of those children, more often than not, go to these playing fields. I would want to think that it is Government's policy that, in acquiring areas for this type of playing field, you go on a strict situation where priority is given to the catchment basins that have the larger number of people that need this type of facility.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because the line which the honourable Member for St. Philip North is taking would give the impression that Orange Hill is a small catchment area. Orange Hill, as a district, is one of the largest areas in this country. I do not know what the honourable Member is trying to prove.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is no point of order. That was a point of elucidation.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

At this particular time I am just seeking to know, as a matter of information from the appropriate Ministry, if, in arriving at the priority for acquiring land for this type of use, a catchment basis or the requirements of other areas are taken into consideration? I am certain that there are areas in Barbados that have a much bigger catchment basin that are presently without the facilities that would be provided at this particular one. I am

saying, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that, as a matter of clarification, I would welcome the Minister informing me, for my own personal enlightenment, of the procedure in arriving at the priorities in acquisition for playing facilities.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish to support the Resolution, familiar as I am with the area of Baywoods and being satisfied that it meets the sort of criteria which my friend the honourable Member for St. Philip North has just said.

In fact, I am deeply conscious of the degree of representation on this particular point made by the honourable Minister of Health and the support which he obtained from the Minister in charge of Community Services and Sport at the time, as well as his colleague the honourable Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, who was then in the Ministry of Housing.

I am glad to see that the Resolution is before the House, because Baywoods is really in need of community services and facilities as well as a playing area for a sports field. I am sure none of us who has pressing needs will begrudge that area the establishment of these facilities as soon as possibly can be arranged.

Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Baywoods reminds me in some respects of the area of Rendezvous where, of course, there is a tremendous catchment area which is not adequately served as the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central will agree, by the facilities at Sargeants Village. In fact, quite a lot of these facilities have proved inadequate in planning, and I am sure the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central will support the idea behind Resolutions such as this, particularly if it is applied to the Rendezvous area to cater for parts of Sargeants Village, Smith's Corner, Bartletts Tenantry, Rendezvous Hill, Rendezvous Ridge, Amity Lodge, parts of Club Morgan and Fordes Road that have as similar needs as those of Baywoods. These are in the constituency of Christ Church West which, I believe, is adequately represented.

The honourable Prime Minister wanted to know which constituency they are in, so I am telling him so that he would hurry up and provide money not only for the acquisition, but also for the provision of the facilities.

But seriously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is an area in Rendezvous Ridge that if we do not acquire now we would lose, and I have written personally to both the Minister of Labour and Sports and to the Minister of Housing about this matter, and this is a follow-up of representations made to the National Sports Council.

Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to see that in future the Government would not have to come down with acquisitions for these purposes. People in Barbados should be a little bit more public spirited and be prepared to make donations of land for the provision of community facilities for people. Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is precedent for this, because in the constituency of Christ Church West the estate of the late Myra Bryden has provided the Government with an area of land in Gills Road for the provision of this type of facility, and the only delay is that the Government has not yet carried out the programme for establishing facilities there.

In fact, I wonder if the Minister can tell us where is the hold up in the Government getting the papers for what has been a magnanimous donation, because, in my opinion, the land is worth close to \$50 000. It has been given to the public of Barbados and awaits only now the execution of the project by the Ministry of Sports in conjunction, of course, with my good friend the Minister of Housing and Lands.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to make one very small intervention here on behalf of the people of Cave Hill. About three years ago, a pavilion, including other facilities, was put on Montgomery pasture. It is not a good building, but it is there just the same. It has been there for some time. I would be glad if the appropriate Minister — I am not sure which one is responsible or the appropriate department; it might even be a statutory corporation; in other words it might even be the Ministry of Housing or the National Housing Corporation — would do something about that structure on Montgomery pasture.

In the first place, I think it is too large for the pasture. Secondly, I think it is badly sited. But it is already there, and since it is there, I think it is only fair that it should be made use of. It should be opened. If the pasture is now too small, for whatever reason, I hope that the Ministry would acquire some other lands if other lands need to be acquired, or do something; whatever needs to be done in order to bring that playing field into some kind of use for the people of the Cave Hill area.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I, of course, support the acquisition of land in the Baywoods area for the provision of recreational facilities, and like my friend, the honourable Member for Christ Church West, I entirely support the provision of land for recreational facilities all over the country.

He specifically mentioned the area of Rendezvous. Rendezvous at this time definitely embraces the area of two constituencies, Christ Church West and Christ Church West Central, and I would definitely support the acquisition of land in that area and the provision of recreational facilities.

In the course of the intervention by the honourable Member for Christ Church West, I heard a *sotto voce* remark coming from the Right honourable Member for St. Thomas, whose constituency he was speaking of. I wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the *sotto voce* remark was in any way prophetic as to what would happen to that constituency in that particular area and location. Would Rendezvous, for instance, be still in Christ Church, partly in Christ Church West or West Central, or will it too form part of one particular constituency in years to come? But definitely, irrespective of which area it was, I would support the acquisition of land in the Rendezvous area for the provision of recreational facilities.
5.40 p.m.

I would also like to add, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that when land is being acquired for the provision of recreational facilities, too often we see that the provision for the acquisition is made, but then nothing further is done about the development of the land which is acquired. I remember, very early in this Parliament, shortly after Elections, that land was acquired at Briar Hall, in Christ Church West Central, for the provision of recreational facilities and developing the land that was acquired. I wonder if the Minister of Lands could at this time perhaps indicate when something positive and constructive is going to be done in connection with providing facilities at Briar Hall and developing the land in that area.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rejoice with the honourable Member who represents the people out there where Baywoods is located, and I rejoice with the people who live in that area. They are extremely lucky; they are going to have some land acquired for recreational purposes, and I dare suppose that, apart from the acquisition of the land, they will have the usual services which go with recreational facilities. They will be as lucky as, for example, the persons who live in the area which is represented by the distinguished Member for St. Michael East.

I hear my colleagues from Christ Church West and Christ Church West Central calling their neighbourhoods and indicating how they would like to share with the good people of Baywoods in this Resolution. How I wish that the people who live in St. Michael West could share this happy moment with the people of Baywoods.

After representing them for so many years, since this Government came into power, and as a Minister of Government; and after doing so much and trying to acquire the land at the bottom of Passage Road, which is itself a bit of a catchment area; and after having the assurance of a Minister in that Government that every step would be taken to assist us; we have had extreme difficulty in getting a piece of equipment to clear an area so that the boys could play football.

I am not going to quarrel with the Minister responsible for Lands, because he gave me an assurance, on the occasion when I spoke to him, that he would do all in his power to assist in the moving of these small "trees", which are vines, which have grown up in that area. But what I find extremely difficult to understand, having heard him talk about policy in the Ministry, is whether there is an overall policy for all the youths of Barbados. I wish to know if there is an overall policy in his Ministry, and those Ministries concerned with providing recreational facilities, that takes account of all the youth in the community.

I have been given this assurance by Minister after Minister, but the fact remains, that in the constituency which I have the honour to represent there are no recreational areas. Except for one open area.....

(Aside)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member who represents St. Michael North East is saying *sub voce* that they have the Liberty. That is an indication of the callousness of the Government in its attitude to recreational facilities for the urban and suburban youth. They do not understand why we are having a number of problems related to sociological development. That is all they have — the Liberty — but the Liberty starts to function after 9 p.m., as the honourable Member knows — and the honourable Member has no difficulty in Libertarian recreational facilities, because he starts his after midnight — but the youth would like to start like the youth in Baywoods — at a reasonable time in the afternoon.

Why is it difficult for us to get the facilities of the National Sports Council, or the Ministry of Lands, or the Ministry of Community Services, or the Ministry of Agriculture, or whichever department it is responsible for clearing a field? This is land about which they ask no more than the clearing of the land so that they mark out a football field, so that they can become members of the Barbados Football Association, to whom they have made an application. This is all they ask.

It is a large area of land, Sir, it is owned by the Government, because you will recall, Sir, that we made arrangements during our time for that land to be exchanged for land at the Harbour so we could have the recreational facilities; you will recall that I had said in this Honourable Chamber, almost on my knees, that I would not wish to see housing placed on that piece of land, and you will recall that the honourable Member who was responsible at the time, the honourable Member for St. Michael East, gave an indication that he would seek to make the area a recreational area.

I am not asking for this for any partisan political purpose; I am in the spirit of the policy adumbrated on a number of occasions by the honourable Member who introduced this Resolution. What I am saying is that those youths who live in the City and surrounding areas, what I call the urban areas, are not being given the kinds of consideration which they have to have if we are not to have an explosion in this country five, ten, fifteen years from now.

Why should it be so difficult in a Government Service, irrespective of the economic situation we are in, to get a simple tractor to push down a few "trees"; vines that have been growing for so long that they now have the appearance of trees. Why is it so difficult for ordinary folk to be able to identify the agency to which they can go and say, "We wish to have 'X' done", and get it done? Why are the co-ordinating services to provide the recreational facilities, for which this Resolution comes to be passed, are so disparate; that if you go to the Ministry of Transport and Works they tell you, "Well, that is not our area; we do not handle that;" and when you go to the National Sports Council they tell you, "Well, you know, that is not exactly our field; we will see what we can do for you"; and when you go to the Ministry of Lands, they tell you, "Well, we only acquire; but once we acquire, it goes to another Ministry."

The fact is, Sir, that we are continuing to pass a number of Resolutions in this Honourable Chamber for the acquisition of lands in order to provide recreational services, but I wish to raise whether those recreational services are being provided at the level and scope which the presentations made in this Chamber suggest — except where Providence allows the Ministerial function and the representation to coincide; except for a few areas where, even when that is done, apparently there is some confusion.

I wish to make it clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not wish recreational facilities to be provided for the youths of Eagle Hall or Passage Road at the expense of the youth in the Ivy, or the expense of the youth in Baywoods or the youth anywhere else. That is not my contention, I am not suggesting that any honourable Member over there, who has the opportunity, ought to deny his community or his area of representation for my purposes.

5.50 p.m.

I am not suggesting that. I am suggesting that the time has come when we should get this business in order, where we should have some kind of co-ordination for these so-called recreational facilities. It is remarkable that we could be, at the beginning of 1983, debating this kind of mundane issue. I believe that there is a level and quality of recreational services which all the youths of Barbados have a right to expect. I think

it would be a travesty if the arguments were reduced to whether it is that side or this side that happens to be in power.

(Asides.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Prime Minister is in one of his moods, and I do not intend to hear his remarks. But if I had heard his remarks in the way he wishes me to hear them, I would point out that even in his constituency there are questions raised about the proper recreational facilities for the youths of his community. But then again, Sir.....

(Asides.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The level of his representation is a cricket field at Porey Spring. Well, if they could get a little water in the houses when they leave the cricket field and go home, like, for example, in Christie Village, where they have water four hours a day; after they have come from the cricket field in Porey Spring, if they could have water for longer than four hours a day, they would be a lot better off.

Mr. Deputy Speaker.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I wonder when the honourable Member would get back to Baywoods.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am saying that the people in Baywoods are much better off today on the face of it because this Resolution seeks to provide them with recreational facilities. I am saying that the people in Porey Spring, from what we hear, are going to be fortunate to get some recreational facilities by way of a cricket field, before 1986.

I would like to see, before the end of February 1983, indeed by the end of January 1983, that the people who live in Bank Hall, Passage Road, Barbarees Hill, President Kennedy Drive and even in the City be able to use seven acres of land that is owned by the Government at the bottom of Passage Road that has gone to grass, bush, and trees; that is of no use to anyone, except to provide shelter for one or two questionable activities. I am suggesting that that is a waste of resources of the community when, in fact, there are at least three groups from the surrounding area who are waiting.

It is wrong that they have to make the Westbury Cemetery a place of recreation. That is where we are reduced to. Westbury Cemetery is the major recreational facility area for the people in that area.

(Asides.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The quick and the dead. The dead, Sir, are at rest, except when the honourable Member for St. Thomas sends them tax bills, Sir, and the living have to play road tennis.

(Asides.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, but Rev. Jones, who died about twelve years ago, got a tax bill.....

(Asides.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Good shot. The honourable Member for St. James North has come back alive. He has been sleeping for the last two days, but obviously he and the Prime Minister are *ad idem* again; so it is all right; he is back to life.

Sir, I will not prolong this Honourable House any longer.

(Asides.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am only able to go by your demeanour. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not prolong this Honourable House any longer. The honourable Minister means well, Sir. I believe so. Each time I have approached him on these matters, his manner has been affable, his attitude suggests sincerity and I have no reason to doubt that he means that he means what he says when he tells me that he will do all that he can.

If, therefore, we accept that is how I feel about the honourable Member's behaviour in regard to this issue, and if we accept that previous Ministers holding his portfolio and others holding related portfolios have all indicated their willingness to see recreational facilities provided as they are being provided in this Resolution, Sir, for other areas such as Passage Road, then, Sir, it has to be a managerial problem. It has to be a difficulty which needs more than affability, sincerity and good intention. It needs some input from those responsible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker let me say to you that if any of us over here had the responsibility, that the area at Passage Road would have been cleared. I would see to that. We don't have the responsibility so, therefore, all we can do is ask, beg, console, quarrel. We do all of these things in the interest of those poor, unfortunate youth who have, when they do get a chance to use the playing facilities at the school, to be very careful to make sure that they don't breach the rules, and I agree with that policy. But they wish to enter a football team.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Alkins United Won the Second Division cup one year, and the next year, when they went to First Division, they did not have a home ground,

and as a result, Sir, they left the First Division in a hurry. Richmond United cannot find any facilities in Richmond. But Richmond is just across the street from the land which I described, and all they ask is that somebody would just cut off the grass and they will mark the field, they would put up the goal bars, they will do all the other things. We ask no more than — just clear it. Mr. Deputy Speaker, all I am asking them to do is to get a tractor, or whatever it is they use, from whichever department — just clear the field and we will do the rest, Sir.

We don't expect much, as they say to me when I meet with them, "We understand that you are not in the Government. We understand that the Government is going to look after itself first." I try to tell them that the Government is not like that, but they see for themselves and they come to their own conclusions, and they unanimously say that the Government will look after itself. I have no quarrel with that. But please, couldn't we get just a tractor to clear the ground so we could mark it up?

(Asides).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member of St. James is a sportsman, Sir, and that is neither here nor there.

I am going to stop now, Sir, but I hope that when the Baywoods project is established that it will not merely be a piece of land that is acquired and then you go and tell the people, "See what we have done for you." I hope that there will be a serious input, recognizing that recreational facilities form part of the economic and social development of the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a number of countries, Cuba, for example, where the prosecution, if you will, of sporting activities has been so exercised that has been clearly demonstrated that the national effort has followed the feats of the sports people on the playing field. It is well known, Sir, that the West Indies, because of the powers of its cricketers — until the last two weeks or so — has managed to be known in lands far and wide as a superior area because of the performance of our sportsmen on the field. It is also accepted in medical, sociological, and medical psychological areas of study that the recreational requirements for the society are at least equal to the economic and social requirements. So, no one in his right mind would ever have any quarrel with the acquisition of land for recreational facilities.

But what is required, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a comprehensive policy. And it must be recognized by those whose responsibility it is that that policy must be given the same vigour as other policies in the development of the society. We must have a macro-developmental

approach to the societal needs, and we must recognize, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that if we plan for all the other areas of our development and we consistently neglect the recreational and sporting areas, the resources we put in the other areas will be lost or, indeed if they are not lost, we will not get maximum efficiency from our use of resources.

6.00 p.m.

We are told from time to time that things are tight in this country, but things can never be so tight as not to allow young people to go out and get what is commonly described as recreation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is extremely expensive these days for anyone to participate in some of the more esoteric sports. Recently, I sought to take up the sport of squash, and when I discovered that a racquet costs over \$75, that is the beginning, it seemed to me that, even at my level, taking up a new sport might be a dangerous activity financially, if not physically.

So you can imagine that for a number of these young people, all they have is the pasture to go out on. The honourable Member knows of what I speak. He grew up in areas where the only recreation he had between the daylight hours was going out on the pasture and playing whatever the boys were playing. In 1983 now, Sir, are we going to deny one area of the community this possibility?

Kensington Oval is in my constituency.

(Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: It is in the City).

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It is in the City. Well, I lost that too, Sir. I had Kensington Oval and the Prime Minister took it from me. Empire cricket ground is in my constituency.

(Aside.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Do you see how he deals with me? He took away Kensington and gave me Empire. What are you going to take away the next time?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member has only two more minutes.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I wind up in sorrow, because apart from the Prime Minister indicating that he is going to take away the seat from me, he will not give me the recreational facilities. I believe that the recreational facilities' failure in my constituency is consistent with his wish, his hope, his highest dream that one day he will be able to see listed next to that constituency, Barbados Labour Party. I wish him well. It is going to be a long and difficult struggle, and I hope to see him down there making his effort. If I were him, however, I would pay more attention to the Porey Spring cricket, because he might not know it, but he, too, is in danger.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is in the nature of this society that when social development theories are enunciated from time to time, they are given short shrift. When I was Minister of Sport, time and again I elaborated a philosophy which was encapsulated in the declarative sentence, the sport is not sport in Barbados, and that the Community Development had an important role to play in social stability, even more important than the Police Force, in that social policy was aimed at the prevention of deviant and anti-social behaviour, whereas the police policy was aimed at correcting the deviant and anti-social behaviour.

I do not believe that it is the truth that the Government's policy in relation to recreational facilities has not been elaborated time and again. I therefore think that it is a waste of time to repeat what I have said so often in the past, and therefore I should confine myself to certain operational aspects of the programme, together with the achievements of the Government within this domain.

Now, a Minister responsible for Community Development, and the people who work within this area, are not magicians. They cannot sit in their respective offices and determine the places where recreational facilities should be located and, therefore, the Minister and the entire Ministry rely heavily upon responsible and community conscious persons to bring the needs for community development to their attention. A consequence of this is that, in large measure over the years, the Ministry of Community Development has responded to the demands of political representatives in placing recreational facilities in their constituencies.

It was recognised too that, in addition to the demands of these representatives, one had to take into consideration the question of general deprivation within the area and the size of the population of any given district. It is on the basis of these criteria that areas were selected for the location of recreational facilities.

Equally fallacious is the view that recreational facilities were located to one geographical area, and I hate to go through with this tedious and monotonous recital of where recreational facilities are located, certainly from 1978 to the present time, but in view of the slanders made in here today against this person, it is necessary to state where these facilities are located.

It was incorrectly stated that there are no recreational facilities in the City. In fact, when I was Minister responsible for sport and community development, we formulated a plan, which was a three-phased plan, for a complex at Murphy's pasture. Before I left that Ministry two phases of the plan had been executed — a pavilion had been constructed there together with two hard courts — and when I left the

Ministry of Sport, that Ministry was in the process of preparing a modern playing field for Murphy's pasture. At the present time the Ministry of Sport, I know, has under active consideration the acquisition of three acres of land at Passage Road to be identified as an area for the development of a youth town.

Moving a little further into what has been described as the suburban area, four hard courts were built there in 1977, at Deacons Road, four hard courts. You talked about the suburban area and I am telling you where they are located in the suburban area.
6.10 p.m.

I built a hard court at Princess Royal Avenue, one at Parkinson Avenue, two at Wildey, two at Clapham Park, one at Pleasant Hall, one at Dover, a pavilion at Dover, a pavilion and centre at Wotton, a pavilion at Shorey Village, St. Andrew, a pavilion at Farmers, St. Thomas, a pavilion at Chapel, St. Philip, the development of the old lighthouse as a Community Centre in St. Philip North and we had to postpone the acquisition of land in Supers, in St. Philip North again, upon the request of the Parliamentary representative, because he wanted it sited elsewhere. The Government has also acquired six acres of land at Bayleys in St. Philip for recreational purposes. We built a pavilion at Warleigh in St. Peter. The lies and slander and distortions must come to an end. We built a pavilion at Thorpes, St. James costing \$130 000, a pavilion and centre there. So there has been an attempt.

I do not want to be exhaustive in enumerating areas in Barbados where there are recreational facilities, but it is simply not true to argue that there are no recreational facilities in the St. Michael area and, further, to imply that the only place that there are recreational facilities is in St. Michael East. All that St. Michael East got out of the exercise is a hard court and a community centre.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation if the honourable Member will give way. It is clear, Sir, that the honourable Member misunderstood certain aspects of my speech.

I did not seek to suggest that the honourable Member had not performed, nor did I seek to suggest that there had not been any hard courts, and my reference to suburban and urban obviously has been taken in the wrong way.

I will make the point, repeat the point, that in the constituency which I represent, neither he nor I can boast of any of the things, we cannot fall into the enumeration which he has so correctly expounded.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: It is impossible in the nature of things for a Minister of Community Services to

serve every community all at once, or in a short period of two years and nine months. The fact of the matter is this.

Asides.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Yes, but I cannot name all the playing fields that have been prepared during this period, but I will give a number to indicate that they are spread far and wide geographically, and Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know you would want me to talk about the hard court at Lammings and the community centre at Bathsheba, which I have also built for you.

Asides.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Christ Church? I could talk, about Dover — a pavilion at Dover, a playing field at Dover, a playing field at Wotton and a pavilion and community centre at Wotton. You want my flesh and blood? What more do you want from me?

We also believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that recreational facilities should extend themselves to people of all ages. We believe that it was wrong, as has traditionally been the case, to focus our attention exclusively upon the needs of adolescents and young adults. That is precisely why the programme for the younger children was also instituted, a programme of the development of play parks, and the honourable Member for St. Michael North East was the beneficiary of a play park at Friendship playing field, as indeed the honourable Member for St. Michael South East was the beneficiary of a play park in the Parkinson area, and, of course, there is the best and most modern play park at St. Giles Girls' School, put there for the young people in that area who have been neglected for such a long time.

There is no doubt that the people from St. Michael West have also benefitted from community programmes for the youth, because side by side with these recreational programmes were community based programmes for the development of skills for the youth. Indeed, at least half of the people who were enrolled in the skills training courses, which were carried on at the Deacons Farm Community Centre, came from the constituency of St. Michael West, at least half. So St. Michael West has not been left out.

We had these skills training programmes all over Barbados. There is a skills training programme at the community centre at Belleplaine, a skills training programme at the Parkinson Community Centre, at Sayers Court, at St. Lawrence, where the old Telephone Co. was, at the Ivy Community Centre, at Ellerton in St. George, at Gall Hill in St. John, and so on and so forth. So it is simply not true to suggest that the recreational and developmental needs of the young people are not looked after.

Unfortunately, a high degree of parochialism informs the approach of people to these community based recreational and youth developmental projects, and as a consequence of the parochial nature and approach to this kind of development, people only tend to remember what has happened within their particular area. But I believe that, within the last four years, there has been an unprecedented explosion, a veritable explosion of community based projects of a recreational and developmental nature for the youth of this country, and this development, this phenomenon, is in marked contrast to the absence of any significant youth programmes executed during the period of 1961–1976.

The indifference on the part of the previous Democratic Labour Party Administration to social development can be seen in the fact that, during those 15 long years, not a single community centre was constructed in Barbados. Between 1961 and 1976 there was no new community centre constructed in Barbados and, therefore, that Party is ill-suited to get up and preach piously about their concerns for community development. 6.20 p.m.

Not only that. We had the major scandal that the community centres of this country had been reduced to eyesores. They had fallen into disrepair and became places where people went at night to make love, or to unburden themselves where there was no toilet in close proximity. This was a result of total and criminal indifference on the part of the Democratic Labour Party to youthful and social development within the society. With that kind of record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the honourable Member for St. Michael West cannot come in this House and shamelessly.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER ordered that certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Michael West be expunged from the record.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: There was no programme for the community centres and this is what the community centres were reduced to.

All of the community centres in Barbados, some sixteen of them, were built by the Barbados Labour Party in the Fifties, and the Barbados Labour Party of the Eighties and possibly Nineties. This fact must be known. During the period of fifteen years of indifference and negligence of the needs of young people in this country and other recreational needs Mr. Deputy Speaker, that political organisation built two pavilions.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, I have listened to and did not wish to interrupt the honourable Member. The honourable Member has made a statement that the Democratic Labour Party did not build a

community centre between some period and some other period. That is not correct, Sir. He is misleading himself or is misleading this House. The honourable Member must know that, to my certain knowledge, in the housing development in, I am not sure if it is Eden Lodge or the other area, recreational facilities formed part of the development, and it is still there. The community centre is still there.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member cannot now make a speech.

Hon. Dr. D. G. BLACKMAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no community centre in Eden Lodge period. You are talking about one of the two pavilions you built. One pavilion you built at Eden Lodge and the other pavilion was built in the Back Ivy at Blenheim, where the residents of that area were not permitted to trespass upon. The residents of that area were kicked out of the pavilion, that was built in their midst, by the Democratic Labour Party. It was built for carpet baggers coming from elsewhere. Not only did they build a pavilion, but they put a big ground in the area, and the people of that constituency were unceremoniously chased off the ground whenever they ventured on it, and, of course, your humble servant put an end to that scandalous situation at the earliest opportunity. Do not talk to me about community development. When you did put recreational facilities in the community, the members of the community could not go anywhere near it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I did not think that, in this year of our Lord 1983, I would be forced to get up here and talk about simple facts that anyone with eyes to see can drive or walk about Barbados and behold, but I found it necessary to respond to the brazen and bare-faced attempt of the honourable Member for St. Michael West, in spite of all these monuments to the recreational programme, and unprecedented recreational programme, to fool the people of this country that this party has done nothing in the area of recreational and social development.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I regret that I missed the presentation by the Minister responsible for Transport.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Is the honourable Member now off duty without taking off his uniform?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am now on duty.

I am sorry I missed the presentation of the honourable Member for St. Michael East, but as I understand it, as it has been reported to me, there has been some charge that the Democratic Labour Party Government did

nothing for recreational facilities in this country. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is really a charge that is unfounded; it is a charge that cannot be substantiated; it is without any fact; it is based firmly in fiction.

Now we only have to identify a number of facilities. The very National Stadium itself, the premier recreational facility in this country, which brings together the people.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: The Jaycees gave them \$800 000 to build the stadium; shut up and go outside.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It was built by the Barbados Labour Party! You hear that?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think you and the honourable Member for St. Philip North were involved in that exercise and you gave them piece of waterproof land up there.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: What \$800,000? What a ridiculous argument that is. The whole country appreciated the contribution of the Jaycees, but the fact is that it was the Democratic Labour Party which made provision for the premier sporting facilities in this country to enable sportsmen and sportswomen to develop. That is right at the top.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you are well aware, near to the constituency of St. Joseph, in St. John itself, the honourable Member for St. James North is constantly praising the facilities that have been provided in St. John. He calls them "model", if you go back in the debates. Those words have come from his lips.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: You have put your case, and I am just identifying some of the areas.

In terms of the provision of playing fields and facilities, provision was also made at various points in St. Michael for the provision of playing fields and playing facilities.

Aside.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We made provision in Christ Church for hard courts at various points and playing fields.

(A VOICE: Where?)

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: You go and look for them. We provided a playing field at Lowthers under the Democratic Labour Party. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think

I have to go through that kind of exercise now. It is just enough to demonstrate that at a few points, in areas represented by the Democratic Labour Party, in areas represented by the Opposition Barbados Labour Party and indeed the national facilities themselves, provision was made for these.

6.30 p.m.

Hon. DeL. BRADSHAW: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I shall not be long, because the honourable Member for Christ Church East has answered and dealt with the question of recreational facilities quite adequately. However, I would want to inform the honourable Member for St. Philip North that, as Minister responsible for Lands, my duty is to acquire the lands on the recommendation of the Ministry of Sports, and the criteria used by that Ministry and by this Government is well known and well accepted by the people of Barbados. We believe that it is the very best criteria to be adopted in determining where the recreational facilities should be sited.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West raised a question about land at Passage Road. As far as I know, the area was acquired and the Government has earmarked it for providing recreational facilities there. As far as I am concerned, I was told only just two days ago that the area is now overrun by bush. I have not paid a site visit there, but, in the very near future, I will see what can be done in order to correct the situation.

I am well aware not only of the recreational aspect, but from the security aspect, because the lives of the people operating at the gas station, which is adjacent to this area of land, have already been threatened. There are a number of signatures to an appeal submitted to the Ministry quite recently and I would wish to deal with this matter. So I want to give them the assurance that this Government, and this Ministry in particular, is very, very serious about looking after these areas of land acquired by Government and maintaining them as well.

As far as the Resolution is concerned, I would wish to point out that Government has already, in 1981, acquired a property known as Baywoods and this is just an extra area of land adjacent to the already acquired property, which would expand the facilities that are provided there. So, contrary to what the member for St. Michael West did say, this is not a new acquisition. You did hint that they should be happy to have this, and that they are lucky. But they have already had recreational facilities and this is just to accommodate other recreational facilities.

With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Order No. 14, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order No. 14.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on a point of order Sir. I draw to your attention Standing Order 22:3 Sir:

"Not less than three clear days notice of a motion shall be given unless it is a Government Business introduced in the name of a Minister, in which case one day's notice shall be sufficient".

Mr. Deputy Speaker, you will note, Sir, that this sitting began on Tuesday; Sir, and this sitting is still continuing and the Standing Orders were not suspended on Tuesday, Sir.

These matters were placed on the Table some time today; you will see, Sir, that they are still in the form in which they are normally distributed; and I took the trouble to ask the Clerk at the Table about these matters and I was given the assurance on behalf of this side, Sir, that it was not the intention to have these matters dealt with today. They were merely put on the Table today. I think that it would be contrary to the spirit and the Rules of this Honourable House for us to proceed with the Order as called, Sir.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: What is the point, Sir? A Minister gave notice of this Bill three days ago, what point is being made.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Move that it be postponed if you want.
6.40 p.m.

Honourable Members do not understand this. According to them, we on this side have no morals, so why appeal to our moral sense? We are bankrupt of ideas, so how can we understand the Standing Orders? I know the Standing Orders say that one day's notice is sufficient. Maybe I cannot understand that, but I believe the one day expires on the Thursday, at the worst.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 8 o'clock this evening. This would give us time to have dinner and the ten minute break to which you are entitled, Sir. I am quite sure that when the Members come back

in, if they do come back, we will be able to get on with the other items.

I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 8.00 p.m.

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

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

On Resumption:

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, before we resume, I have a supplementary Notice Paper. It is just a document to be laid and I would like to crave the indulgence of the House to lay this document on behalf of the Minister of Labour, Social Security and Sport.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If there is no objection, leave will be granted.

Pause.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable Member may proceed.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am commanded to lay, on behalf of the Minister of Labour, Social Security and Sport: The National Insurance and Social Security (Non-contributory Old Age Pension) (Amendment) Regulations, 1983.

RESUMPTION OF GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken, the Leader of Government Business called Order No. 14. Objection was taken by the Opposition on the grounds that Standing Order 22 had not been complied with. I am informed by the Clerk of Parliament that the

papers containing Items 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15, which form part of today's Order Paper, were distributed at the commencement of today's sitting, after notice was given on Tuesday, 18th January, 1983. It therefore follows that Members of the House would not have been aware of the contents of those measures until today, during this sitting.

While Standing Order 22(3) provides that not less than three days' notice of a motion shall be given unless it is Government Business introduced in the name of a Minister, in which case one day's notice shall be sufficient, I rule that it is not in the best interest of Parliament to proceed with Items 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 at this moment. If it was thought that these matters were of an urgent nature, I would have thought that, at their introduction, application would have been made to have them done in all their stages at today's sitting.

Applause.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, of course I accept Your Honour's ruling, though I think I am still within the ambit of the Standing Orders. I know you have used your discretion and quite rightly said it was in the interest of Parliament. I heard thumping on the other side. I hope when you make a ruling against them I will hear the thumping too, Sir.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg to move that this House be now adjourned until January 25, 1983 at 12 o'clock noon.

Sir, I would like also to make mention that the Order Paper which will come to you, which you will not get before Tuesday, would have the Items which are on the Order Paper for today, so there will be no procedural problems.

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

The question that the House now stands adjourned until Tuesday, January 25, 1983 at 12 o'clock noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.
8.05 p.m.

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