
THE House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, March 6, 1984

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

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Deputy Speaker)
Hon. L. S. Craig, (Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and Leader of the House)
Hon. H. B. St. John, Q.C., LL.B., (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade, Tourism and Industry)
Mr. L. E. Sandiford, M.A. (Econ.)
Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, (Minister of Education)
Mr. J. G. Odle, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. V. L. Johnson, M. A., (Minister of Transport and Works)
Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw, (Minister of Labour, Social Security, Sport and Community Services)
Mr. L. L. Sisnett, (Parliamentary Secretary)
Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham, M.A., M.Sc., (Econ.), (Minister of Agriculture, Food & Consumer Affairs)
Mr. P. M. Greaves, B.A.
Mr. R. E. Brathwaite
Mr. M. A. Truss

Prayers were read by Fr. G. E. Vaughan.

MINUTES

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are no Minutes available for confirmation today.

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Your Honour, I am commanded to lay the Travel Ticket Tax (Rate of Tax) Order, 1984.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I beg to give notice of a Resolution to grant the sum of \$3,000,000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1983–84, Part I – Current, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1983–84, No. 29, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

Order No. 1 was called – To move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the granting of sums of money for the services of the island.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair and the House went into Committee of Supply, Mr. J. G. ODLE in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1983–84, No. 28

HEAD 28 – TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Subhead 2 – Export Promotion

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): Mr. Chairman, this sum is needed to supplement the Estimates to allow the Export Promotion Corporation to carry out one of its policies, namely the grant of help to exporters who wish to export outside of the CARICOM area. There is an agreement between the Government of Barbados and the World Bank for the provision of funds

to the Export Promotion Corporation and the Industrial Development Corporation in relation to this area.

Mr. B. M. TAITT entered the Chamber and took his seat.

However, it is necessary for the money to be expended first; then, reimbursement is claimed. Although the Export Promotion Corporation is the executing agency, the money does not go to the Export Promotion Corporation, it goes into the Treasury, so every year we have the exercise of having to vote money to the Export Promotion Corporation and show in the revenue estimates the refund provision.

This year the Export Promotion Corporation has been endeavouring to encourage a tremendous amount of market research in new areas, and it is necessary for us to supplement this estimate. It is anticipated, with the approval of this House, and God willing, that next year a very substantial increase in the appropriations available to the Export Promotion Corporation will take place.

Last year, at Estimates time, it was agreed that the Barbados Export Promotion Corporation would canvass with the manufacturers the possibility of doing similarly to what other export corporations do, namely, to have a levy on exports for the purpose of co-financing, with Government's help, the cost of promotion. The Export Promotion Act does permit this.

12.30 p.m.

The Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation's advisor has done a review of the co-financing efforts by a large number of export promotion corporations in the world. However, at the present moment, the general view, in the context of the Caribbean, is that a levy on exports may not be the most appropriate method of providing that proportion of the funds to the export promotion corporations which should come from manufacturers. There is a viewpoint that the proper thing to do is to have a levy of all imports other than raw material imports, so that, in the context of the Common External Tariff, there will be a uniformed system of levies throughout the Caribbean.

The Government of Barbados, as it is well known, put forward a proposition at the last Heads of Government Conference that it would like to see a small levy on intra-regional trade and on imports, instituted to allow the Secretariat and the CARICOM instruments to be self-financing, in the same way that the European Common Market has made provision, through an addition to VAT, to allow the European Common Market institutions to be self-financing. Obviously, there are a variety of different bodies, with different opinions, which will have to agree on a common approach. The Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce is one of the organisations looking at this.

But while all of these opinions are being canvassed, and while the decision-making process and the consulting machinery is in operation, it is necessary for us to ensure that in respect of the new areas of operation that we wish the Export Promotion Corporation to go into to take advantage of our trading opportunities, it would have to be adequately funded. That is why in this year's Estimates, the 1984-85 Estimates, you will find that there has been a substantial increase in the money voted.

The Government's view, though, is that the mere provision of funds alone to the Export Promotion Corporation is not going to translate the opportunities that we have, under the new access provisions of the Caribbean Basin Initiative Act, into practical realities. After all, we have had experience of having access under the Lome Convention.

What we have to understand is that although the Governments may go out there and negotiate favourable agreements, at the operational level, more is needed. It means that the industry has to be competitive. It means that we must have adequate marketing expertise. We have to pitch our cost of production and our productive capacity to the demand that there is in existence.

I am very pleased with the work that the Export Promotion Corporation has done so far. I think all those who have looked at what they have done since they were set up in 1979; all those who have looked at the expansion of the type of product that we have exported, not only within the CARICOM area, but outside of the CARICOM area; all those who have had the opportunity of attending the exporters' conferences, who know of the work that goes on day-to-day between the IDC, the Export Promotion Corporation, the Manufacturers' Association and others at an operational level, will appreciate that considerable progress has been made in this area.

I hope that with the additional subvention, and with a solution to the method of determining the industry's contribution to the expansion of the resources of the corporation in the forthcoming year, that far more resources would be placed in the hands of the corporation to carry out its essential task.

I beg to move that Head 40 stand part.

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, it is obvious that we on this side are unlikely to find this Resolution unacceptable. If the Minister says that the money needs to be supplemented, we, who have been in the forefront in the industrialisation of this country, and in the recognition of the need for Barbados to pin its development on its productivity, will not stand in the way of provision of funds for such a cause. I believe that

the opportunity should be taken, however, to make a few comments on the state of industry in this country at the moment, more particularly in relation to the export performance of the manufacturing sector of Barbados.

I believe it is fair to say that in the latter days of the Export Promotion Corporation, it has been doing as much as can be expected of it. I think that its first two years were unproductive in the sense that a lot of time was wasted and it did not get the kind of direction which those who planned the development of the exports anticipated.

The history of the Export Promotion Corporation has its genesis in decisions, which we made back in 1973 and 1974, to establish a quasi-governmental body that would assist in the co-ordination of the export thrust, which, at that time, was beginning to reach the kind of proportions we anticipated.

It is unfortunate that a lot of misinformation continues to be promulgated in Barbados, mostly through Government agencies, which suggests that Barbados has been doing extremely well, and is poised to take advantage of great export opportunities outside of the region. I think that we would be a lot better off if we would deal with the reality of our infrastructural situation.
12.40 p.m.

The plain truth is that, although there are a number of opportunities knocking at the door for Third World country exports, for extra-regional exports, in terms of the capacity and in terms of capability, Barbados is still not in a position to take substantial advantage of these opportunities.

I have always believed that the Caribbean Community, the economic integration of these Caribbean States, has been, and will be, the life-blood of the Caribbean region. The people of the Caribbean will not reach the quality of life which all of us anticipate and hope for them, if we do not increase our exports to a significant level, to the point where the employment that is provided in this region is not any longer dependent on the ebb and flow of the peripheral international activity.

It is true that when there is a depression, all countries must suffer, as, conversely, when things are going very well, all countries should benefit. But I think that countries of the size of Barbados, with the educational level of Barbados, can put themselves into a position so that they would not be the victims of every single movement on the international community. They can, by virtue of the quality of the product which they are putting into the market place, cushion themselves against the worst ravages of the ebb and flow of international trade.

We have a work force which is not the size of the work force employed by General Motors in the United States. We have a work force that is not, indeed, as large as that operated by a large number of multinational corporations. It means therefore, that if we operate at a certain qualitative level, we will be able to ensure, if not guarantee, a level of employment in our society that would not go lower than 5 per cent, 6 per cent, or 7 per cent unemployment. But in order to do that, we must be prepared, and it is my contention that in Barbados, despite some 15 years of examination, 15 years of constant shifting and searching for the right policy combination, we are still too far behind in our ability to tap the extra-regional markets.

The reason for that is that we have too many tugs and turns in the policy which we have followed. We have seen the Industrial Development Corporation deluding itself that it has been successful in the provision of employment, when what is required is a realistic appraisal of the performance of the manufacturing section over the last five years each time we do an appraisal.

For example, the period between 1978 and 1981 was a period which saw a substantial falling off in the net employment in this country. Yet, recently, the Chairman of the Industrial Development Corporation was able to say, to an unsuspecting and unenquiring Press, that the IDC had fulfilled all of its objectives; and there has not been any analysis of that statement *vis-a-vis* a performance which is available to anyone who wishes to take the trouble to examine the statistics.

The Central Bank statistics will show that the net gain in jobs between 1978 and 1981 was a mere 350, some people say 340. I do not think that ten here or there makes any difference. It would show that we have indeed not reached the goal set out in the Industrial Development Plan, which was put forward I think in 1975, and the basic reason for that is a failure at the export level.

Now that failure is relative. If one has not been exporting anything at all and then one exports \$100, one could show a percentage increase that was very high. If, however, there is an examination of the qualitative nature of the exports, you will see that the vast majority of exports of which we brag about in Barbados, occurred in the electronics industry, which, in fact, adds up to a re-export of material which has been brought into Barbados and processed.

One cannot gainsay that there is some benefit from that kind of activity — countries like ours will be required to do that for a long time to come. But what we must not do is to take these figures and try to give the impression that that is significant in the context of our fundamental development.

It is my contention that where an entrepreneur, preferably a local entrepreneur, is able to bring raw material into Barbados, design it, fashion it, manufacture it, and then, therefore, add substantial value to it, and he sends it out of Barbados and we earn hard currency on that activity, Barbados has made a significant stride in its development. Such industries for us would include the garment manufacturers, whatever handicraft manufacturing we are able to project, our agricultural output and any extracting industry, such as the fledgling oil industry which we have in Barbados; and to the extent that we are able to have fundamental industries, such as the feed plant and other similar agro-industrial manufacturing, when we transform that manufacturing further into other products, to wit, poultry, pigs and other agricultural products, that, too, is part of a fundamental development.

It is for those reasons, that we, in our time, and the Government in its time, have pinned a lot of hope on the proper growth and development of the Caribbean Community. Therefore, when exports from Barbados to Jamaica come to a virtual halt, when exports to Guyana are non-existent, and to the extent that we have had exports in the immediate past, the funds have still not become available in Barbados; and when, finally, the Trinidadian market, which is the market *par excellence* for Barbados and other Eastern Caribbean countries, becomes so contracted that it is now not even profitable to trade in that market, then we have a very serious problem.

When that happens, our problem transcends the political spectrum. Our problem goes beyond what the Barbados Labour Party is doing or what the Democratic Labour Party would do. Our problem becomes a national problem; and what is required when we are dealing with a problem of that nature is that we approach it as nationals, and stop trying to kid ourselves that something is happening that is not happening. I submit, Sir, that in order to make their performance look good, governmental agencies, and, by definition, the Government, has been putting out information that is not quite accurate.

12.50 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I take note that we are in Committee. I will have to speak again, because the point I am developing needs to be dealt with.

I want to end this first input on this point. Our Export Promotion Corporation must assist the Government — because the Government seems incapable, at the highest level, of achieving it — in re-opening the Trinidad market. The errors which have come out of the mouth of the Prime Minister are having a more funda-

mental effect than the Government would care to let anybody know. We have reached the stage where manufacturers in Barbados do not know in which direction to go.

The gravamen of my point is that if you say to the population that extra-regional markets beckon, and you have not got manufacturing in place to take advantage of that, then you are misleading yourself; but more, you are misleading the population. It is my contention that our manufacturing sector in Barbados is incapable at the present time of grasping the opportunities which have been presented, either through the CBI or any other system.

We have been successful in the EEC because we had sugar, because sugar is in place, and because we were able to negotiate reasonable terms for our sugar to enter into the European Economic Community. That is the only manufacturing of any significance that we have been able to put in the EEC.

When there is a massive headline talking about the export of half million dollars in peppers, that is misleading, because that does not do anything significant to the Gross Domestic Product in Barbados. If you are saying that you are going to be exporting \$10 million in peppers, or if, as recently I saw a lady indicating, you are going to be exporting the ginger lily and the market is about \$5 million to \$10 million, that is significant. But do not have four people grading some agricultural produce and then giving the impression that this is a massive break through in our export promotion. I say that that does not help the total position.

When you go back and look at the amount of investment which is not going into the manufacturing sector of Barbados today, you begin to realize that there is no provision for the training, the design and the planning which is absolutely vital for manufacturing, not in 1984, but in 1994.

Mr. Chairman, you have signalled that my time is up. I am going to pick up from where I have left off in another fifteen minutes.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM (Christ Church East): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support this Resolution seeking to supplement funds available to the Export Promotion Corporation.

I want to emphasize the point which has already been made, that is that the Export Promotion Corporation, which is an infant parastatal organisation in this country, has within its short existence been doing a good job trying to facilitate the export of Barbadian manufactured produce and, in particular, in trying to penetrate the extra-regional export market.

One unintended consequence of the difficulties which we have been experiencing in CARICOM recently, particularly the difficulties of access to the markets of Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, is that our local manufacturers will be forced to address themselves to the requirements of the extra-regional markets.

Government has been emphasizing for a long time that more and more manufacturers in Barbados should gear themselves for the extra-regional market. But while the Trinidad market was available to them, they never invested seriously in going extra-regional. I am very much hoping that as a result of the difficulties of access to the Trinidad market in particular, and the Jamaica market, more and more manufacturers will see the importance of gearing themselves for the extra-regional market.

The extra-regional market is not an easy market, but at the same time, it is not an impossible market. What is needed is a new spirit of adventure and a careful study of the requirements of that market. Neither in relation to manufactured goods, nor in relation to agricultural goods, does the market call for the vast volume that we sometimes fool ourselves about.

There are distributors in the United States of America who will be content with nothing less than thousands of dozens of any particular manufactured product a week. Equally, there are distributors who will be content with one hundred dozen or two hundred dozen. So we have to match our production to the particular requirements of aspects of the vast United States of America market. That is important not only in relation to manufactured products, but also in relation to agricultural products.

There is another point of significance which we need to emphasize. The United States is a place where you can get the most expensive and highest quality goods. It is also a market where you can get the shoddiest quality goods, and at the cheapest price.

At the lower level of the market, the competition is particularly acute. There are many countries around the world that are supplying cheap goods to the United States of America, and goods of poor quality too. Barbados, a high-cost producing country, cannot get into that market.

But there is always room at the top. It is true in every profession, it is true in every human undertaking, and it is also true in relation to the export market. If we could gear ourselves to produce, for example, quality shirts, directed to the top 10 per cent or 15 per cent of the market, where people buy particular brand names for \$20 or \$25 without worrying about it, then there is a place for us.

These are the sort of avenues which we must explore and pursue. But above all, it is the attitude and the spirit of adventure. A new attitude and a new spirit of adventure that is necessary, if our manufacturers are really to meet the challenge of exporting extra regionally.

I want to comment for a moment about the performance of the manufacturing sector in Barbados in the decade of the Seventies and, in particular, about the role of the Industrial Development Corporation. Because the last speaker, I do not know where from he got his facts, was suggesting that the Industrial Development Corporation, and the Government too, were misleading the public by saying that the IDC had fulfilled all of its expectations and reached all of its goals, according to the first Development Plan, and were further misleading the country into believing that manufacturing had performed well in the Seventies, the decade immediately behind us.

The Government commissioned a study on the performance of the industrial sector, the new emphases that we should be pursuing, and the future role of the Industrial Development Corporation. A firm of consultants, Booz Allen, undertook that study. They reported that manufacturing out-performed every other sector in the 1970s, and performed above the national average. They further reported that the net gain of jobs created in a particular period — I do not remember the particular period they are talking about; 1978–79 is perhaps the period — was only about 378 net jobs.
1.00 p.m.

The net creation of jobs is a very tricky and difficult concept, which we must understand. If, for example, a factory starts today.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of elucidation: We have no difficulty with the facts. The point I made was that the Chairman of the IDC did not take the trouble to do precisely what I and the honourable Member had done — point out that the net gain was 340. He left the figure, which he gave to the Press, of the large nominal amount, which I contend, is misleading.

I am not questioning whether the Industrial Development Corporation performed well or not in that respect. I am saying that when you are giving the public information, you have a duty to explain the information; and the Press have a public duty to examine it.

Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Mr. Chairman, I was making the point that the notion of the net jobs created is not always an easy concept to grasp. If, for example, a factory is established today and 50 people secure employment in that factory, and a year after, when you are measuring the amount of jobs created, 20 of the 50 people who gained employment in that factory

are working elsewhere, as far as that particular factory is concerned, after one year the net jobs provided are only thirty. But that does not mean that all 50 people who went there originally are not still working.

It is a very tricky concept and it suits my friend to seize on it to suggest that the net figure is low, and that the Industrial Development Corporation in that period did not realise all of its expectations. But I wish to say, for the purpose of the record — and I happen to know about the performance of the Industrial Development Corporation during that period, 1978–81, as I was chairman, that all the jobs we set ourselves to create, 5000 in a four — year period, were created. We built more factory space than we had set ourselves, we attracted more capital, both from local entrepreneurs and from overseas, than we had set ourselves, and manufacturing made a greater contribution to the Gross Domestic Product than we had set ourselves. That is why we can confidently say that, in that period, the IDC performed magnificently and realized all of its goals. I thought that, in the light of the speech that was made by the last honourable Member I should set the record straight.

I just wish to say, in conclusion, Mr. Chairman, that it is my view that we are not spending enough money on export promotion, and I am glad to see that we are now seeking to supplement the vote under the head Export Promotion.

We need to spend an additional \$1 million or \$2 million both on tourist promotion and export promotion. The time to do it is now, because all my experience has taught me that when things are difficult, that is the period when you must invest in promotion, and keeping your image and reputation in the market; so that when there is a turn around in the economy of the country from which you attract your tourists, and which buy your goods, then you have a first-class chance of making an impact.

If there is one plea which I would like to make, it is that we invest far more resources, both in industrial promotion and in the promotion of tourism. I think that we have done well on the shoe-string budget that we have provided tourism and export promotion in the past. But we have to face the situation that the markets are more and more competitive, and it is more difficult now to make an impact than it was five or 10 years ago. We must not only bring more sophistication to our techniques of promotion, but we must also put more money behind the effort.

This supplement ensures that, until the Estimates are approved in this House, we will be able to meet our commitments. But I was glad to hear from the honourable Minister responsible for Trade that much more

money will be spent in export promotion in the future. That is an emphasis which I fully support.

Mr. B. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, to continue from where I left off, Sir.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member for St. Michael Central.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: This is a serious debate.

Mr. A. TRUSS: That is why the honourable Member should not speak. Mr. Chairman, I rise to support this Resolution in the amount of \$75 000, which is required to meet the expenditure under the Export Grant Incentive Scheme of the Export Promotion Corporation. There has been an increase in applications from exporters to the corporation to assist with the investigation of extra-regional markets, and, as a result, the amount allocated in the scheme has been exhausted. That is pretty straightforward.

The development of the Barbados economy depends greatly on three areas: sugar, tourism and the manufacturing sector. Of these three sectors, we have proven over the last couple of years, that the export of manufactured goods have shown the greatest resilience to the recessionary conditions that we have been faced with, not only here in Barbados, not only regionally, but international as well. The Government, therefore, has embarked upon, and will continue this, placing greater emphasis on the manufacturing sector for export. Government will assist manufacturers, by encouraging and providing incentives to the private sector to produce more for export.

In view of what the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) stated, and in support of my colleague who just sat down, I think that I, too would like to set the record straight. The export performance of the manufacturing sector has been very effective during the last few years. The domestic exports of manufactured products rose from \$175.8 million in 1979 to \$321.8 million in 1982, and the projected figure for 1983 is \$350.8 million, which is almost 100 per cent over the 1979 level. I think that statistics will prove that this Government has been progressive as far as the export of manufactured goods are concerned.

The Barbados Export Promotion Corporation, which is basically the authority responsible for the promotion and development of Barbados' export trade, has made remarkable progress since it was formed in 1980. In 1982, the domestic exports, as I said, was \$321.8 million and it is projected that in 1988 domestic exports will be \$742.1 million. The achievement of this target will

depend a great deal on a number of factors, which can be very easily summarized as follows:

- (1) The continued commitment of the public and private sector to the development of new export markets.
- (2) The rate at which Barbados is able to attract and establish new export manufacturing industries.
- (3) The level of recovery of the economies of actual or potential key markets.

We have suffered a great deal because of the economic malaise in the Caribbean, but we have still done a lot. International reserves in Barbados have fluctuated from time to time although over the last year, they have increased by \$30 million and we accomplished a slow down in the import growth.
1.10 p.m.

Guyana, as a result of the difficulty which they faced, has hurt the CARICOM Multilateral Clearing Facility very badly, and I believe that Barbados was the victim, more so than any other Caribbean territory, of this particular unfortunate happening. Jamaica introduced the two tiered system, and, in addition, Trinidad placed a licencing system on imports from Barbados, and these measures affected our exports tremendously. In spite of these difficulties, too, we were able to overcome and show significant strides.

Our main thrust in the development of the export industry have to be extra-regional, simply because the CARICOM market is very small. Between 1979 and 1983, we made remarkable strides in this particular area, securing Barbados' position in the regional markets, but because the regional markets are relatively small, and because the productive capacity of Barbados is far greater, we will have to find extra-regional sources for our products.

This Government has therefore embarked on promotions in Margarita and the Venezuelan mainland, in Martinique and Guadeloupe, in Curacao and Aruba, in Puerto Rico, in the Dominican Republic, in the U.S. Virgin Islands and suitable segments of the European market — for example, segments of the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, West Germany and Sweden — as well as the North American market, followed, of course, by other areas in South and Central America, and, possibly, West Africa. Through the Export Promotion Corporation, a great deal of research is being done to find markets for our products other than the regional markets.

We have taken the lead in the Caribbean as one of the greatest exporters of goods and services. In 1975–76,

Trinidad undoubtedly was the greatest exporter as far as the islands were concerned, ten years prior to that it was Jamaica. Today it is Barbados, and we are proud of the fact that the Barbados Labour Party Government made a direct input into this.

We have made this possible by the policies which we implemented, and the Deputy Prime Minister, as Minister responsible for Trade, Industry and Commerce is to be congratulated. There is no reason other than the dedication and hard work put in by the honourable Deputy Prime Minister for our success in achieving these things. The incentives which we have laid down for the private sector to produce more goods in Barbados for export, have come about as a direct result of the difference in policy between the Barbados Labour Party's Administration and the Democratic Labour Party's Administration.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West, the former Minister of Trade, made his contribution in his time; no one can deny that. But the point is that the contribution made by the Deputy Prime Minister is far greater than the contribution made by the honourable Member for St. Michael West. No one is going to take away what the honourable Member for St. Michael West has contributed to this country, but, by the same token, one must accept and realise that, statistically, we can prove that between 1976 and 1984 we have done a great deal better than when the Democratic Labour Party was in power, and we were faced with bigger problems than when they were in power.

They had an oil crisis in 1973–74, we had one in 1978–79. We are faced today with one of the greatest recessions the world has ever seen since the Great Depression of the late Twenties, and still we are able to make great strides in tourism, in agricultural production and, mainly, in exports of manufactured goods.

There is a need in Barbados for manufacturers in the garment industry, in the furniture industry, in the printing industry and in the pharmaceutical and food industries to devise long term marketing plans. This is an area which we believe the Export Promotion Corporation should look at, because we have failed in this particular area. The Export Promotion Corporation will therefore have to encourage and assist manufacturers in these industries into developing long term programmes for export development.

We have to create a local environment that favours exporters and encourages investments from overseas. By so doing, we can increase our productive capacity. We must be able to give to manufacturers in Barbados easier access to credit, we must ensure continuous access to foreign markets by maintaining a stable industrial relations climate, and by avoiding the introduction of bureaucratic

obstacles. This is the part, in my view, that the Export Promotion Corporation can play if we are to achieve our goals of \$742.1 million in domestic exports by 1988.

What is the strategy of the Government in achieving these things? We believe that we have a well-conceived exports strategy, and among the elements of the strategy to be employed by the Barbados Export Promotion Corporation are a marketing advisory service, an organisation of trade missions and exhibitions, the use of a trade information service, market research, training seminars on specialised topics, use of export incentive schemes and the assistance of overseas trade representatives. In addition to these, priority must be given to the development of a sound marketing advisory service, the carrying out of research, the establishment of overseas representation in key markets, and, of course, the carrying out of appropriate promotional activity. With the implementation of our strategy over the next few years, if all goes well, we should be able to achieve our goals in the area of exports of manufactured goods.

The staff of the Barbados Export Promotion Corporation will have to be increased because of the volume of work and number of industries with which they will be dealing. Financial assistance, apart from Government assistance, will have to be sought from UNDP, the EDF and the World Bank, and we will have to find technical assistance from areas such as the OAS, USAID, IDC, CFTC and, of course, the CARICOM Secretariat.

In our Development Plan, Mr. Chairman, we have estimated an expenditure for the Export Promotion Corporation of \$9.3 million, so we are taking this whole matter of export promotion very seriously. It is a significant part of our Development Plan.

1.20 p.m.

Manufacturing has shown in the past that it has been able to stand fast. Even though our tourism arrivals decreased over the last couple of years, even though our sugar production has decreased since 1980, we were able to maintain some stability within the island by increasing our exports and reducing our imports. It was a tight rope which we were walking.

Bank credit was released in the distribution and personal sectors, with large increases for home improvements, real estate and the purchasing of consumer durables. In short, despite all that has happened, regionally and internationally, as a result of the recession, I believe that Barbados has done very well.

The strategy of the Government is good, and it shows that the Minister responsible, the Deputy Prime Minister, has given a great deal of thought and attention to the problems which we face in this country. The far manufacturing is concerned. We are very concerned about

the manufacturing sector, but I believe that we will achieve our goals, because in Barbados real output for the first six months of 1983 increased by 1 per cent over 1982. In spite of the fact, as I said, that agricultural production and tourism arrivals were slightly reduced, the manufacturing sector grew, and we were able to hold our own.

In closing, let me finally state that no one can deny the contribution made by the honourable Member for St. Michael West when he was Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce. He made his contribution to this country but, in my view, and in my assessment, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade, Industry and Commerce, since 1976, has had greater success, and has made a greater input into the manufacturing sector than the honourable Member for St. Michael West. I believe that, to a large extent, our success in this particular area is due mainly to the brilliance, the hard work, and the dedication of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Thank you very much.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, I make a brief intervention in this debate. I think the honourable Member who just spoke, the Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. A. Truss), obviously misunderstands the mood of this country and the problems which we are facing, because — let us consider this very carefully — Barbados is in dire straits at the moment. And this is not the occasion when members of the Government, or members of the Opposition should be trying to massage the ego of any particular person or Member; this is the time when we should be putting our heads together, looking at the problems, and trying to come to some kind of solution to those problems which the ordinary man and woman in this country are facing.

To get up and give faint praise to my colleague, the Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), and to give full praise to the Deputy Prime Minister is beside the point. Let us deal with the problems that the country is experiencing at the moment and come up with some kind of proposals which would lead to an improvement in the situation in this country.

The Resolution which we are dealing with relates to a relatively small sum of money for the Export Promotion Corporation. As I understand the Resolution, it is money which the corporation will spend first, and which the Government will have to make available to the corporation, and then the Government, in turn, will recoup from the sources of the World Bank.

The Resolution speaks in terms of an increase in applications from exporters for the corporation to assist with the investigation of extra-regional markets. That

is the reason given why the original amount of three quarters of a million Barbados dollars has been used up and why this supplement is being requested.

I was listening to the Minister very carefully, but he did not give us any hard data, any statistics, on these applications from the exporters. I would like to know how many requests they have to service, how much money has been spent in this area, where are these extra-regional markets and in respect of what particular products is he talking about?

I think any introduction of a supplementary dealing with this matter of export promotion must give that kind of information. And let me warn the Member from the start there is no point saying that I must ask a parliamentary question on the matter, because the Resolution which we are considering now deals with this specific problem, and the Minister should have the information at his disposal. I think this is information which this House and this country should be given.

Let me say that when we are dealing with export promotion, this is not some kind of esoteric subject. We are dealing with problems which the worker from St. Lucy, St. Philip, St. Thomas and St. Michael South face in this country. We are dealing with the problems, not only of export, but the question of employment.

The reason why we export is to earn foreign exchange so that we may be able to import, and because we wish to provide employment for as many people as possible in our labour force. But at the moment, the situation is dismal.

Economics has been called the dismal science, and sometimes when we hear Members speak, they speak in such a way that these problems which we try to come to grips with are made so very complicated that they go above the heads of the ordinary person. The Member for St. Michael Central who just spoke gave a speech of a lot of statistics, a lot of praise, and a lot of reading of the Barbados Development Plan, or whatever it is he was reading from. But let him speak in terms today of the problems being faced by the workers who are being dismissed. 1.30 p.m.

If we provide an environment in this country which the morale of the workers is destroyed, then we cannot achieve our goals in export promotion, and I must confess that I am very much concerned about the kind of example that the Government is setting for our labour force in this country. If it continues in this way, we will not be able to gain the kind of export markets we want, because we will have a dissatisfied labour force. We have problems every time the Government lays off somebody.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member, suggesting that export promotion is a waste of time?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On the contrary, Mr. Chairman; I am making the connection between export promotion and a satisfied labour force; and I am also saying that export promotion is very important because it means jobs for the person from Bay Land, Ellerton, Eagle Hall, Market Hill and those places. This is not a time for massaging, as I said, the ego of any particular person. Let us deal with the problems, and what we have got to do is to ensure, first of all, that the Government set an example in labour relations. And when we hear of three-day strikes or three-hour strikes in the hospital, when we hear of layoffs.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is really straying from the point under discussion. I can understand your tactics, but I am not going to allow a debate on strikes, labour relations and so on. Let us deal with export promotion.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am dealing with export promotion, Mr. Chairman. I well understand that the Government may not wish to hear about these things, but export promotion relates to the jobs and the morale of the workers in the country, and — this is the point I am making — if you have a dissatisfied labour force, that labour force cannot produce either in terms of quantity or quality the kinds of products that can make an impact and an input into the achievement of higher export earnings or higher exports from this country. So it is most important.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is that the only factor? I do not want to get into the debate. Anyhow please carry on.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: When we look at this particular Resolution, we really need to get this kind of information, because it is on this basis that we are going to judge the work that the Export Promotion Corporation is doing. We need the hard facts in this Chamber. Sometimes I tend to believe that more information is given outside of Parliament than inside Parliament. We are in here now, and this Parliament must be given the information relating to the basis on which this Resolution is before the House, and therefore I am calling upon the Minister to provide us with the necessary breakdown, specifically in relation to this Resolution.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I wish to continue where I left off, but I do not really think it is necessary to deal with the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. A. Truss), because, as I indicated, this is a serious debate. I do not think that the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Hon. H. B. St. John)

is comfortable when he is receiving that kind of gratuitous input from his colleague behind him, because we are not discussing who made the biggest contribution. That is not the point. The point is what is happening now.

But since he wants me to talk in those terms, I will tell you what is the fundamental problem with industry in this country. The Prime Minister of this country is not interested in industry. He has demonstrated, on more than one occasion, that he has absolutely no interest whatsoever in the manufacturing sector. He may trot out figures during his budget proposals, but his performance, in terms of providing the machinery by which the manufacturing sector can reach the levels that we set for them; his performance as he deals with the manufacturers.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let us try and deal most specifically with export promotion. I am hearing about labour relations and I am hearing about attitudes of individuals to trade and industry. Let us deal with export promotion. That is the matter at hand.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, what I am dealing with is the heart of export promotion. I am saying that the attitude of the Minister responsible for Finance to manufacturers in this country is at the heart of the problem, and those honourable Members over there, given an opportunity, would confirm it.

Let me explain to you, Sir. Manufacturing for export is a very special area of activity in this country. It requires nursing; it requires continuous psychological assistance as well as financial assistance to the fledgling manufacturers in Barbados. It is new. We in this country do not have a history of manufacturing. Our history is one of merchants and planters, and, therefore, when we moved from the plantocracy type to manufacturing in the Seventies, it became very necessary for us to make a personal input, one of the reasons why, in their own plan, they are able to say — let me quote exactly what they said, at page 93 of their recently published Development Plan:

"During the 1970s the Barbados economy was transformed from a non-industrial to an industrialising one with the manufacturing sectors' contribution to GDP exceeding 10 per cent."

That is the opening sentence to the Government's 1983-88 Plan, and the reason they were able to say that is because those persons who were involved in the promotion of industry took a personal interest.

I challenge anybody over there to show me how the Minister responsible for Finance has, by his allocation of resources, by his personal interest manifested in his public performance, contributed to development of manufacturing. (Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Do you want to curse the Minister of Finance?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Not today. I have a cursing for him, but not today.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Asides are not to be part of this debate from either side, so let us leave out the personalities.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: This is not cursing, Sir. This is fundamental to what is wrong, and you can check with the manufacturing sector and they will tell you so.

Let me explain what I mean. We have in this country a situation where the Caribbean Development Bank, which is a multi-country-owned institution, was about to spend a substantial amount of money to expand its furniture. I believe the amount was in excess of \$1 million, but I am not even going to go into those details. Now in order to qualify to try to sell to the Caribbean Development Bank, you have to be able to bid, and, as you know, the international institutions have to make any availability for purchase available to all of the members that make up the particular institution. But in 1983, manufacturers in Barbados, companies in Barbados, are not even aware of how to prepare the project proposal in such a manner as to capture a substantial part of that kind of market right here in their own country. As a matter of fact, that is an export because it is paid for in hard currency.

I took the trouble, after complaints from manufacturers here that they could not win a bid for furniture at the Caribbean Development Bank, to have a discussion with the Vice-President of the Bank, because I felt that it is a wrong policy for a building in Barbados to have furniture that was produced in Colombia or somewhere else. It was pointed out to me that the people who made the bid, along the satisfied lines which we could find in all of the international agencies, were unable to satisfy the technical requirements for the project. 1.40 p.m.

Now what I am saying when I talk about getting the country ready for export is that we need to have those manufacturers, and the people who work in decision-making positions, capable, through the kind of infrastructural work we do, of making substantial bids such as the one for Caribbean Development Bank. This applies not only in Barbados, it applies throughout the region and in the other international agencies.

And when I talk about our not being ready, I would give you a simple example. I got in touch with a company in the United States; from a marketing point of view. I have contact with them. I indicated to them that we in Barbados produce genuine hand manufactures that should find a place in the US market, albeit they

are small quantities. But as the honourable Member for Christ Church East has said, if you are producing a high quality product, it does not matter what numbers you produce.

When the company came to Barbados and looked at the place mats, the expert said to me, "You would never be able to sell those place mats in the United States because the shape is wrong. People in the United States do not use square table mats." That is a simple, every-day point. But it is the kind of point which, if we had been making available the kind of marketing expertise which is available on an ongoing, ordinary basis to companies outside of Barbados, then we would know these kinds of things, and it would make a tremendous difference to our export performance. It is this kind of expertise, this kind of assistance, which is lacking among the manufacturing sector. It is this that I am talking about when I say that we need to get our people ready.

Instead of getting up and trotting out statistics about what has happened, we have to get serious. I know that neither the Deputy Prime Minister nor the former Chairman of IDC would follow the route of the honourable Member for St. Michael Central because, except when we are on a political platform, when we are talking about industrial development, we have to be serious. We cannot talk about the figures show this and the figures show that, because the figures themselves are misleading, if you do not understand what you are reading. You cannot talk about a percentage increase.

The point which has to be made is that for a manufacturer in Barbados to get into the third markets, extra-regional markets, that manufacturer must be producing a product that is going to be acceptable to the company, wherever it is. The companies in the United States are accustomed to high quality products, and therefore —

Aside

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member says not all. Those who buy cheap products are not going to buy them from Barbados, because the cost is too high. If you are talking about exporting manufactures from Barbados, you do not discuss cheap products. You cannot get into any extra-regional market with cheap products, when there are Coolies working in the East for six cents a week and that kind of thing.

Therefore, when we talk about manufacturing for export, we are dealing with quality products, and I am dealing with bringing the manufacturers up to a level where not only they understand, but the people who work in the mid-management agencies, such as the Export Promotion Corporation and the IDC, will recognize that dealing on a one on one situation with a manufacturer is

more important than any speeches that can be made, any seminars that can be held.

When I was on a recent trip to the United States, I spoke to the people in the State Department about the CBI, and they asked me what I would recommend to assist with the implementation of the CBI. I said to them: Apart from getting up and giving the impression that you have just opened the door to Heaven, and giving the people the impression that God has now smiled on the people in the Caribbean because you have the CBI, take some of the money, which a number of the fly-by-night, so-called consultants would be ripping off under the system that operates whenever a developed country is putting money into a developed country, and make it available, on the basis of recommendations made by the countries themselves, as to the type of expertise which they really need, and let us have some of the marketing people who are in the field come and spend some time with the manufacturers themselves!

I have had occasion to quarrel publicly with the Deputy Prime Minister about a trip to South Korea. We disagreed on the result. I see that the Prime Minister of St. Lucia has just returned and announced that he is going to be putting in three, or four, or five factories, as a result of his trip to Hong Kong and South Korea. I look forward to that, because when that happens, although it will help to disabuse me of a theory which I have, it would be to the advantage of the region. So if they can get five factories out of the East into St. Lucia, I look forward to that. I hope that Barbados can get ten.

But I certainly disagree. I think that the only benefit which the manufacturers of Barbados can get from the spending of that money is if they see how people in those places do it. That is the area on which we will agree.

My argument was that the cost was too high for that particular trip. I did not think, and still do not believe, that the South Korean trip was economically worthwhile. But I am not going to get into that.

All I am saying is that there are areas which, on the basis of our knowledge, may suggest that they are peripheral areas. But for developing countries, those peripheral areas are the most important areas, because it is in those areas, of marketing, of how to prepare a particular set of documents, where we do not have expertise.

You would be surprised to know that there are manufacturers who can produce high quality furniture, have it ready to be shipped, and on the question of the preparation of the right documents, or knowing exactly which route the shipment should take, they fail to get into the extra-regional market.

Mr. Chairman, I know my fifteen minutes are coming up. I am going to end here by saying this. We cannot substitute extra-regional exports for CARICOM exports. We must have the extra-regional exports in addition to the CARICOM exports. What has been coming across in recent times is the impression that, since, we cannot get into the CARICOM market, we should go and look at the extra-regional market. That suggests that we are at a level where the goods which are being produced are substitutable, if you would pardon the expression, and therefore if you cannot get into a, you go into b. That is not true. What is required for export to Trinidad is not exactly the same thing as what is required for export to Miami, Florida.

This is the gravamen of the input which I have tried to make, and if it is difficult for the honourable Member for St. Michael Central to understand, I can only feel sorry for him. But I offer it to the Government for what it is worth.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very glad that today we had an opportunity to have a relatively in-depth discussion on the export sector in Barbados because it is very revealing. The debate was conducted on a level at which I am very happy to be able to participate. And although now and again, because of the particular period of time we are in, and because the real and imagined prospects of the other side are very much in their mind, they used every opportunity to try and score a point or two, I am satisfied that the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. A. Truss) has effectively rebutted some of the claims which have been made. In short, he has succeeded in exposing fiction and and replaced it by fact.
1.50 p.m.

Sir, I just want to deal with two points. The honourable Member for St. Michael South asked for some information. I can give the honourable Member the information, because, one thing you have to say about the Export Promotion Corporation is that they have a very particular and fastidious way of setting out their information. The export of the major industries and the percentage changes are as follows: Clothing moved by 3.5 per cent, Electrical Components, 103.8 per cent, furniture, 15.2 per cent Food, excluding sugar, 12.9 per cent, Chemicals, 8.2 per cent. Those were the positive areas between 1982 and 1983. The negative areas were Beverages and Tobacco, which dropped 14 per cent.

In 1983, the domestic exports moved to \$581.6 million, as opposed to \$383.7 million between January to December, 1982. So we did have a substantial increase in trade in that period of time. I also want to say this, and this is important, because we are dealing with the direction of trade. Trade to the United States increased by 98.3 per cent, and that is related to the increase in the exports of electrical components, which have increased

103.8 per cent. Canada moved by 2 per cent and CARICOM increased .5 per cent, from 143.8 per cent to 144.5 per cent.

If one looks at the first set of figures, you will see that Clothing, Food and Furniture are the three areas in which we export most.

In relation to the Export Incentive Scheme. This consists of a series of measures, and it was implemented in 1982. Under this scheme, we provided assistance in excess of Bds \$100 000. We gave grants to manufacturers who want to do market research on their own and who want to go on trade missions on their own, and we also help with overseas related activities. So that it is a supplement....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, on a point of elucidation, if the Minister will give way: The question I was really asking was not about the statistics which you have given, although it is very good to have that information. I was actually asking about the increase in applications from exporters to the corporation to assist them, as set out in the note to this particular Resolution.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That increase would be at least a 50 per cent increase. I cannot give you the specific numbers, but I understand it is in excess of 50 per cent. I will explain.

After the Prime Minister of the Bahamas made a statement that they were considering formally joining the functional aspects of the CARICOM Treaty, and only part of the Common Market — this was in Trinidad at the last Heads of Governments Conference — and after they had delineated the products that they import, and the volume of products, some \$700 million, steps were taken to do a preliminary survey of the market. Some of the manufacturers went off on their own, with help from the Export Promotion Corporation, to investigate this new market, and they were given help. In addition to that, after the passage of the CBI in the United States, some manufacturers started to look more seriously at particular areas in that market, and they were given help.

So the increase of applications that we have had. I cannot give you the exact number, but I know that it is more than 50 per cent this year over last year — relates to manufacturers, themselves, wishing to get help to do their own work, as opposed to the total work done by the Export Promotion Corporation. What the Export Promotion Corporation does is to get preliminary surveys, undertaken by the Corporation itself or by consultants, done of certain product categories. This information is fed to the manufacturers; and those who are interested, try and pick up from that information and do their own particular work.

Anybody who has been on a trade mission, whether it is sponsored by the Hotel Association, the Manufac-

turers Association, knows that the public sector can only set the stage. No private sector firm is going to allow any public sector official to clinch a deal for them. As a matter of fact, they do not even want the other manufacturers, who are producing the same line as them, to know when they get a deal.

The most you can do is to set the atmosphere — and do the research on product groups and hand it over. There are actually 10 applications outstanding, to the value of \$70 000, that is why we want \$75 000 before the end of the financial year.

Having replied to that, I must chastise the honourable Member. The honourable Member must not think that the Government is not well aware of the fact that a good industrial relations climate is necessary for the export industry. The Government is also well aware of the fact that there are always two sides to a story — that is why I will not reply to anything that the honourable Member has said in relation to any particular incidents, at any particular place. I know that, very often, the first story that breaks is not necessarily the true story. Experience has taught me that, so therefore I will not reply to that.

I will say this. Nobody has been trying to get across more than the Ministry of Trade, the Government and I, to all and sundry — workers, managers, the community — the need for us to conduct our affairs in a non-combative way. It is very important that, whatever areas of disagreements we have, in the resolution of our areas of disagreements, we conduct ourselves in accordance with a civilized mode of approach. Gone are the days when abuse, threats, and tactics of that kind can bully anybody.

Secondly, the Government and my Ministry have also been trying to get across the concept that however we may feel in our minds, and however justified we may be in our minds of the feeling that we are worth a million, it is useless if we cannot get anybody to agree that we are worth that and, what is more important, if no one is willing to pay a million when we want the million. That is very important.

That is why I am very glad to see that the honourable Member from St. Michael West made the statement, because I have been saying all along that because of our peculiar concepts of our world, and because of our inherent cost structure, we cannot look to sell goods that are cheap. This is not a country that produces cheap goods. We have to produce goods of quality, we have to look for that niche in the market for quality goods.

The honourable Member had to make his little politics about the situation in CARICOM. I just attended

the conference in Trinidad and I want to tell the honourable Member that the issues to be resolved in the CARICOM do not have anything to do with Barbados and Trinidad, because it is recognised in Barbados that Barbados and Trinidad, if both are to survive, have to work together because the economies are inter-locked. The real problem is that the Treaty of Chaguaramas never envisaged that you would have two of its so-called important MDC's reach such a parlous economic state that now, far from being able to deal with us, to buy from us, they are fast approaching the state of Haiti.

Jamaica has moved from a dollar in relation to the CARICOM unit of account, which is the U.S. dollar, from being more than the U.S. dollar down to 3.15, and Guyana, I believe, is \$4.00. This is something that nobody possibly envisaged when they were drawing up the Treaty, that you would end up with only two MDCs and all the rest as LDCs.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is now 2 o'clock. I will report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Yes, Sir. I will continue after lunch.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now two minutes past 2.00. This sitting therefore stands suspended until 2.45 p.m. today.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

QUESTION TIME

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now Question Time. There are no answers to Questions, therefore we move to Private Members' Business.

PRIVATE MEMBERS BUSINESS

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is one item of Private Members' Business on the Order Paper. The honourable Member in whose name that item stands is not in his seat, therefore, we resume Government Business.

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS RESUMED

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: When the suspension was taken the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it now reverts.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply.

The question that Head 40 stand part 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. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Resolution in Committee of Supply, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

THE DEVELOPMENT (CANADIAN LOAN) (PETROLEUM DEVELOPMENT) ACT, 1984

Order No. 5 was called — To move the Second Reading of a Bill to authorise the Government to borrow from the Government of Canada a sum not exceeding CDN, \$6 000 000 and to provide for related matters.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is generally known in the country that, since the purchase of the exploration facilities of Mobil Oil (Barbados) Limited, great strides have been made in the development of our petroleum resources. These strides could not have been possible without the assistance that has been given by the Government of Canada, through the Canadian International Development Agency, in pursuant of an agreement negotiated when I paid an official visit to Canada at the invitation of Prime Minister Mr. Trudeau.

The Canadian Government established an international oil company, called Petro-Canada, in August 1981, and Barbados has been fortunate enough to be one of the very first countries to benefit from the technical assistance offered by Petro-Canada. This assistance actually started on January 7, last year, with the coming into force of the Barbados National Oil Company, which we formed to hold the assets of the former Mobil Company.

There has been extensive training of local personnel, both on the job and in Canada, and we have had the benefit of technical assistance in the form of a General Manager and a Senior Petroleum Engineer, supplied directly from Canada under CIDA.

The progress which we have made has depended very largely on a drilling programme to locate producing wells. Until we entered into oil exploration on our own account, I think that very few people, other than the very able and competent Mr. Louis deVerteuil, who has been an adviser to the Government for years, were really aware of what it would cost to drill for petroleum, and what we had been saving over the years by having, Mobil, basically, do our drilling for us.

Oil wells cost from three quarters of a million dollars up to a million and a half dollars to drill. You can drill an oil well, and if it proves dry, this would mean that you put a million and a half dollars down in the ground. Fortunately, the great majority of our wells have been producing wells of high quality, and very few dry holes have been drilled.

Let me give some figures. In 1978, we produced 271 600 barrels of oil; in 1979, 283 500; and in 1980, 305 400. There was a fall back in 1981, when a deep drilling programme was being carried out; in 1982, after much pressure, we were able to get the programme resumed, and 258 500 barrels of oil produced, but in 1983, after the establishment of the Barbados National Oil Company, no less than 379 000 barrels of oil were produced, and we very nearly doubled our output of natural gas, moving from 6 million cubic metres to 11½ million cubic metres.
2.55 p.m.

We thus think that, with the assistance of Petro-Canada International, the country has benefitted enormously from the acquisition of the exploration assets of the Mobil Oil Company in Barbados.

Given a vigorous exploration programme continuing, especially if we locate another oilfield, as we are trying to do in my own constituency, bordering on yours, Sir, between St. Thomas, St. Joseph and St. Andrew, we can see our way to producing, in the very near future, half of the petroleum we need, and producing natural gas at such a volume as will allow us to go ahead with the confidence of a heavy capital investment to bring natural gas to a majority of homes in the urban and suburban areas.

We have also, as I think have already been published, been exploring the hydrocarbon potential outside of the proven areas on land in Barbados. We have entered into an agreement with the Cluff Oil Company for a seismic survey and drilling to the northwest of Barbados, between Barbados and St. Lucia, and we have also signed an agreement with Petro-Canada International relating to an assessment of the offshore hydrocarbon prospects of Barbados, in regional project also involving Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. This programme is also associated with the

World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. Initially, it will take the form of an offshore seismic programme.

It can therefore be seen that funds are needed. We are getting returns. I cannot give you immediately the value of 379 000 barrels of oil, but honourable Members can work out the arithmetic of the extra 120 000 barrels that the Barbados National Oil Company was able to produce last year, at a rate of around US \$28 a barrel. But to obtain the funds at this level, we need to invest and we need to give ourselves authority to borrow. This particular borrowing which the Act will authorize, will provide for the purchase of oilfield exploration and drilling equipment — casing, drill bits, pipe, pumping units and so on.

I do not think there is an addendum, so I will give the figures. The money will be provided by the Canadian International Development Agency under an agreement by which these funds are free from interest, and the funds will be repayable over 40 years starting in 1994. We really could not ask for a more generous loan than this, and the fact that it is tied to the purchase of Canadian equipment is no more, we think, than is fair in all the circumstances.

I hope that this purchase will enable Canada to reduce its unemployment and start to restore prosperity, and generate some more tourists to come down to Barbados. I think that honourable Members will be satisfied that this is money well spent and will have very little difficulty in supporting the Bill.

I would make one small correction in what I said, Sir, and it relates to natural gas. The 11 million cubic metres of natural gas I said we produced is, in fact, what we sold to the public. Unfortunately, we still do not have the means and the demand for selling all the natural gas that we produce, and we are at present, according to my information, perhaps flaring off as much as half of all the natural gas we produce.

We produce over 20 million cubic metres. If we can be sure of this production of gas in the future, I would be able at this stage to hold out very much more hope for the extension of piped natural gas more widely. Other agreements with the Canadian International Development Association will be investigating this.

I dare say that I should not steal the thunder of the Chairman of the National Petroleum Corporation, the honourable Member for St. Michael Central (Mr. A. Truss), who I see sitting behind me ready to elucidate completely on this point. But I prefer to correct myself than to have him correct me on the facts, knowledgeable and competent that though I know he is in all matters relating to petroleum and, especially, natural gas.

I have much pleasure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in moving that this Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. A. TRUSS: I beg to second that and reserve my right to speak.

The question that the Bill be 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.

Clauses 1 to 4 inclusive were called and passed.

On the motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Mr. L. L. SISNETT, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one Bill in Committee, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly. 3.06 p.m.

On separate motion of Hon. L. S. CRAIG, seconded by Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

RESOLUTION TO AMEND RESOLUTION NO. 48/1983

Order No. 4 was called — To move the passing of a Resolution to amend Resolution No. 48/1983.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Sir, is a relatively simple Resolution. The Addendum sets out primarily what agreements there have been between the Government of Barbados and the Venezuelan Government to borrow a sum of US \$9 million, which is BDS \$18 million, from the appropriate institutions for the purpose of assisting and financing the Petroleum Exploration and Development Operations of the Barbados National Oil Company Limited.

The Resolution seeks to approve the portions of the above-mentioned loan which have been anticipated, and, as I see it, can cause no controversy.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

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

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

MOTION RE \$3 MILLION RESOLUTION FOR TRANSPORT BOARD

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Sir, earlier today I gave notice of a \$3 million Resolution, and I would seek leave of the House, if honourable Members on the other side would support the Government, to do this Resolution in all its stages today. It is not a Resolution that should cause any great problems.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would prefer if there could be agreement between the parties as to whether or not this Resolution can be dealt with today. If the Leader of the House needs time to discuss it with members of the Opposition, I am prepared to suspend the House for a couple of minutes while these negotiations go on.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I am quite sure that my colleague on the other side would raise no objections at this time. I am quite sure that they would appreciate this, knowing my colleague quite well, whom I take is the senior person on the other side on this occasion. He and I have had a very good relationship over the years, and I have no doubt that he can deal with it.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I question the Members on the other side as to whether they have any objection to leave being granted to deal with this particular resolution?

There appears to be no objection, and therefore leave is granted.

Order No. 6 was called – To move the House into Committee of Supply to consider the granting of sums of monies for the services of the island.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1983–84 No. 29
– \$3 000 000

Hon. L. S. CRAIG (St. James North): Sir, the Addendum is as clearly set out as it can be. Members on the other side, I think, have always agreed over the years, and I subscribe to this, that despite the problems which you hear John Public complain about with regard to a bus here and a bus there, we have had to accept it

as a fact of life that we still have the finest transport system in the Caribbean.

I have no doubt that Members on the other side will support a Resolution to make sure that there will even be a much more attractive and more reliable system, operated under the present Minister, whom, I am quite sure, no one can deny is doing everything in his power to make sure that the Transport Board is efficiently run.

I beg to move with those few remarks, that this Resolution do now pass.

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

Mr. M. A. KING (Christ Church West Central): Mr. Chairman, I must confess that when reference was made to this Resolution, I was not aware that it was this particular resolution which was being considered. Nevertheless, it seems that what is now before us is a Resolution for the approval of \$3 million for the Transport Board to meet commitments and anticipated expenditure to March 31, 1984.

We have not had the benefit of any explanation from the honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. Craig) as to what this Resolution is all about. He has just spoken in extremely general terms, the Addendum is quite unsatisfactory in explaining what the money is required for, and we on this side are not in any kind of position to decide on whether the money which is now being sought is for a justifiable purpose or not – we just see that this money is required to meet commitments and anticipated expenditure to March 31, 1984.

Why could the Minister who introduced this Resolution not be more specific and let us on this side know what this Resolution is all about? What is it for? What is the Transport Board now requiring \$3 million for?

The Minister of Transport, I believe, has not spoken on this yet, and perhaps we could be treated with the courtesy of understanding and knowing what the money is being voted for.

3.15 p.m.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yet! He has not spoken yet! He cannot speak!)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, in response to my colleague.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Are you winding up?

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

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You introduced it, so let me get in now.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Just for the record, Sir, I want to say that I treat the Committee to all courtesy at all times. It is not my fault if you see something for \$3 million, did not know about it, and got up and started talking on it. I treated you with the greatest courtesy. I explained to you that the Addendum was quite clear and begged to move that it stand part. That is the courtesy which I gave to the House, and my friend, the senior Member of the back bench.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I agree with the honourable Member for St. James North. He knows as much of what is happening in the Transport Board as anybody else in Barbados and, therefore, he made the introduction that he can make, because he knows nothing about what is happening in the Transport Board.

What I think is remarkable is that a Minister of the Crown, with a portfolio, which the Minister of Finance, in a speech in New York, prior to the moving of the then Minister of Labour to the portfolio of Transport and Works, told the people of Barbados, via a columnist from New York, that transportation would form the bulwark of the development thrust of the Government, and then we have, soon thereafter, the movement of that Minister, who we were led to believe was brought there for the movement of this special ability. But I am not going to dwell on that. I am dwelling on the fact that the Minister who has replaced him could sit in this House and allow the Leader of the House to introduce a supplementary — this is not the Estimates — for \$3 million for the Transport Board.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: If the honourable member would please give way on a point of order: A Minister can introduce any subject!

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Of course.)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: So do not say that he sat there. I had my reasons for introducing it.

If the Deputy Speaker did not extend his courtesies in the honourable manner in which he treated the House you would not be speaking. All the Deputy Speaker had to say was: "Is there any objection?" And if there were no objection, I would have had the Chairman in the Chair and the Resolution would have gone through, because you should have been back here on time.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The people of Barbados will judge. I have nothing to do with the Leader of the House. The Leader of the House has stated his position, and we understand his position. It is his duty to employ tactics, but it is the duty of the Minister responsible for Transport and Works to explain to the population of Barbados, via us, why he needs \$3 million, what he needs it for, how has he managed to have done so badly.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has not surrendered his right to do so.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, this does not concern you now. This does not concern you at all, Sir.

He should now explain to the people why the last Minister has done so badly, if that is so, that you need a supplementary in the month of March for \$3 million when the Estimates will be coming shortly. During this month the Estimates will be here, and you would know what the subvention will be!

We have had no explanation, so let us talk transportation. He said that the Minister will reply. He has a lot of replying to do this evening. He is going to have to explain to us what is happening in transportation.

You will recall, that when the Government came into power in 1976, we had a Minister of Transport. That Minister concentrated on one kind of bus. He said that he was going to organize the Ministry of Transport and Works. This was October, 1976, to be specific. Thereafter, we heard that the Ministry of Transport and Works was in the process of getting the best bus service in Barbados.

It was not long before that Minister was replaced, and we heard from the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite). He said that there was a lot of slackness going on in the Transport Board, and that he had come to bring a measure of organization to the Transport Board.

In the meantime, some \$17 million in deficit were identified. The identification of the deficit was visited by a promise and a commitment that what we needed was an increase in bus fares; and that once we had the increase in bus fares, the people in Barbados could look forward to an improvement in the transportation system.

Furthermore, we were told then that the buses needed upgrading, and that there had been, for some considerable time, a failure to bite the bullet and change to the buses from the United Kingdom. That was the time of the Leyland.

The honourable Member for St. Andrew went to London and met with the people of Leyland. I recall very well the honourable Member for St. Thomas almost biting out my throat when I raised questions about the efficacy of the arrangements that were being made, in the light of the then national and international concern about certain activities in Leyland.

Well, it was not soon enough yet before we had another Minister. What do you think his major thrust was? We had to change the buses! He was not going to be

staying with Leylands, because Leylands had proved to be inefficient, the Seddons that had been thrust upon the people by the Democratic Labour Party proved to be inefficient — notwithstanding that they had been there for seventeen years, — the workshop needed to be reorganized and the staff needed its morale raised.

He brought in a high-powered team to work in the Transport Board and he shifted out some of the people who had been there. The then Chief Labour Officer moved over to the Transport Board, together with a chairman, and he, the chairman, indicated in a number of public relations exercises that the people of Barbados needed to have a different approach from those who worked at the Transport Board, and that he was going to bring in some management training techniques and a number of other methods to make sure that the quality of transportation improved.

The Mercedes buses came — amidst a number of statements and questions concerning their origin. We heard that Mercedes buses and school buses would be coming from the United States, that the Minister had personally gone to the United States and held discussions with a number of high-level persons, who were versed in the area of public transport, particularly the transportation of children — and we had a long soliloquy on the Transport Board.

In the meantime, about \$25 million had gone down the drain between 1976 and the last Minister, but one. Then, recently, we had the Government indicating that that Minister's attitude apparently was wrong, because not only did they throw out the baby, they threw out the bath water and the bath pan. Indeed, they almost threw away the room in which the baby was born. They almost closed down the hospital in which the baby was born!

The honourable Member for St. Michael West Central came in and cleaned out the stables — his words, Sir, not mine! He indicated.....

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member will get his chance to speak.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I have never used any words about cleaning out any stables.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The most profound statement he can make so far is that he has never used any words about cleaning out any stables.

I am going to remind the honourable Member that he said the Augean stables needed to be cleaned and that he would have no compunction about cleaning them.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Not me!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: He said that heads may have to roll and before long, that Chairman had gone! 3.25 p.m.

It may be said that the first time since the Barbados Labour Party came to power there was any indication of movement at the Transport Board, was during the time of the honourable Member for St. Michael East. (Dr. D. G. Blackman). It may be said, as they have said, that during his time something had started to happen at the Transport Board. And that gentleman, Mr. Straughn, went on television and radio, and throughout Barbados, and I must confess that one got the impression that something was happening.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North West owes it to the population on this, the first occasion he has got, now that he comes before the House for a sum of this size, \$3 million, to explain to the population what was wrong with Mr. Straughn. He owes it to the population to explain why the then Manager of the Transport Board was removed. He owes it to the people of Barbados to explain why the Manager, this gentleman who was discarded by the Barbados Labour Party, and of whom it was said he was incompetent — something we never believed — was suddenly found, like the stone the builder had refused, to be acceptable in the sight of the Barbados Labour Party, and brought back to bring a measure of organization to the Transport Board.

If ever there was a comedy of errors in the public administration of this country, one could look to the Transport Board, and more particularly to the manoeuvrings of the Government in this regard, to see the comedy of errors. The only beneficiaries of this manoeuvring would seem to be silent, for all others in Barbados seem to be victims. From Pie Corner, St. Lucy; Checker Hall, St. Lucy; Horse Hill, St. Joseph; Belleplaine, St. Andrew; Ruby, St. Philip, the cry goes out that transportation has never been worse.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central ought to spend a little time talking to the people in his constituency, and they would invite him to recognise that it is not a joke. Perhaps it is because the Barbados Labour Party thinks that everything in public administration is a joke, that they can get away with allowing more than \$30 million to go down the drain, between 1976 and now, in the Transport Board without merely an explanation to the people of the country as to what has been happening. This is the cruelest joke that has been played on the people of this country — transportation in this country!

Mr. Chairman, you, Sir, represent a constituency in the country, so-called. The people of St. George must speak to you and tell you that they have extreme difficulty. I heard with my own two ears a young voice on one of the call-in programmes — they were not talking about the transport system *per se*; they were talking about the unfortunate attitude of the Minister of Education in the matter concerning the children; that is what they were talking about! — and the young voice said, "I have to come out in the morning at 6 o'clock and some days I get to school at 10 o'clock. Some days I do not get to school at all!"

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member says that is nothing strange. They make sport of it. I agree with them. If I was of the mentality of the honourable Members on the front bench at the moment, I would laugh at the people of Barbados; too! You are right to laugh at them. Make fun and say that it is a joke, please do that, because it would seem, from the attitudes which you pick up as you go around, that the people in Barbados do not mind if you promise them everything and give them nothing, but particularly in transportation it is an embarrassment.

Here is where the leader of the Government said that he would make his stand. I well recall when he indicated that this whole industry, the transportation industry, needed the levies. Some \$60 million have been collected from the Transport Levy alone. I may be wrong, Mr. Chairman, because I do not have the figures in front of me, but if I am wrong, I must be erring on the side of the Government. At least \$60 million have been collected, and these levies were collected from the time the Prime Minister — rather, the Minister of Finance — I do not think he was speaking in his capacity as Prime Minister —

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute more.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: My time runs so quickly, Sir.

The honourable Member said that transportation was going to be his thrust. Now Sir, as the people have paid, the cruel joke is that they have on television that you can see where the levy is going. They have built roads, the Spring Garden Road, and they have put some more roads, highways as they call them, but the buses are worse than they ever were!

The only area in which we can get some assistance with transportation is in the area of minibuses — but they have been harassing the mini bus drivers! They have made it virtually impossible for people to function! Were it not for the strength of the population to ignore the Government and get in the minibuses, no matter what happens, they would not get to work!

Industrial development in this country has suffered because of the infrequency of transportation from the rural and semi-rural areas!

My time has run out, but I will be back because this is one of the most fundamental problems we have in this country — the difficulty the average person has, if he lives two miles or more out of Bridgetown, of getting a bus regularly, getting a bus which does not leak, getting a bus that will not stall, getting a bus for him, his children and his wife to get to work on. And old people desirous of going to the hospital find that riding in the bus is something of a luxury, because they do not see the buses.

Mr. Chairman, you are signalling to me that my time is up. I could go on *ad infinitum*, but I will be back, Sir. It is a terrible thing they are doing to the people of Barbados!

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN (Christ Church East Central): Never have I heard such a patent exaggerator and distorter of facts! Anyone who have been living in Barbados and has eyes to see, and is not biased, would come to the conclusion that in the last year in particular, the quality of equipment used to transport the people of Barbados has never been of a higher standard.

When this Government took over, the transporting equipment consisted of a multiplicity of unsuitable units, a large number of various types, a hodge-podge of broken down equipment, particularly equipment which was under the control of a few private owners with strong Democratic Labour Party connections. What about the wooden buses that you had? What about the canvass sights that you had? Did you forget? The honourable Member obviously forgot the state of the minibuses. 3.35 p.m.

Systematically, year after year, the Government said that over a period of time it would do a number of things. One was that it would bring all the transportation equipment in the public sector area under one ownership. We did that, and we make no apologies for that at all. Secondly, we said that we would standardise the equipment along a number of lines to ensure that we would be able to use parts from one type of equipment, if it became damaged, in the same fleet. However, we said that there would have to be a modicum of diversity, because we did not want to place all our equipment in the hands of one supplier.

An evaluation was therefore done, and as a result of the evaluation, it was discovered by every Minister who was there that the greatest affliction of unsuitable equipment was the one the DLP inflicted on the Transport Board with the Seddons. Do not deny that fact. Even your own Transport Board repeatedly said that the Seddons were unsuitable from the beginning. They were

too heavy in the front; they almost looked as though they had a flat tyre in the front and a high rise tyre in the back.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: You were there seven years now).

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is why the Seddons are out of the fleet. It took the period of time that we have been there to clear them out. You had such a large part of the fleet as unsuitable equipment, that unless the Government had unlimited money, that had to be over a period of time.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Why did you change the Ministers?)

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: That is your business. When you become Prime Minister, you will know who has the power to change Ministers. Why can't you get Richie out?

Under Minister Brathwaite we started to bring in Leylands, and so desperate was the Transport Board for equipment that we had to allow some ready-made buses to come in. From then until now you will see that the Transport Board has settled on a policy that the two most suitable types of equipment that we have are the Mercedes Benz and the Leylands. That is the programme, that is what Cabinet has decided, and that is why they are being bought.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: The Minister did not say so).

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If you want to distort and twist the Minister's words to suit your argument, you will do it.

The Cabinet of Barbados has decided that the two pieces of equipment that are suitable for transportation in Barbados are the Mercedes Benz and the Leylands, and that is why the replacement programme will build up a category of each of them within the fleet. Parallel with this, the Deputy Speaker, when he was in charge of transport, established, with the concurrence of the Cabinet and this House, a straight policy with respect to minibuses, and that is why we now have the finest transportation fleet in the whole Caribbean — a combination of public sector and private sector fleets. I do not have to say that, ask any observer. Check it out, look at them and you will see.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The honourable Member's problem is that his constituency has been so well provided for that they do not need to have a bus.

Aside.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I hope you pay the rent for the excursion buses.

Everybody knows that the problem with the operation of transport in Barbados is the fact that wages is an essential and important component of the cost, and the subsidy that was voted for the Transport Board at the last Estimates, as the Minister will tell you, was predicted upon a given wage bill. Subsequent to that, they had a wage increase. And do not let us fool ourselves — you may be able to get away with fooling the members of your party, but you are not going to get away with fooling the public — every time there is a wage increase in the Transport Board someone has to pay for it. If you do not get it from increased bus fares, you have to get it by way of public subsidy.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Increased efficiency).

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: Increased efficiency? I know what the honourable Member is saying. The fare boxes are helping to increase efficiency. I am very glad to see that, at least, there is one sensible Member on the other side, who is a full supporter of the fare boxes. I hope he is a supporter of the logical consequence. How are you going to have a fare box and continue to have the same manpower?

Asides.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I see you want the cake, you want to eat it and you want to be able to fool the general public. The Government is not that foolish, and the Government knows that the Barbadian public is not that foolish.

Mr. Chairman, I do not want to go into details, but such nonsense was trotted out, such untruthful statements were made in some of the speeches, that I had to intervene to point out that if you look at the number of buses on the roads in Barbados, both public sector and private sector, you will see a quality of equipment. Look at the minibuses, the Hinos, which are produced in Barbados, and the Mercedes Benz, and compare them with what Mrs. Rock had. Compare them with what the man in St. Philip had. There must be scales on the honourable Member's eyes that he cannot remember the old green buses that used to come from St. Philip. I think they used to be called "Trotman's buses". How could anybody compare those with the virtually silent, automatic Mercedes which, when it passes, you do not even know it is passing. How can you compare those with those old smoke stacks you used to get before? Oh Lord!

I have been in politics long now, and I never thought it would be possible for me to live to hear some-

body make a speech like that, which is so contrary to the truth, so contrary to fact. I know you feel there is a by-election around, so you have to practise and tune up the lying machine. You have to start now, you want the experience.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way: I am glad he has indicated that there is a by-election in the air, because the last time we did that all kinds of hell broke loose.

The Member cannot say "contrary to fact". The impression the honourable Member is giving is that I made a statement that was contrary to fact. I said that the people from the outlying districts are complaining. I am saying that they complain to me. Do you not listen to "Feedback"? Ask the Prime Minister. He listens to "Feedback", he has people monitoring it all the time. Ask him if they do not quarrel and complain every day about transportation?
3.45 p.m.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We have allocated minibuses to every area where there is a complaint. Are you talking about harassment of minibuses? The Development Bank of Barbados has been exceedingly generous to mini-bus owners in Barbados. When you lend a man \$100 000 to go and buy a mini-bus produced in Barbados, a 24-seater, of the quality that you have here, is that what you call harassment? Of course, there are some people who do not like any kind of discipline at all.

(Asides: Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Ask the Deputy Speaker about that.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: The Deputy Speaker made a very great contribution to the transportation system in this island by bringing the Road Traffic Act of 1981, in originating the idea that all public transport had to have a special colour scheme, and all those kinds of things. You try and deny the contribution that the Deputy Speaker made.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: At least the Deputy Speaker left something which you can remember him by. As far as you are concerned, you have left, you will come back and you will go back and there is nothing you will ever do to be remembered by! The only thing you will be remembered as is the Minister who presided over the Housing Authority during its most corrupt period.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, order please!

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: I do not want to go into details, because I do not want to steal the thunder of the honourable Member for St. Michael West Central (Hon. V. L. Johnson). When he is ready, he will demolish the honourable Member for St. Michael West. I do not want to deprive him of that pleasure at all. I know he is anxiously and eagerly awaiting that. That is why I will sit down now.

Mr. M. A. KING: There are a number of points I would like to pick up the honourable Member, who has just spoken, on.

At the outset, I want to raise the concern that when the honourable Member for St. James North introduced this Resolution, he did not give one detail, one iota of information, as to what the Resolution was required for.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central (Hon. H. B. St. John) has just said — I do not know if he hinted or stated categorically that the money was required to pay increases in wages, and, so far, this is the only thing which has come through. He said that since the last Estimates, there has been an increase in wages and that wherever wages increase, you are going to need either subventions from subsidies or an increase in bus fares to meet the increased needs of the Transport Board.

I do not know if there are any other considerations which have to be taken into account, but certainly the honourable Members on the other side could be a little more particular and treat this House with the courtesy it deserves. They should let us know what this money is for, if all of it is for wages, and if not, what other purposes the money is required.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central has laboured the point, and that side continues to labour the point, that the Democratic Labour Party has been responsible for introducing Seddons, which were unsuitable for use in Barbados. I believe that there may be still one or two Seddons on the road in Barbados today, and if they are not still on the road today, it is only very recently that they have been taken off the road. Whether Seddons have been unsuitable in their totality or not, is a question for the experts to decide on.

Governments, I believe, always get the advice of their experts, or they ought to, unless there are Ministers who always want to travel and go and themselves participate in the purchase of buses and so forth, take the advice of their experts when they are purchasing equipment like buses.

Asides.

Mr. M. A. KING: Let me ask the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central this. When the Government decided to take over transport in its entirety, what compelled them to buy all the Seddons and all the old buses which the private concessionaires had?

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If the honourable Member would give way: It is not a question of taking over Seddons. Mrs. Rock foisted the Seddons on the Transport Board.

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, can I say that is nonsense? Mrs. Rock could not foist Seddons on the Transport Board. Mrs. Rock was a private concessionaire, the Transport Board was one of the concessionaires.....

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: If the honourable Member would give way: he does not even know that Mrs. Rock had a dual capacity. In fact, she had more than a dual capacity: she was a member of the Democratic Labour Party, she was an agent for the Seddons, and she was the owner of the Rocklyn Bus Company. As a member of the DLP she had contact with the DLP hierarchy, who had to make decisions and she sold them the Seddons — she never used them for herself!

Mr. M. A. KING: Mr. Chairman, the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central makes himself more ludicrous as he goes on. The one point he has not made is that Mrs. Rock could not in anyway influence the Transport Board when they were purchasing the buses which the private concessionaires had. The Elite, Rocklyn and all the other private concessionaires had a large number of old decrepit buses which this Government, when they nationalised transport, when they brought all of the transport into the hands of one concessionaire, namely the Transport Board, took over. Let my honourable friend explain that!

He is accusing the Democratic Labour Party of buying Seddons. Yet, when they had the opportunity of not buying the Seddons from the Elite and the Rocklyn, and when they had the opportunity of not buying those old decrepit buses, they went and bought them over as well!

Hon. H. B. St. JOHN: We did not buy Seddons from them; we bought Bedfords from them.

Mr. M. A. KING: You bought a lot of old buses nevertheless. You bought a lot of board buses.

The honourable Member for Christ Church East Central makes the point that Seddons are unsuitable. This Government has bought brand new Mercedes buses which were totally unsuitable to conditions in Barbados.

They bought Mercedes buses which did not climb hills.

If you listened to "Feedback", and other programmes like that, you heard people from St. Philip complaining that they could not get new buses running in that area. The responses on "Feedback", I believe, from the former Chairman of the Transport Board, were that the new buses could only run on flat roads; they could only run on the flat roads because they were not geared to take the hills.

They criticise us for having buses which were unsuitable, and, clearly, they, in their time, in 1983-84, when you would imagine that reliance on technical knowledge and advice would be standard form, bought brand new buses which were not able to run on the routes for which they had been bought!

3.55 p.m.

When my honourable friend talks about saddling the Government and the Transport Board with old buses and bringing buses which were not suited to the terrain of the country, if the Democratic Labour Party Government has been at fault in that regard, and I have to question that in its entirety, then this Government has clearly been itself severely at fault in bringing some buses which were totally unsuited to the conditions in Barbados, and, secondly, in acquiring the whole lot of old buses from the private concessionaires when they brought all the buses from private ownership into the Transport Board.

I am going to talk next about minibuses. He talks about the Development Bank being extremely generous to minibus owners in lending them monies to purchase minibuses. It is true that the Development Bank has provided funds for the minibus owners, but at the same time there have been so many additional pressures put on the minibus owners that they find themselves in a vice from which they are finding it difficult to extricate themselves, because with the level of taxation now on minibus owners and on taxi drivers and so forth, it is making life extremely difficult for them.

He talks about harassment. I notice the honourable Member for Christ Church East Central did not respond to the question of harassment which the minibus drivers are complaining of, but tried to twist, or divert, the argument into another direction. Whenever minibus drivers break the law, quite rightly they are hauled before the courts, but sometimes the minibus drivers complain that they are even brought before the courts when they, themselves, may not have broken any law. In essence, what the minibus drivers are complaining of is that equal treatment appears not to be meted out to them as well as to the Transport Board.

There have been occasions, for instance, where the Transport Board buses have not been properly licensed, and where the police, in the proper exercise of their duty, have pulled the Transport Board buses off the road — and on one such occasion a Minister of Transport pilloried the police for doing their job — but yet, in recent times, we have seen Transport Board buses again being not properly and effectively licensed, but running on the roads. Police, true enough have pulled in some of them, but when the minibus drivers are on the road in this condition, they are brought before the courts and are made to pay heavy fines, and then when they organise excursions and things of that sort — well, that is another matter — they again run afoul of the law, and they feel themselves harassed.

So the minibus drivers and owners have been complaining that they feel that they are not being fairly treated. How people feel has to be important, and if a public relations effort needs to be done to ensure that they are being given fair treatment, or equal treatment, with the Transport Board, then that has to be done.

Let us not sit back and blow hot and cold at the same time and try to blame the problems of transport on one side, saying the Democratic Labour Party has left us a legacy of bad transport. After all, the Barbados Labour Party has held the reins of this Government since 1976, and the time has run out — not will run out or is running out — the time has run for the Government of the day to continue to blame the past Government for what has happened in the past.

Nineteen eighty-four is a long way from 1976, and the sooner you learn to take the blame and deal with your problems, without harping back to the problems which you say have been left you by the former Government, the better for you. The people of Barbados in 1984 are not going to sit back and accept that the problems with transport in 1984 are the problems of the Democratic Labour Party's bequest in 1976. So I urge the Minister to take stock. He has a duty to inform this House what the votes of this Parliament are required to subsidise, and I think that honourable Members deserve an explanation when supplementaries of this nature are brought before them.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Sir, I am rising to speak both as Minister of Finance and Minister of Planning. First of all, as Minister of Finance, \$10 million was voted for Transport Board subsidy at the beginning of the year. There was then a wage bill of \$21 million. As a result of increases, the wage bill has gone up to \$24 million, and we are asking for a subsidy of \$3 million.

The Minister of Transport wanted more. He explained how some of the older buses inherited from

the bus company were not working and we have not been able to bring the fleet up to the numbers as quickly as we could, and therefore we were not taking revenue at quite the rate we should. I said \$3 million — and nearly all of it will go to pay the National Insurance and pay arrears of P.A.Y.E., because those are what we have been meeting the new salaries out of. That is what the Minister of Finance knows about this.

What the Minister of Finance can add is that the Transport Board provides free travel to persons over the age of 65, and that this costs the Transport Board, from fairly solid and reliable estimates, about \$1.6 million per year at the present bus fare rate. What I also know is that to subsidise the fares of school children perhaps costs the Board \$1.9 million, and police, who for some reason have managed to acquire the privilege of travelling free on the buses when in uniform, although I believe that many manage to travel free when not in uniform as well, cost another, I think, \$400 000. Therefore, the subsidy, which represents a loss, is about \$4 million, and the loss for the year about \$9 million.

The next estimates to come up will not contain so large a subsidy as this. The reason is that, in my view, it is unreasonable, as a matter of commercial accounting, to ask the Transport Board to carry on its own books the cost of the old age pensioners. We are therefore going to increase the Welfare Vote by an amount to cover what the Transport Board loses on the old age service, we are going to increase the Education Vote by the amount of the subsidy on school children, and we are going to increase the police Operating Expenses by an amount to cover the cost of police travelling on the buses. Those amounts will be paid to the Transport Board as of right. They will not be subsidised, and we will then have a fairly accurate figure from which to estimate how much the Transport Board is losing.

We will also be trying to create a capital structure for the Transport Board, based on its rolling stock, which can be suitably depreciated so as to set against the operating — I cannot say profit — the operating loss, so that you can estimate what the Transport Board is losing. When we do all that, we will be in a position to know what the true subsidy is.

4.05 p.m.

The finances of public transport in all countries deteriorate as the countries develop. As countries increase their industrialization, which invariably calls for more public transport, increase their commercialization and their urbanization which, even more, calls for more public transport, there is a tendency for private transport to become uneconomic at bus and railway level and for public transport to have to take over, and for public transport to make losses.

One of the hottest issues in London politics today relates to public transport. The London Transport system loses money. And in the face of it, a left wing takeover reduced the fares, and the rate payers of London Transport were successfully able to go to court to have the fares raised again. We have no such issues in Barbados. All we do is put up the very small fares relative to the cost of providing the service, and we write those fares off as subsidies for the level of development that we enjoy.

I am not seeking to trail any announcement, I am not flying any kite, but honourable Members would be interested to know that now that no change is given on the buses, it is by no means unusual to pick out dollar bills out of the fare box, because people are in such a hurry to catch the bus that they are not going to wait to get change to save the extra quarter out of the dollar. I think the Minister of Transport will confirm that you even pick up dollar bills out of the school buses, which means that the school children, who have not got the ticket or whatever, are willing to pay a dollar for the subsidized fare. Honourable Members can draw whatever conclusion they wish from that.

I myself, am a supporter of the single fare. I believe that the equity of the single fare in a country, where the greatest distance that you can make on any bus is less than twenty miles, exceeds the equity of the argument that you should not have to pay 75 cents to travel from the Ivy to Bridgetown, or from Bay Land to Bridgetown, or from Black Rock to Bridgetown. I think that the convenience of living in the Bay Land, the Ivy or Black Rock is such that to have to subsidize those who come from Pie Corner and Marley Vale should really not be any great burden. But all of these matters are matters of macro-planning at the Ministry of Transport and will have to be considered for the future.

The Ministry of Finance is very concerned over the level of subsidies to the Transport Board. I do not hide it. But I think that they are doing the best they can, and at the moment they are making an effort to see whether improved management can eliminate the operating loss, at least in the medium term.

I am not here to discuss personalities. Sufficient to say — and I mention this, not in the context of the Transport Board, but within the context of many statutory corporations — that a habit, unfortunately, grew up in some corporations of people thinking that they would be creatures of a particular Minister. The managers, chairmen, and sometimes members of the Board, put their loyalty to an individual Minister above their loyalty to the people of Barbados and their loyalty to the overall Government that appointed them. In all circumstances one cannot be surprised if when this is directional

loyalty was discerned by the successor of a Minister, he asked Cabinet to concur with him — they ask Cabinet to concur with them, we ask ourselves to concur with each other — in changing some board chairmen and managers.

It would, in my view, be unfortunate if you went in the direction of carrying a man with you wherever you find yourself in Government. We have tried that on the basis that a Minister deserves people who he can trust. It cannot easily work in Barbados, unless you fully institutionalize the system popular in Europe, known as the *chef-de-cabinet* system, from the French who originated it.

In France, a Minister in charge of a department and a nationalized industry does not only carry with him his own manager and chairman, he carries with him his own permanent secretary. He carries the top civil servant with him also, the *chef-de-cabinet*, and the *chef-de-cabinet* runs a department and he has his own men — and they know they are going to change with the Minister. We do not have this system in Barbados, and it does not work well because it unsettles the public and the department.

I accept the arguments of the honourable Member for St. Michael West, that you see these people change when the Minister changes, and I have explained them. The honourable Member's arguments are, in any case, not sincere. He is trying to make mischief between the honourable Member for St. Michael East (Dr. D. G. Blackman) and his colleagues, he is trying to create divisions in the Barbados Labour Party. Those who live in a glass house should not throw stones. He thinks that because the Democratic Labour Party is hopelessly and catastrophically divided, with people assessed as to their loyalty to Richie or Branford or Sandy, that the Barbados Labour Party is similar.

Let me tell him this. He has said worse things to me about his colleagues — and not just one of them; two of them — than anybody on our side has ever said about them. And the sentiments are reciprocated. We do not have this warfare over here.

As far as I am concerned, Mr. Codrington, who gave good service as Chief Labour Officer, and who gave good service to his Minister as Manager of the Transport Board, will give me equally good service in the position to which I have now called him, which is to work as a planner in my office. I am putting him in charge of the St. George Development Scheme. I will very shortly be announcing a St. George Development Committee under my leadership, the chairmanship of you, Sir, Mr. Chairman. This Committee will work towards the development of one of the two cities, the suburban development around the St.

George Glebe. I have no doubt that the talents of Mr. Codrington will find a home there. He has been sent on a course in project management.

Mr. Straughn, who has been mentioned by name, undoubtedly is one of the people who has always had the welfare of Barbadians, particularly underprivileged Barbadians, at heart.

4.15 p.m.

He has often been mistaken. I remember that, somewhat grudgingly, I agreed that he was the best of the candidates, in terms of experience, in the City by-election in 1968. But his mistaken views caused him to get only 32 votes, and he was barely able to beat Mr. Haddock and others. Sometimes his love for the people exceeds his political judgement.

Mr. Straughn perhaps should be remembered as the only Government candidate that has ever won a by-election in this country. He is the only one. He will not be the last — but he is the only one who has ever achieved it.

I do not think we should be critical of him, either by praising him as being damned or damning him as being praised, as the honourable Member for St. Michael West was doing. We should not seek to make him a political football. Barbados should be harnessing the talents of people like Glenroy Straughn, whose attachment to the cause of the people has survived many of his own misjudgments. I do not think that mischief-making suits the tone of a debate such as this, which is about transport.

I come now to my second hat, to Planning. I will be short under the head of Planning, because it is not directly concerned with this debate. I will advert to it only in so far as it relates to the Transport Board.

There is no doubt that there is a new thrust in road building. We have discovered that the road system of Barbados cannot be easily repaired to carry the traffic of Barbados as is being generated now. (That is common place and I repeat it only to remind honourable Members that I think that it is pretty well accepted on all sides). Unless we improve the road system, the Transport Board will be hampered. The roads are twisting, they are winding, and they are of a bad surface. We have, in addition, a plague on our roads, a plague called the Water Authority, that singlehandedly does more to damage the main roads of Barbados than any other agency, including the Lord in Heaven above.

The Water Authority digs up all of the roads of Barbados. In a recent survey, I think it was said that 60 per cent of the pot holes are due to the Water Authority.

Three times within the last four years I have had to make a tremendous fuss about the road I drive to work on, because after it was repaired, the Waterworks came and dug it up in the same place, with consequential damage to MP 1 and MP 2, and I really do not want them to have the chance to damage MP 3. The fact is that the roads must be improved.

I am very sorry for the honourable Member if he complains about seeing television advertisements about the Transport Levy. Honourable Members on that side have continually put a case to the public that the Transport Levy is a wicked imposition. The Government must now point out that the Transport Levy is what is going to support the new road system. The Transport Levy is rebuilding Bridge Road. The Transport Levy is going to help provide the counterpart funds to build the new highway, which is starting in the area of Lodge Hill in November at the latest.

Honourable Members obviously watch television, and this is why it worries them. But I think that a little more of that sort of publicity does us all good. I never tire of telling honourable Members that we are indivisible in here. When you drag down a politician on one side, you are dragging down all politicians. I am sure that there are people out there who like the honourable Member for St. Michael West, and public opinion is such a funny thing, there are probably people from Westbury Road or wherever, who hear him — perhaps he is the only politician they know — and when they see Civic File and they see the advertisement, they say: "God Bless Mr. Taitt."

Do not dismiss that. His Excellency, the Governor-General, once told me that shortly after being elected to St. George in 1940, the road between Charles Rowe Bridge and Salters, and Bulkley Road and Haggatt Hall was made up. This was just a few weeks after he was elected. Up to that time it was a cart track; it had existed for 300 years, but was not made up. His Excellency said that he was only in the House a couple of weeks and people forgot all that Mr. Charlie Elder had done. They said; "God bless Mr. Springer. Mr. Elder was there for 12 years and look Mr. Springer came and in three weeks got the road." Obviously, Mr. Elder's adherents would have said: "Look Mr. Elder after 12 years got the road made up, and the people voted against him."

The point of the whole story is that the making up of that road gave somebody a good impression of a politician. The B. G. I. S. programme on politicians collecting your money and showing you what they are doing for you, in the end redounds on Government, but not necessarily in the governing party. We will try to make it redound more on the governing party than in the Opposition, do not fool yourselves, but in the end, a positive programme on our television screens is beneficial

to the whole public process, not just for one political party alone.

There are lots of things that can be very negative to Barbados. The Democratic Labour Party, I understand, had a political meeting — in the middle of a wonderful BLP development in Halls Road, next to a roundabout and a nicely made-up road, nicely paved area, which, I believe, is actually provided with electrical facilities for public meetings; it was always intended that meetings would be held there. They had a meeting on the spot we provided, and cursed us.

A gentleman from the BBC, while interviewing me today on world problems, superpower politics, Grenada, said to me: "Tell me Mr. Prime Minister. I only came to Barbados on Sunday, and I went to a political meeting held by the Opposition, and all they talked about was the St. George's Medical School. Is this really a major political issue in the country? I was listening to it for overtones and undertones. Tell me, are they really very subtle and this is their way of putting over that they are anti-American?" I said; "No, it is just that there is nothing else for them to talk about. They cannot complain about inflation or economic management. The general public does not accept that those are legitimate criticisms, in legitimate political areas, and therefore, in a silly season such as this, they have to find silly issues".

All of this is on record. My Press Secretary, who was present, was, I think, silently very amused as the gentleman from the BBC was solemnly asking how could the establishment of an offshore medical school justify a major political confrontation, even in Barbados. Of course I know that I am speaking to the converted when I speak to the honourable Member for St. Michael West, because the point of the meeting was that a meeting should be held and he should not speak at it. That was the point. 4.25 p.m.

Getting back to the Transport Board, the prospect of having to supplement the vote does not thrill me — obviously. I have seen fighting against the Transport Board increasing its subsidy for years now; for every year since 1979, when it made that surge, I have been fighting very hard against it, but we are stuck with it. It is the price that we pay for commercialisation and industrialisation in Barbados, it is the price we pay for the factories at Sargeants Village, for the Newton Industrial Estate, for industry all over the island; it is the price we pay for there being almost 100 000 people at work when we came into power and found 85 000.

I beg to support that this Head stand part.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Before the Minister repli, let me just deal with this gentleman.

The Prime Minister has a good tongue when it comes to putting the case for his party. Let me put this in the Record. I deny categorically having spoken to the Prime Minister in a private capacity about anything. I do not talk to him, I do not know why he is getting in here trying to give the impression that I talk to him. I am putting it in the Record, because I do not wish him to get up and say that and the Record goes unchallenged or unstated. I do not talk to the Prime Minister in a private capacity about anything, I talk to him in here.

Secondly, when he gets up in here and talks about Mr. Glenroy Straughn, no amount of gainsaying, pappy showing or soft words can take away from the fact that the Prime Minister, as Prime Minister, in the face of having promised the people of this country that he was making a thrust in transport, and that is specifically why he was putting the honourable Member for St. Michael East (Dr. D. G. Blackman) as Minister of Transport, and that he subsequently transferred that honourable Member to another Ministry. There is a television programme in the United States called "Have Gun Will Travel", it is an old one, and as if the Minister was saying "Have Executive Will Travel", from the time that Minister went, the Chairman of the Board went, the Manager went. Nobody, not even a four-year-old child in this country, could accept the nonsense which they would have us accept.

Now, this afternoon, the Prime Minister himself is talking about what a nice gentleman Mr. Straughn is. Nobody said he is not a gentleman. What we are saying is that he was the only chairman during the time of the Barbados Labour Party who appeared to be getting anything done in the direction that people believe the Transport Board should go, and they got rid of him suddenly, swiftly, and without explanation. But now he comes here this evening to give the impression that they love Mr. Straughn, and if it were not for Mr. Straughn's bad political judgment he would have been in the House of Assembly ever since. They cannot see how anybody could have anything against this nice gentleman!

We are not dealing with him in his capacity as a nice gentleman; we accept that he is. We are dealing with the fact that the Barbados Labour Party told the people of this country that they were going to make this input and this thrust in transportation, and now what they have given us is, as I have called it, a comedy of errors.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister said the levy is going towards the fixing of roads, and he sought to give some gratuitous indication to the people of Westbury Road. The people of Westbury Road have made it very clear that they do not wish the Prime Minister to speak

They have a representative, and if they ever "God bless that representative", it cannot be because of any roads that have been done, because the Barbados

Labour Party has made it abundantly clear that it does not intend to fix any roads in St. Michael West. We have gone through it in this House, I am not going to do it again.

He is not going to fool me with his concept, that when you see a television programme it redounds to all politicians, and he will not fool any honourable Member on this side. To the extent that "Civic File" is pure propaganda, it is a displacement of the people's money. To the extent that it is pure propaganda, it is a misuse of the taxpayers' money. And when you collect the levies and promise to do certain things with the levies and end up using the levy money for other purposes, and then come on the television saying see how the money is being used, we accuse you of misleading the people.

But you have the Government, you have the numbers.

And honestly, Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that the BBC has a correspondent who could be so inept, so totally without guile, so without any understanding of what is going on, that, even in the face of denials by the Government that the St. George's Medical School falls within the category of schools that is being investigated by the U.S. Federal Government, he would wonder how the setting up of an offshore medical school could be an issue in a country like Barbados. Why, if the man from the BBC is even halfway of the quality he should be, he would have known that some of the articles saying the worst things about offshore medical schools, and in particular the St. George's Medical School, can be found in the British Press.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: We are debating the Transport Board.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am debating what the honourable Member debated. I am responding to his debate on the Transport Board.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Prime Minister did not make the St. George's Medical School the subject of the debate. That is the course the honourable Member who is now on his feet is about to pursue. I am asking him please to stay away from that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not wish to say that the honourable Member is not telling the truth. I am saying that the honourable Member talked about somebody from the BBC, and tried to give the impression that the journalist from the BBC would cry shame of a serious political party discussing the St. George's Medical School. All I am saying is that if the man who is a journalist was of the quality that the BBC journalists usually are, he would have been aware why the St. George's Medical School is a very big issue in the political arena in

Barbados, and no amount of fluff by the Prime Minister will get rid of it.

The transportation system in this country, no matter what the Government says, is open to serious question by the people of this country, because those who actually use it are the ones who are complaining continuously about the lack of regularity of buses, about the capability to look with any degree of certainty on moving from point A to point B, about the disruption in their social and political life. And I am charging that the Prime Minister is guilty of ineptitude, because he has taken five Ministers through the Transport Board from 1976 to 1984, thereby contributing to the discomfiture of those who use the transport system in this country.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: You talked about that already.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member is asking *sotto voce* if I mean to say that the Prime Minister is inept or the Ministers. I think he wishes me to say that the respective Ministers have been inept. I am not going to say that, no matter how much the honourable Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham) wishes me to curse his own Ministers for him. If he thinks that they are inept, he should get up and say so. I challenge him to get up, instead of *sotto voce* asking me if they were inept, and say that they are inept. The honourable member is going to talk about it.

I am going to stop now. I just want to be certain that the Prime Minister does not believe that he has fooled anybody into a sense of false security because he gets up and tells an untruth, and then adds on to it a soft voice commentary about his exploits with the BBC. I wish he would tell us his full exploits with the BBC. 4.35 p.m.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: In replying, I am just going to deal with this very briefly. The honourable Member must not seek to make his private strictures about his colleagues the subject of debate. By denying it, he really wants me to say what he said about his colleagues. He wants it said so as to hurt his colleagues, but he does not want to say it himself. I am not going to say it either.

I see the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) sitting with a quite straight and slightly worried face. He has good cause. I say no more than that.

As far as the BBC gentleman is concerned, I really do assure the honourable Member about this. I believe my Press Secretary might have a tape recorder here, and if he wants to, he can listen to the questions I was asked by the BBC man about the irrelevance of a whole political meeting that he went to. I said to him: "Please do not judge Barbados by its Opposition." Those were my first

words. I had to beg him to give Barbados more credit than he was prepared to give us because of the foolishness the Opposition got on with.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I would like the honourable Minister to reply.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: He cannot reply. I want to speak.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member for St. Michael South.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Chairman, it is obvious that the very massive and successful public meeting on Sunday night is causing considerable worry to the Prime Minister. The fact that he is taking this opportunity to reply to some of the things that were said at that meeting is proof of the fact.

I do not think that a debate on public transport in this country, relating to a substantial supplementary for the Transport Board, should be an occasion for the Government to beat its breast and to brag that Barbados has the best public transport system in the Caribbean. Whether that is so or not is irrelevant to the present situation in this country. Where there is widespread criticism of, and dissatisfaction over, the service provided by the Transport Board by the people who use the Transport Board's services in this country, the Government, which is responsible for transport in this country, should address those problems.

The whole idea of boasting and bragging on these matters and saying: "We are better than those over there", a Dives and Lazarus situation, is totally irrelevant and is totally out of character with the way we should be conducting our public affairs in this country. I wonder when the Government will realise that it has a responsibility to the people of Barbados, and deal with matters at a level that is required of the front bench.

We have a very disgraceful situation in this country at the moment, because in all of my years in this Parliament, I have never seen a major Supplementary Resolution being requested by the Government from Parliament and get the display we have seen here today. This is a Resolution for over 30 per cent, or about 30 per cent, of the original vote requested and obtained from Parliament for the Transport Board — and the Minister responsible, up to this point in the debate, has not spoken! We have had the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, and the Leader of the House speaking on this particular matter, but up to this particular point, the Minister who is responsible for Transport has not said one word on this Resolution! There must be an indication.....

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order, Sir: the Minister agreed with his colleagues that I should present the Resolution and let you all talk the nonsense which he knows you are going to talk, and then he would give a final reply. Do not say that you have not heard him yet. You must wait until Mr. Chairman puts the question: then, if he does not say anything, you would be in a position to say that. Nobody is worried about your public meeting.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please. Order. Let us not get out of hand. The honourable Member please continue.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am very glad that you have allowed me to continue.

We are dealing with the whole question of the responsibility of those Ministers over there for their respective portfolios. Sometimes I wonder if we are still operating a Cabinet system.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member must deal with the matter of the Transport Board. Please deal with transport, with the \$3 million subsidy.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, I am really wondering now if the Minister responsible for Transport deserves his salary, because he is paid as Minister in this country to come into Parliament to speak on matters under his portfolio, of which the Transport Board represents one of the major, what my friend, the Member for Christ Church East (Hon. Dr. R. L. Cheltenham) would call, "parastatal organisations" that fall under his direction.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does the honourable Member believe that he is the last speaker in this debate?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I certainly know that I am not the last, nor was the Minister responsible for Transport the first. He should have been out there opening the debate on this matter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Honourable Members, please, order!

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Are you hurt like Malcolm Marshall? Why cannot you introduce matters which fall under your Ministry? What are you allowing them to do to you? You have a responsibility, it is called individual Ministerial responsibility, for the subjects under your portfolio; and I am surprised that you, as Minister, could come in here and allow all of them on the front bench to speak on this matter. You, the Minister responsible for Transport, is like a little boy, puny, walking under their feet, and allowing them to speak on your behalf! What is happening with the Government on this?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member is totally out of order. The honourable Member is debating who should open the innings. You have no say in that.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order! I am speaking. There can be no point of order when the Chairman is speaking.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I would like to have all the honourable Member has said struck from the record. It has been completely irrelevant! I am very serious about that.

Whenever a "Don" arrives anywhere, the honourable Member for St. Michael gets jittery. There was a "Don" knocking about St. Michael South, and he started to tremble. There is another "Don" knocking around again, and he is trembling. This is his problem this evening.

He started out very well on the Transport Board, and then he started talking complete nonsense. Keep your composure! Continue with the Transport Board! 4.45 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I believe the Committee is now prepared to hear the Honourable Minister of Transport. Am I correct?

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Chairman, you do not want me to speak?

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Let him continue. Get up and continue.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable Member for St. Michael South prepared to continue? He has another five minutes to go. I know the honourable Minister is very anxious.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I believe that I have said enough to let the Minister realise what his responsibilities are, ministerial responsibility for a portfolio. People all over the country are concerned about transport. We hear about it on the Call-In programmes, we hear about it in the bus stands — wherever you go there are complaints about transport. All of us as representatives hear the complaints, and we would really like to know what are the particular plans of the Government for correcting the situation and for bringing about improvement, because transportation is one of the basic infrastructural services in this country, and it is time that we get it right.

We have got to study all of these problems. Do not let us say, and make fun about it, that if you find a dollar in a fare box, there is a willingness of the passengers on a bus to pay a \$1.00 bus fare. The Prime

Minister can draw that conclusion, but there are other conclusions that can be drawn if you find a dollar in the fare box. It may be that people, having no change, will put in that dollar because they do not know when the next bus will be available to them, and it is better to catch that one at the time than to wait in the hope that something else may turn up. We can draw a lot of conclusions from that.

The fact is that almost every operation of the Transport Board, its management, its operating procedures, the workshop, the depots, the workers — almost all of them — represent problems, and indeed there are problems for us as Parliamentarians in examining the Transport Board. I have asked in this Chamber for the most up-to-date report and financial statement of the Transport Board. I was given a document, a report dated October 1, 1979 to March 31, 1980. Maybe the Minister has an up-to-date financial statement, or profit and loss statement, which he can make available during this most important debate, but it is really impossible to deal with a Resolution of this type without the appropriate information being available on which we are going to base the necessity for us to approve this particular resolution.

I am told by the new Minister for Transport, who introduced this Resolution, that the information is in the Addendum. The Addendum says:

"Supplementary provision in the sum of \$3 000 000 is required under Head 42, Subhead 8, Item 1 to permit the Transport Board to meet its commitments and anticipated expenditure to 31st March, 1984."

In other words, the Addendum says nothing more than what is in the Schedule itself. It says nothing! This is what we call circumlocution. An Addendum is supposed to give some additional information concerning the need, the reasons for the request that is being made.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: On a point of order: I cannot let the honourable Member for St. Michael South get away with this. An Addendum is to give information to all Members in Parliament, and it is for the record, and in relation to the \$3 000 000 which we are asking for, the Addendum sets out quite clearly that it is to meet commitments and anticipated expenditure for the Transport Board until 31st March. That is the information you are to have. Now you are to get up and make your speech and criticise it from there, but you have nothing to say.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has made his point.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: The Addendum says nothing!

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: So what did you read out just now?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I cannot have two honourable Members on their feet.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Well, tell him to sit down.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Both honourable Members must be seated. The honourable Minister may wind up.

Certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. James North (Hon. L. S. CRAIG) at this stage were ordered struck from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Does any other honourable Member wish to make a contribution to this debate? If you do, please indicate.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE (St. Lucy): Mr. Chairman, I am happy to support this Resolution. I think \$3 000 000 to the Transport Board for the improvement in service over the last seven years are quite reasonable, and I was more than shocked as I listened to the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford). I had to say that this Resolution was so outstanding that the honourable Member could not speak on it — he has to speak on the honourable Minister.

I cannot understand the honourable Member for St. Michael West. He said that transportation is at its worse. I remember that in 1975–76, prior to this party being in power, the first bus used to leave St. Lucy at 6 a.m., and the last bus would come from St. Michael at 6 p.m. Since this party came into power, the first bus

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order; the honourable Member cannot give wrong information deliberately. The schedules would show that is not true.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order. There is no rule broken.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But it is not true.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Sit down, please.

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I am saying that the last bus used to leave town at 6 p.m. on weekdays, and 8 p.m. on Sundays, under the Democratic Labour Party. The last bus now leaves at 12 midnight, and it gets to St. Lucy at 1 o'clock in the morning. So you can see the improvement in the transport system, and I can tell you that we are all very happy.

He spoke about school children. If school children cannot get home at night when we have a bus running from 5.30 a.m. until 1 o'clock next morning, how did they get home before when the service was from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. You now have so many more hours that

school children can play with, but some school children do not want to get home anyhow.
4.55 p.m.

We all know of the good plans of this Government in relation to Transport. But we have to realise that although we put more buses in the fleet, and we license more mini-buses to help improve the system, we keep getting more people on the routes. We have more people working and more children going to school.

You all had a "play, play meeting" a few nights ago in Half Moon Fort and when the buses were passing through so quickly, Senator Greaves, I will call his name, said "Look, we could do with four more buses." He only knows about the buses now. Why did he not talk about the buses from 1971 to 1976; when his Government was in power?

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: Hear, hear!)

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: What meeting was this?)

(Hon. Dr. R. L. CHELTENHAM: That was a mock meeting.)

Mr. R. E. BRATHWAITE: This meeting was going on around 10.00 o'clock. The buses were passing to and fro, and he was comparing it and saying that the route could do with four more buses. Of course he could say that now, but in 1975 and 1976, the people did not have the money to go any place, so he did not want buses then. The people did not have any jobs to go to then.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to reply to the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King). I am sorry that Mrs. Rock is not alive to listen to his remarks. When you are taking over a route, you take over the route from someone. That Member is no fool. Does he believe that you can take the route and leave the buses on the lady's hands. This party is not a party like that. If this party was a party like that, I would not be a member of it. I would never be a member of such a party.

I believe that for all the years Mrs. Rock ran a transport system, she tried her best, to improve the service for the people of St. Andrew, St. James and St. Thomas. We said that we would have to accept Mrs. Rock old buses, but now the honourable Member is trying to give the impression that we should not have taken over some of those old buses from the lady.

Mr. Chairman, when you consider the expenditure in spare parts, tyres, and other plant from 1976 up to now, I would say that a meagre \$3 million as a subsidy is quite in order for the service we have had. There are a

lot of people who lose their jobs when they get to work late, because there is a lot of work going on nowadays, and the honourable Minister is only appealing for a few dollars to improve the bus service so that people can get to work on time to save their jobs. I have a lot of dealings with people from St. Lucy who work in Christ Church and sometimes it is very difficult at peak hours on mornings to get those people to work on time.

I welcome this move by the Minister, because I am sure that when this Resolution is passed in here, we will have more buses, and the people from St. Lucy will be able to get to work on time. I fully support this Resolution and I hope that we will all do all that lies within our powers, that the members of the Opposition will join hands with the members of the Government, so that we will have more buses and we will all be very happy with the transport system.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Hear, hear, hear, hear!)

Applause.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES (St. Michael North): Mr. Chairman, I have no doubt that \$3 million is required by the Transport Board. As a matter of fact, I rather believe that the Transport Board needs a lot more money than that. I would just hope that the money we vote for the Transport Board will be put to good use, even better use than it has been put to in the past.

I happen to represent a suburban constituency, but, at the same time, it is sufficiently distanced from the centre of the city that the people in St. Michael North have to use the transport system.

I recall very well that three years ago as I was going around, and the matter has not improved, I was told by some of the school children and school children's parents that children living in the Jackson area who had to get to town, or to schools out of town, but in order to get to those schools you had to pass through town, had to leave home at six o'clock in the morning and, in some cases, even earlier than six o'clock in the morning. I was also told that, very often, even though they have left home at that earlier hour, sometimes they were left at the bus stop, and that very often there was no bus at all to take them where they wanted to go.

A similar thing occurred in the Lodge Hill area. I believe I have reported that incident here in this Honourable Chamber before and I repeat it again, because I think it bears repeating. One night at 8 p.m. in the Lodge Hill area, I was asked by a youngster: "Have you seen that bus that turned around here a few minutes ago?" I had not, because I had been in a house. I said: "No, I am sorry, I did not see that bus." He said: "There is a

bus that just turned around here, this is now 8.00 p.m. and that is the very first bus here for the day."

The people living up in the Lodge Hill area to a great extent — not totally, but to a great extent — are working class people. If you have all this great transport system, for Heavens' sake, extend some of it to the people of Lodge Hill so that they can get some of the services in Lodge Hill too, because they, too, have to pay some of the Transport Levy. That is important.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: They have minibuses.)

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Minibuses do not go in some of those areas in Lodge Hill; they go in the Eden Lodge area, and when people get there, they have to walk over the hill. This is the problem faced by the people in Lodge Hill. So I am asking the honourable Minister to extend this great service that he says we have, but yet is to be seen — we cannot certainly see it — so that the people of Lodge Hill can get some part of the service for which they are paying.

I have to take issue here with the honourable Member for St. Lucy (Mr. R. E. Brathwaite). He has spoken about all these great strides in the transport system. I am a believer in centralizing the transport system of the Government. I have never supported, the fragmentation of the transport system among various private concessionaires. The reason for this is that you can get a service in some areas under Government where the private concessionaires are not going to want to do. The same applies to the minibuses. Minibuses will ply the areas that give them high economic returns. Minibuses are not going to want to ply an area where returns are of little or no value to them.

But it is not true to come and give this House the impression that the last bus in 1975 going north to St. Lucy was at 6.00 p.m. It is totally untrue! That was the position many years ago, I grant you, but it changed long before 1975. Long before 1975, the bus service to St. Lucy was later than the 6.00 p.m. as the honourable Member for St. Lucy tried to give the impression here this evening.

The point is, what would be the good of having a transport system, if, in 1984, it is not better than in 1976? What is the point of the system, or any service, for that matter? If there can be no improvement in the service, you might as well hand it over. There is no point coming to boast about this good service you have in 1984 over 1975 or 1976, because there should be improvement. After all, you collect enough money from the taxpayers for this improvement.

I hope that when we would have voted these funds for the Transport Board, we will see the kind of system

that they are boasting about, and which we ourselves cannot now see.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Not with the naked eye!)

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Not with the naked eye!

It is no consolation for us on this side to talk about the transport system other than in a complimentary way, because the transport system is intended to serve people. And when the transport system serves people, it serves the country and it serves development, because a country cannot exist without proper transport. We would like to see a proper transport system. For heaven's sake, Sir, I want the Minister to use these funds to great advantage.

5.05 p.m.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, I will be brief. Transport in any country at all in the world has to be subsidised by the taxpayers. Let us first establish that. The second point is that in a developing society such as Barbados, it is also very difficult to meet the demands of all of the commuters in the country. If, for example, the Government tomorrow opens an industrial estate in Bath, St. John, the Transport Board, with its limited resources, and the limited amount of buses as they have now, would have to divert buses to Bath in St. John to satisfy those commuters that are coming from Bridgetown. This, I believe, is one of the major problems in the country with the transport system.

We have given the minibuses to the travelling public. We have regularised them. The Government improved its fleet. There are 45 000 motor cars in Barbados, and many people travelling to work by motor cars take their friends to work. Still, there are always problems with commuters.

I believe that Barbadians complain a bit too much. I know this, because I listen to programmes called "Feedback" and "Guttaperk", I pay close attention to them and I know that many of them are well-organised on some occasions, if not all the time. On "Feedback" one evening, a man called in and said that a Transport Board bus was leaving Belleplaine in St. Andrew at 9 o'clock, he got to the terminal only five minutes after nine, and he wondered if the driver or conductor could not have used their discretion and let the bus wait another 10 minutes.

We in Barbados have an approach to work that you are to start for work at 8 o'clock in the morning, not to start to work. I know that in big countries, where they have to punch in, that workers must start at 8 o'clock, on the dot of 8 o'clock. They get out in time, through sleet and snow, to catch a bus to start to work at 8 o'clock, but we still have a lackadaisical approach

to work. If the rain starts to drizzle — not fall heavily, just drizzle — even the manager or the owner of the firms will tell you that the rain is falling, so he is not going to open at 8 o'clock, furthermore the workers. These are the attitudes, but in the meantime, we are examining our overseas neighbours, and we are introducing measures that are in keeping with the international scene in a small country with limited resources.

I have said on the floor of this House, on more than one occasion, that, if it was possible, I would like to take a thousand Barbadians a week, put them in the airplane, and let them go to Trinidad in the south, to Jamaica in the north to see what is happening in those countries, and compare them, because we complain too much. Then, they, would see the difference.

Can you imagine Barbadians getting a bus at 2 o'clock in the morning? I run and walk around the Garrison five times on mornings. It would take me four days to get from one end of Barbados to the other, if Barbados is 21 miles long. I have seen Barbadians, who could take a leisurely walk, which is good exercise, stand up and wait for a bus. The minibus passes and the Transport Board bus passes, and they would then complain that they cannot get a bus on time because the bus was too full.

What is the Minister asking for? An additional \$3 million to help carry through the Transport Board until the 31st of March? I believe that part of these funds are to pay for the increase in wages. Is that correct? Do you hear what it is for? It is for an increase in wages and part of the \$3 million is to pay the wages which were negotiated by the Union.

But you will raise the question of dead people, furthermore something that is living. You cannot help it, that is your function, and that is why I told my colleague not to say a word but let me introduce the Resolution. I knew you would talk nonsense, because you do not know enough. If you would pay enough attention to your subject matters, then we would not have to give you the information.

Let me tell you something. A clever Minister does not give you a long drawn out introduction. A clever Minister gives you a few words and let you butt your head against the wall. That is why my colleague in the Senate, the Minister of Health, when he was dealing with the St. George's Medical School — just to digress for a moment — was placed in the position he was in. I would have never given a statement. I would have simply introduced the Bill and let you all do what you have to do. I would then tear you up, because you did not remember the things you were committed to. That is your trouble.

Asides.

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: I can talk about the St. George's Medical School, I am not like you. I can say that the maids, the receptionists, and the security men must get transport to Speightstown. I can talk about it. I could get around it.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Will you put cadavers on the bus too?)

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Well, you are one and you are always on the bus. You are the ideal cadaver. You would be the ideal thing for anybody to perform anatomy on....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please, please, please!

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, part of the \$3 million is to pay wages. We all know that as we come to the end of the financial year, a number of money Resolutions come down to meet the expenses before the end of the financial year. This is a known fact, this is not anything new that the Barbados Labour Party Government is now introducing. I tried to get the Resolution through without a debate, because in two weeks' time you are going to be talking about the Transport Board again, and you will be saying the same things all over. I would have kept my thrust for that occasion, not for this evening.

As far as the Member for St. Michael South is concerned, I know him so well. I only have to introduce an old friend of mine to the political arena, and when he hears the name, he will tremble. Anytime he hears that D-O-N is in St. Michael South arguing about E-R-S-K-I-N-E, he starts to tremble. From the time he heard that name he gave a bad speech, filled with irrelevancy.

I am going to advise my colleague — do not even worry to wind up. What do you have to reply to? A lot of irrelevancies from the Member for St. Michael West? The Member for Christ Church West Central did not even know that the Resolution was before him. The Member for St. Michael North has always been a dying political figure, so we pay his speech no attention. You do not have to reply.
5.15 p.m.

Do you want to know what the money is for? It is to meet additional expenses which resulted from increased wages, and that is the end of the story. Put the Question, Sir.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to be distracted by the irrelevancies in which the honourable Members on that side have engaged themselves. I am a little amused by the speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford). He reminds me of King Dyal,

particularly in his dress today, purple tie, dingy white suit! He does not have his pipe, that is the only difference.

I am going to address myself to the substance of the debate, which has to do with the allocation of \$3 million to the Transport Board for the purposes of meeting its expenditures up until the end of the financial year.

The appropriation to the Transport Board was \$10 million and the wages negotiations recently concluded added slightly in excess of \$3 million to our payroll. An accumulated deficit in the PAYE and National Insurance contributions, which we have accelerated this year, has further drawn down on our operating resources. We have sought to pay them off, and, as a Government Statutory Corporation, we feel we ought to be setting an example, rather than using the National Insurance contributions and the PAYE as a crutch to support the inefficiencies of the transport service. We believe we have a responsibility to make sure that the contributions due to the Government are current, and we have been doing that to the extent that our resources would allow.

That, coupled with the increase in our payroll, has made a significant impression on the total capital resources available to finance the Board during 1983-84, and it is to meet those requirements that the \$3 million is for. There is no mystery. As a matter of fact, I believe that when the final story is written, the Transport Board would be in a position to announce a substantial reduction in the levy requirements when we compare it against past years.

Honourable Members have addressed some questions. The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) in his typical, reckless style, attributed to me words which I have never spoken in or outside this Chamber. He attributed words to the effect that I said I was going to clean the Augean stables and heads would roll. I have never made that statement either in or outside of this House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member will give way, on a point of elucidation, Sir: If it is that they have reported him wrongly and the voice I heard was wrong, I will apologise to the honourable Member, but I saw in the Press that the honourable Member had said heads would roll. I thought I heard the honourable Member in a VOB interview making the statement. It may be that he does not remember, or I heard wrongly. I will apologise to the honourable Member.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I remember what you said at Welchman Hall, and that is what is important. I surely can recall that, and in addition, I have it carefully preserved on tape for posterity, and to listen to it.

He mentioned that we needed to offer explanations for changes which we have made in the professional staff at the Transport Board. I believe that, on any number of occasions, I have pretty forthrightly and directly spoken to the public of Barbados and given them the reasons why I thought it necessary, when I assumed responsibility for the Transport Board in this country, to make the kind of changes that have been made. I do not believe I need to repeat my reasons. Those persons who are interested and genuinely concerned about understanding the rationale for those changes have already been informed, and I believe that the public of Barbados, in the final analysis, if not at the moment, will accept the wisdom of the changes which I made.

I further feel that, as a Government, we owe it to the Transport Board to deal with it in more precise management terms. We have to be more considerate of its organisational requirements. The tendency to rely upon short term initiatives, taken perhaps in the heat of the moment, and for the wrong reasons in many cases, is not, in my view, doing service to what, I am sure, will turn out to be one of the most important statutory corporations in the island.

The transport service is indispensable to the social and economic development of Barbados. It moves people backwards and forwards, to and from their jobs, it plays a significant part in the recreational infrastructure, and the honourable Member for St. Michael West himself has alluded to the fact that each year he rents several of the Transport Board buses to take several of the constituencies of the Democratic Labour Party on an excursion. (He pays).

I believe that when you consider this, you will appreciate why it is necessary for the Transport Board to be given what I consider to be a fair and reasonable deal. It does not do anyone any service to come in here and seek to talk about Seddons or the bad engines. That is history. We know that the Democratic Labour Party presided over the dark days of the Transport Board and made a number of wrong decisions for the wrong reasons. That is history.

What I propose to consider now is the present and the future. I should like to point out that within the next couple of weeks we will have installed 200 fare boxes on the Transport Board fleet. We have 100 operating at the moment, another 100, I believe, are now in the island, and they will be installed within the next two weeks. That will pretty near complete the roster of the running buses at the Transport Board.

The revenue intake, so far as we have been able to monitor it, on specialised routes will show a significant upturn when compared with receipts taken by the conventional method. The Transport Board's fare boxes form

one part of an integrated security system for revenue intake. One of the reasons why the Transport Board has suffered in relation to its revenue intake is because it has not been as careful with its security measures, in so far as the fares are concerned, as it ought to have been. We have identified that as a major consideration, and we have taken the necessary steps to implement an efficient security system that will bring the fare from the passenger's hand straight into a non-touch fare handling system. What we propose to install will be revenue accounting machines that will count, sort and bag all of the money, so that the necessity for a number of personnel to touch it will be substantially reduced. 5.25 p.m.

We know that there are some members of the Transport Service who are not as careful to bear in mind the legitimate ownership of the fare as we would like. Even with the fare boxes, we have had to take disciplinary measures against conductors who put paper bags or plastic bags over the fare boxes, announce to the public that the fare boxes are out of service, and proceed to collect the money in a conventional way, that is, using another plastic bag in which to collect fares. This is not a myth. Such persons have been disciplined.

I would like to announce to the public that under no circumstances can a fare box be out of service. The nature of a fare box is such that there is nothing that can go wrong with it to prevent it from receiving fares.

Some persons have been identifying the fact that the money platform occasionally loses its tension and breaks off as a sufficient reason to declare a box out of service. I have issued instructions to the Transport Board that under no circumstances must a fare box be declared as inoperative. If it is on a bus, it can receive revenue; and if there is a defect, it can be corrected by the fare box technician at the time when he is extracting the revenue. Therefore, the conductor who is observed to be receiving any fares through any other means than through the fare box is in breach of the standing orders of the Transport Board. Passengers need to be aware of this.

As I indicated, this is part one of a total security system. We have begun to install a Counting and Sorting Department, with the appropriate security measures at the Transport Board. This area will be restricted to authorised personnel of the Board only. When we put all these measures together, I am confident that there will be a significant positive upturn in the revenues of the Transport Board.

We have recently been examining another important need at the Transport Board, the need to have a more conscious programme of controlling expenditure. Old attitudes die hard, and it has not been easy for us to institute a programme of zero overtime, particularly in

the mechanical area, but we have cut down the need for overtime by in excess of \$1.5 million in the last year, and we have done that because we have been able to study the situation.

We realise that the inefficient programme of Saturday — time and half; Sunday — double time; and holidays — triple time, is not really a programme that is appropriate in an all-hours transport service. This is an area that we will seek to raise with the Barbados Workers' Union again on the next occasion, because we believe that persons who work in the transport service, mechanics, drivers, conductors and other personnel, since they work in a very critical and essential public service, with no fixed hours, should be required to work

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order: I do not think it is fair that the Minister should be addressing the House without a quorum. I really do not think so. I draw it to your attention that the House should be allowed a quorum.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Let the bell be rung.

The bell was rung and a quorum formed.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: We believe, as I was making the point, that the staff in the mechanical section of the Transport Board should be on the same programme as drivers and conductors, so that would eliminate the need for overtime. In any event, we have reduced it; and we propose to keep it reduced.

One of the serious problems at the Transport Board is that the present bus-to-employee ratio at the Transport Board is 1:8. In other words, there are eight persons to one bus at the Transport Board. In efficiently run transport services, the ratio is closer to 1:2. This means that, for all practical purposes, there are far more people employed in the Transport Board system than the system can support, and the only way we can continue to keep those persons employed is if we are prepared to close our eyes to an enormous subsidy each year.

I understand my mandate to be the efficient running of the transport service. It cannot be run efficiently with one bus to eight persons, and we will have to find a way, as painlessly as possible, to get closer to what is considered a reasonable ratio of employees to buses.

We have been very careful in so far as the dislocation of workers at the Transport Board is concerned. Over the last year, since I have taken responsibility, we have made some structural changes at management level. We have reduced a considerable number of posts, but we have not, so far, interfered with the lower echelons of the staff. I do not believe that it is going to be possible

to ignore the fact much longer that some adjustments would need to be made at that rung in order for the Transport Board not to have to come in here and call for supplementaries of the magnitude which I have just described.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North is saying that he will remember that, and I have no doubt that he will. He calls for efficiency in the Transport Service out of one side of his mouth; but he is telling me that if we attempt to make it efficient, he is going to go out and castigate us for making it efficient. You are damned if you do, and damned if you don't!

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: Mr. Chairman, I am surprised to hear the honourable Minister say that. I have not spoken about that particular matter. I cannot see how he can accuse me of going out to castigate the Government, *sotto voce* or otherwise. I understood the honourable Member to be a truthful person. I will have to revise my view of him.

5.35 p.m.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member for St. Michael North said *sotto voce*: "I will remember that." Anyhow, Sir, those are two of the significant areas where we have to bear in mind the need for adjustments if we are going to make the Transport Board what it needs to be.

To be safe, I can promise the public of Barbados that not later than September 1, this year the first carefully prepared printed bus schedule in the Island. I am not talking about things written down on a foolscap paper; I am talking about a schedule placed in the hands of each commuter so that he will know precisely when a bus is going to leave the terminal, what time it is estimated to pass his particular point of embarkation, and what time he is supposed to reach his destination.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West will not be able to understand this very complex matter, and the mechanics of implementation will prove difficult for him to cope with, but I promise that that will be in effect no later than September 1, and do not be surprised if you see it by June. This is the kind of thing we are doing at the Transport Board, and I believe that the public will appreciate these measures when they are implemented. Right now we have buses that leave when they feel like, if they feel like, go where they feel like, because we have a number of personnel who operate under the old system, and people who are laws unto themselves, and any request for a change of *modus operandi* is met with a fierce measure of resistance.

I do not want the public to believe that it is easy for us to transform the Transport Board into what it ought to be, because the level of resistance to any

programme of change is fantastic. Many Ministers before me have been frustrated in their attempt to introduce fare boxes. I believe they had gone as far as to bring fare boxes to Barbados, but, because of recalcitrance and indifference in the Transport Board, they were never put in place. We are fortunate now to have them in place, and even although the public may at first have been apprehensive about them, the fact is that a conductor was severely reprimanded by the passengers last week because he went to the back of the bus and proceeded to collect fares, at the back. Passengers told him that is *passe*, to try and get himself up to the front and collect fares in the way they ought to be collected.

When we introduced fare boxes, I heard a caller on "Feedback" say that the front steps are different from the back steps, that the front steps were made for going up and the back steps were made for coming down. I would have thought that steps are steps, and you can either go up them or come down them, but this passenger actually said it is dangerous because the back steps were designed for coming out and the front steps were designed for going in, and therefore the fare boxes ought to have been in the back. I heard that with my own ears.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North in particular talked about the bus service in Eden Lodge. The fact is that the Transport Board is perhaps offering too much service at the moment, and that is one of the reasons why people on certain essential routes suffer for lack of buses. We have buses going into places where buses have never gone in the history of transportation service in Barbados. We have buses going up St. Albans Hill, through Baywoods, buses going into Macaroni Village, Ginger Works, Dark Hole, Rock Hall, the Whim, Indian Ground, Checker Hall, Connell Town, Northumberland and places like that. We have buses going not once a day or once a week, but buses going up there almost on an hourly basis, and these are some of the facts that the public have to understand. Barbados has a very efficient transport service.

I lived in New York for many years, and when I got off the bus at Fulton and Reid, I had to walk about fifteen blocks to get home. Nobody felt any responsibility to make sure that a bus took me to my door, and these are the things that we in Barbados are getting. I believe we have to come to the realisation that, in order to provide that level of service, it is going to cost money.

I do not believe, for example, that we can afford to put as many buses into Lodge Hill as go into Lodge Hill now. The honourable Member is complaining, but we have buses going into Lodge Hill almost every fifteen minutes. We have buses that go to Eden Lodge, down in there by the Soroptomist's Village and turn around, and there are minibuses that operate on the Lodge Hill

route to supplement whatever the Transport Board does. We have a fifteen minute service to Wanstead and Holders Green. Buses go to Holders Green on a fifteen minute basis. These are things that the public has to realise; and they must expect that if they want that level of service, they will have to pay for it.

We have buses going from Speightstown to Oistins almost on an all night basis. Buses go down to the Heywoods Village. The Transport Board is not operating as it used to operate. A team from the Transport Board, went to Heywoods Village and spoke to management in order to be able to structure a service that would service those workers from Heywoods going south-bound.

With respect to the school bus service, we co-ordinate with all the schools. I personally spoke with the Headmaster of St. Lucy's Secondary School, my old friend, Darrell Jordan, and I asked him how the service was to St. Lucy's Secondary School, because I can recall that, some time ago, at 10 o'clock in the morning you could find St. Lucy's Secondary School children all about in Westmoreland. I myself instructed the Transport Board to put on a service across Highway 2 going through Baywoods, coming down St. Silas, stopping at St. James Secondary School, going from St. James Secondary School to Alexandra, then on to the Coleridge/Parry, and ultimately terminating at the St. Lucy's Secondary School. That Service is a loop service that was never in place before the latter part of 1983. I have checked with the headmaster, Mr. Jordan, and he said that the children are getting to School well before 9 o'clock.

From the Alleyne School, which was always a source of complaint, we have received a letter from the headmaster congratulating the Transport Board on the kind of service it is now putting on, which allows his students to be properly serviced. The same goes for St. Joseph Secondary School. That bus that turned over recently up in Parks Hill was carrying students from St. Joseph Secondary School. That is a special loop service which services those routes where the students live in clusters.

Now children go home and tell their parents that they cannot get a bus. The Deputy General Manager of the Transport Board went to Lodge School, which used to be heard on "Feedback" all the time as a source of complaint. He himself made a journey to Lodge School, sat down and observed the buses. The first bus came at 3 o'clock and went back out half empty. The students continued to play football until the last bus came, and all of them could not hold on the last bus, and ultimately, some had to be left behind. That is what they do, and then they go home and tell their parents it was for lack of bus service. The fact is that they opted to take the last bus which is a habit that Barbadians have adopted.

We put on an early bus in Belleplaine, around minutes to 5.45, because passengers used to complain. The next day we put on an early bus, everybody opted to catch the bus behind the early bus, and the early bus was leaving empty. That is what happens. People say they want a service, and when the service is put on and they recognise that they have a back up, they sleep a little later and wait to catch the back up service, and are left. They then go to work and tell the boss that it was the Transport Board. And the service has been so rotten in the past that it is possible for the managers to believe that the Transport Board is responsible whenever people saunter into work late.

5.45 p.m.

I am not saying that the transport service is perfect – it is far from perfect, but it has significantly improved over what it used to be. We have a substantially upgraded fleet of Mercedes and Leyland buses which, from a mechanical point of view make the service far more reliable. We are enforcing the standing orders of the Transport Board, and that, too, has had a significant impact on the level of service offered.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North said he is not in favour of mini-buses. He did not say it in those words, but that is what you meant, because he said that he is in favour of a centralized service; he is not in favour of fragmentation. That means that he is not in favour of mini-buses and it means that he would like to see the 195 people in Barbados, who earn their living driving mini-buses, going back on the starvation line, and the passengers who they serve inconvenienced.

Mr. P. M. GREAVES rose.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order. Two honourable Members are on their feet. On what does the honourable Member rise?

Mr. P. M. GREAVES: On a point of elucidation. The honourable Member is purporting to interpret what I said in a way in which I did not even say it or intend it. I did say that I believe in a centralized service. This is not to say that I do not support the mini-bus system, because we do need the mini-bus system. I do not want him saying that I said we do not need the mini-bus system, because I am not saying that. I am saying now that I am in favour of it.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Your point is taken. Please continue.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Mr. Chairman, I believe that I have said as much as I am prepared to say at this stage. I believe that another occasion will come when we will have an opportunity to lay before the House the very

elaborate and attractive programme we have for the total improvement of the transport service.

Things that have been dreamt about, but have never been implemented. Some people are able to sit down and dream, see things as they are and say: Why? We dream things that never were and ask: Why not? And that is precisely what we have done. We have asked.....

Aside.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: No, no, no. George Bernard Shaw. The honourable Member for St. Michael West would not be able to deal with that. This is a classical matter. I think he should stay out of this.

Mr. Chairman, there are many things I will tell the House in due course about the improved programme we are bringing to public transportation in Barbados. The public has begun to feel just the harbinger of better things to come. And when they are here, I believe that even the honourable member for St. Michael North will have to bite his tongue and say what a marvellous Government this Barbados Labour Party Government has provided.

The question that Head 42 stand part 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. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of one money Resolution in Committee of Supply, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

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

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. S. CRAIG: Sir, that brings us to the end of Government Business for today.

I beg to move that this Sitting do now stand adjourned until, Tuesday, March 13, 1984 at 12.00 o'clock noon.

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

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

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