
THE

House of Assembly Debates

(OFFICIAL REPORT)

SECOND SESSION OF 1981 – 86

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, November 6, 1984

Pursuant to the adjournment, the House of Assembly met at 12.20 p.m. o'clock on Tuesday, November 6, 1984.

PRESENT

His Honour C. L. Bolden, LL.B., (Speaker)
His Honour R. E. Brathwaite, (Deputy Speaker)
Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams, Q.C., M.A., (Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Planning)
Hon. H. deB. Forde, Q.C., M.A., LL.B.
Hon. Miss B. A. Miller, (Minister of Education)
Hon. L. B. Brathwaite, (Minister of Housing and Lands)
Mr. J. G. Odle, B.Sc., (Chairman of Committees)
Hon. DeL. O. Bradshaw, (Minister of Labour, Social Security, Sport and Community Services)
Mr. L. L. Sisnett, (Parliamentary Secretary)
Mr. L. A. Weekes.
Hon. A. Truss.

Prayers were read by Father D. Stapleton.

Hon. V. L. Johnson and Mr. L. E. Sandiford entered the Chamber and took their seats.

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is in session.

MINUTES

Mr. SPEAKER: It has been drawn to my attention that there is a printer's error on page 1 of the Minutes of Tuesday, October 30, 1984. If there are no objections, and if the Leader of the House so cares, he may move that the first line under "Announcements" be deleted from the Minutes.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the first line under "Announcements" in the

Minutes of Tuesday, October 30, 1984 be deleted, and that subject to any other errors or omissions, these Minutes be confirmed.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that, Sir.

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

PAPERS LAID

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, Government Notices have not yet arrived and I will seek the leave of the House at a later stage of the session to introduce them when they arrive.

There is also a Resolution coming down for \$807 000 to supplement the CERO vote. It is a very important vote, and is relevant to the disaster which affected the country during the past few days.

I will also be seeking leave of the House to have the matter done later in the day.

Mr. H. A. Blackman and Mr. W. O. Franklin entered the Chamber and took their seats.

NOTICES OF QUESTIONS

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 15 standing in the name of the honourable Member for St. George North re the Administration of the USAID Scheme for housing.

Mr. J. G. ODLE: Mr. Speaker: To ask the Minister of Housing and Lands:

Will the Minister state —

(1) the total sum allocated to Barbados under the USAID housing programme for onlending to house owners or prospective house owners in Barbados, and the amount of such funds presently available for lending to low income earners, identifying, in particular, whether any such funds are held by the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company,

(2) the names of the banks or other lending institutions participating in the USAID scheme and the amounts allocated to, taken up by, and disbursed in unit loans by each of them for house repairs or house construction,

(3) the criteria mandated under the USAID scheme for unit loans, any specific instructions by Government to any lending institutions under the scheme and any discretion beyond such criteria or instructions available to the lending institutions in processing applications for unit loans,

(4) whether such criteria, instructions or discretion allow

(a) the lending institutions to require a guarantor of any loan to deposit with the lender, for the duration of the loan, a sum equal to the amount of the loan,

(b) in particular, the Barbados Mortgage Finance Company to require from applicants, before applications are considered, detailed plans for loans as low as \$1 500 to help to purchase or complete wooden houses,

(5) whether Government will carry out immediate investigations into the administration of the USAID housing programme to ensure the fullest benefit for those for whom the scheme exists, and

(6) whether Government will consider placing a sum of money with the National Housing Corporation for onlending to low income earners for house repairs and house construction?

Mr. SPEAKER: Question No. 16 by the honourable Member for St. Michael South re non-contributory old age pensions for Barbadian seamen.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Mr. Speaker, to ask the appropriate Minister:

1. Is the Minister aware that a number of Barbadian seamen who have attained the qualifying age are ineligible for non-contributory old age pension on the ground that they have not lived in Barbados for an aggregate of not less than twelve years after attaining the age of fifty years?

2. Inasmuch as these seamen have merely gone to their workplaces at sea and then returned to their permanent residence, which they have always maintained in Barbados, would the Minister explain why Barbadian workers in this category are discriminated against by being denied the non-contributory old age pension in the evening of their years?

3. Will the Minister state what steps he proposes to take so that these Barbadian seamen will become eligible to receive the non-contributory old age pension?

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, before moving the suspension of Standing Orders, I should like to give notice of a number of matters which have just come. I indicated earlier that the matters were not here and that I would give notice of them when they came.

PAPERS

Hon. L.B. BRATHWAITE: I am commanded to lay:

Report and Audited Financial Statements of the Barbados Marketing Corporation for the year ending 1984.

12.30 p.m.

GOVERNMENT NOTICES

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Sir, I beg to give notice of:

Resolution to grant the sum of \$60 000 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1984—85, Part I — Current as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1984—85, No. 16, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

Resolution to grant the sum of \$2 061 355 from the Consolidated Fund and to place it at the disposal of the Government to supplement the Estimates 1984—85, Part II —Capital, as shown in the Supplementary Estimates 1984—85, No. 17, which form the Schedule to the Resolution.

A Bill to amend the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institution Act.

(Mr. B. M. Taitt entered the Chamber and took his seat.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to announce the following:-

His Excellency the Acting Governor-General has the honour to inform the Honourable House of Assembly that on the advice of the Prime Minister, he has appointed The Honourable Aaron Truss, M.P. to be Minister of State, with effect from 6th November 1984 until further notice.

A. S. CATO
Acting Governor-General.

FIRST READING OF BILLS

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Mr. L. L. SISNETT, the following Bill was read a first time:

A Bill to amend the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institution Act.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BUSINESS

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that Standing Orders 6, 16, 18, 20, 42(5), 43, and 44 be suspended for the remainder of the day.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if we can get some assurance from the Government side that other items on the Order Paper, such as Questions, would not suffer as a result of this suspension of the Standing Orders.

I have a question of flooding.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that is appropriate at this time. The honourable Member must not seek to mislead this Honourable Chamber. There are no Questions available for answer today, so, therefore, there can be no assurances given in respect of Questions.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I am sorry, Sir, I did not hear that there were no Questions available for answering today. I have a question relating to flooding a very important matter, which I thought would be coming up.

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member cannot do that. The only way the honourable Member can ask for an assurance that Questions be answered is if when we had reached that stage on the agenda, it was indicated that those Questions are available for answering. No Questions are available for answering today.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: Subject to the rights of the Opposition, I heard that done on many occasions.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Opposition cannot create answers to Questions when there are no Questions to be answered.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Speaking to the motion for the suspension of the Standing Orders, I point out that there is no Private Members' Business, nor are there any Questions to be answered today, and therefore the question of the rights of the Opposition cannot possibly arise.

This Opposition does not ask Questions, does not put down Private Members' Notices, accuses the Government of not doing the people's business, and holds what is called "People's Parliament"; it has only put down one-quarter of the Questions that were put down during the five-year period that the Barbados Labour Party was last

in opposition, it has not sought in eight years virtually to debate any Private Members' Notice to the end, and the suspension of Standing Orders is merely a formality to conceal the fact that the Opposition does not seriously contribute to the constructive side of the debate in Parliament. When we were in Opposition and Mr. Talma used to rise every Tuesday to suspend the Standing Orders, it was to stop us from dealing with the Private Members' Notices that were used to be put down, as anybody who reads the old agendas can see.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) wishes to draw attention to the fact that for sometime, going back to when he was in Government, certain people in his constituency are liable to be flooded out, and on September 4 he asked a Question that something be done about the drainage for the people in Bay Land. I am going to put his case for him better than he can put it. That is what he wants to tell the Press. He can show the Press where on the Order Paper on September 4 he asked for drainage to be done in Bay Land, and that now it is flooded. He can also point out that when he was in Government that he did not get the drainage.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Sir, speaking on the motion, the honourable Member who just sat down said: "This Opposition does not ask questions". Sir, unless there is something fundamentally wrong with the Order Paper which was sent to me Sir, I look on this Order Paper and I see there are 14 Questions on the Order Paper.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of order.

Mr. SPEAKER: Two honourable Members are on their feet. Will both Members please take their seat.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member is misrepresenting what I said. I have just made a speech, the honourable Member has deliberately misquoted from it, and I submit that is a breach of Rules. I said that this Opposition does not ask Questions and then went on to point out that, compared to the previous Opposition, it only asks one-quarter of the number. That is what I said.

Asides.

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member continue his speech.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Yes Sir.

He cannot say that I am misrepresenting a statement of fact. Do you mean that he wishes to get up and say that all of us heard something and that is not what he said. He said, "This Opposition does not ask Questions",

and he was making a speech to demonstrate that this Opposition had not been doing its job as an Opposition. I am saying that the Record shows that there are 14 Questions on the Order Paper. It is therefore quite wrong — I am going on as to the suspension of Standing Orders, Sir — to say that he was misrepresented.

Furthermore, Sir, he said that the honourable Member.....

Mr. SPEAKER: We are not going to debate that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No Sir, I am not debating that speech.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am going to curtail this argument now. I am not going to entertain any more discussion on Questions. There are no Questions to be answered today and I will not waste the House's time debating something that is not.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: We are not debating.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Will the honourable Member take his seat.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As Your Honour wishes.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak on the motion for suspension of the relevant Standing Orders as read out by the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite).

Two weeks ago when this House was summoned here, there were two items of Government Business on the Order Paper, both of which were withdrawn. Today there is only one Item of Government Business. And every week we have to do business in here.....
12.40 p.m.

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not come under the suspension of Standing Orders and I am not going to allow you to go any further.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: The point I am trying to make, Mr. Speaker.....

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to allow you to go any further.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Speaker, could I make my point that is relevant to the suspension of Standing Orders?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to allow you to go any further.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: As you so rule, Sir.

The question that those several Standing Orders be suspended for the remainder of today's sitting was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE VESTING IN THE
BARBADOS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION PARCELS OF LAND
AT BRIGHTON, ST. MICHAEL

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): Mr. Speaker, I rise to a point of order on this Order No. 1. Notice was given of this Order on the 16th October, 1984. It appeared on the Order Paper on the 23rd October, 1984 as Order No. 14. It was not debated on that day, but on the 30th October, which was the next meeting of the House, this Order did not appear on the Order Paper. Now, without any notice at all, it has re-appeared as Order No. 1.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am speaking to you, Sir, because you will have to give us some direction on this particular matter. I am submitting that since Order No. 14 did not appear on the Order Paper on the 30th, which was the last meeting of this House, the presumption was that Order No. 14 had been withdrawn or had been otherwise disposed of. A careful search of the Minutes does not give us any assistance in this regard. This Order now re-appears on the Order Paper as Order No. 1, and I am drawing it to your attention. Maybe Your Honour has some information which has not been divulged to us on this side.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I would like to enlighten.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The Minutes of Tuesday, the 30th day of October, 1984, which have been approved by this Honourable House, clearly states that items were omitted from the Order Paper because of a printer's error.

Over and above that, if notice of a motion or any matter is given in this Chamber, it can only be disposed of in one or two ways. One, if it has been dealt with by the Chamber throughout its entirety, or two, if a motion has been moved by the mover of that motion to have it withdrawn from the Order Paper. Neither of those instances has taken place in respect of what now appears as Order No. 1 on today's Order Paper. Therefore, I rule it is still a substantive Order of this Honourable House and can be disposed of in the normal course of events.

The honourable Member may continue with Order No. 1.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your enlightened ruling.

This Resolution seeks to vest two parcels of land in the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation. That area became open for development as a result of Government's enlightened action to put in the access road, the Spring Garden Highway.

I have heard it said that it was an expensive area for development and that Government had spent a lot of money in the construction of that area and the acquisition of land down there. It is true that, as a result of the lifting of the Town Planning Order in that area at a time previous to the coming into being of the Barbados Labour Party Government in 1976, the Government was then faced with a situation where properties like that of Little Page close on to the roundabout at Brighton went up considerably in terms of cost. Because since the area was freed from Town Planning control and the Order was given from above, the Government of the day, it meant that the owners were able to sell or develop the land and to do whatever they wished to do with it. Before that there was a state of control.

I have heard, and I was amazed when I heard it, that the previous Government had in mind the construction of that highway. If they had it in mind, they certainly changed their mind on it, because you could not have had in mind the construction of a highway at Spring Garden and at the same time lift the control Order which was placed upon developments in that area, thereby opening the flood gate for people to charge any unreasonable sum of money for lands that were owned in that area.

What is particularly encouraging is the fact that with the opening up of those lands, which would not otherwise be considered as suitable for industrial development, by the construction of the road, they were opened for industrial development. The pressure is today great upon Government not only to release the land which it has to the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, but to find more land for people to put up factories in that area, thereby creating employment for hundreds of people in this country. Therefore, when the idea of the building of the highway at Spring Garden was conceptualised by this Government, it was certainly a very noble idea, because we were able to make it possible for factories to be built in areas that were formerly inaccessible. It is felt that, as a result of the factories to be constructed, many jobs will be provided for people who might not otherwise be able to find jobs.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that.
12.50 p.m.

Mr. L. A. WEEKES (St. Michael North West): Mr. Speaker, I am not rising in opposition to this Bill since I have been able to observe what development, so far, has

taken place there. I want to look at the acquisition of this land in a different context.

I believe that this is an opportunity for the Government to give a clear indication of the physical development of the Spring Garden/Brighton area. These parcels of land will inevitably be released to manufacturing in the area. As a result, looking at the Schedule to this Bill, there are certain areas that will create certain problems in this development, and I think the Industrial Development Corporation may have to look at some of these areas seriously.

Some of the areas abutting this land are Vanterpool, part of the Spring Garden Highway and the Brighton area. I am not trying to create any debate on the drainage problem as such, but certainly the present weather has highlighted to a certain extent the serious problems that can develop in these low-lying areas. And to the back of this whole development, there is a housing complex which, if not taken into consideration, this development or future development could be seriously affected.

One has also to take into serious consideration that this development will bring in industries which will employ people. As the Minister said, if you want to have a proper industry as well, you must also be able to provide the workers with comfort, and in these areas, I am of the opinion that, if not properly done, there could be damage to some of the property which we are now developing with the Industrial Development Corporation. I therefore ask that that area which is connected to the Brighton section and the Spring Garden section, that access to the whole development, not impeded by any bad drainage system. I think poor drainage has, to some extent, inconvenienced some people getting into that complex.

Since we are using the Spring Garden Highway and since we are developing an industrial complex, the question of access to work by means of motor transport certainly will develop as well. There is only a two-way access to that development, either by the Brighton Road or the Spring Garden Road, and workers ought to be protected from any kind of hazard. If you look at the present condition of the Spring Garden Highway, you have already increased the speed limit, contrary to what is happening in the other industrialized areas, and I also wish to draw attention to the fact that if there is any decrease in accidents or in any serious injury, it certainly did not develop out of people using the road properly, but people being scared to travel on that road, so you will find that fewer pedestrians are using the road, and not as often as they used to. With this IDC development, and with access to the development by way of motor transport, including the Transport Board, I would think that these workers ought to be given an opportunity to

cross these roads properly to get into the development. I think this will create a serious hazard for those people, and I believe the speed limit could be counter-productive in this area and a safety hazard for workers.

The whole area, as far as I can see it, needs to have a clear indication from the Government as to how they intend to develop that area; if they intend to have a complete industrial development from one end to another, or whether they are going to provide an opportunity to make a more congenial and useful development where possibly some playing facilities may be possible. There are serious problems which I believe a development brought into a residential area might create, and I hope that the Minister will indicate what is their position in respect of the whole development of the area.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Speaker, my colleague who just spoke, perhaps because the area is in close proximity and falls within his constituency, was in a much more favourable position to discuss the acquisition of this land *per se* than I and I believe a number of other persons in this House may be. I find myself in a very strange position of not knowing exactly what it is we are vesting in the IDC. For yet another time the Minister has come down here to either acquire land or divest the Government in land, and they have not considered it necessary or desirable to make the plans or the maps available to this House. I have tried to find out exactly what it is we are acquiring. No one has been able to indicate this to me, so, once again, we are in the process of coming down here to vest two parcels of land somewhere down on the Spring Garden Highway to the IDC. I think that that is not acceptable for this Honourable Chamber. This is not the first time that we have raised this question either on acquisition or divesting, and I believe that one would be in a much better position to discuss the matter sensibly and accurately if one knew what it was one was vesting in.

On principle, one could not question the decision of a Government to vest some of this land into the Industrial Development Corporation, because, on the face of it, the IDC ought to be able to make proper use of the land. After all, the Democratic Labour Party was able, through a systematic programme of taking industries to the people, to establish some ten industrial parks in this country that made a substantial difference, especially between the period 1965 and 1975, as to whether the people in this country would live or whether they would die. But while introducing this Resolution, the Minister went on to utter what I considered to be fulsome words, talking about the establishment of factories for people to get work. I want to say categorically on the floor of this House that no new work has been created in any factory that the IDC has responsibility for in the last year.

1.00 p.m.

One of the best kept secrets in this country has to do with the colossal waste of money which has been poured into that area of the Spring Garden Highway. Mr. Speaker, it would come as a shock to you to know that the land acquired by the IDC along the Spring Garden Highway has seen the wastage of \$4 million.

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not going to discuss the Spring Garden Road or the IDC in this Resolution. Let us deal with the acquisition of land along the Spring Garden Road.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: With respect, Sir, this Resolution vests land in the IDC.

Mr. SPEAKER: But the substance is not the IDC. The question is the acquisition of land for vesting.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, I am not discussing the policy of the IDC, because I would need four days for that. I am discussing what use they put the land to. If Your Honour will bear with me, I will demonstrate that land has been vested in the IDC along the Spring Garden Highway and it was vested for a specific project, and some \$4 million later the project is stillborn. Anyone who passes on the Spring Garden Highway where we are about to vest more land apparently in the IDC will be aware, or may not be aware, that that accumulation of buildings on the left as you are going south account for \$4 million of the taxpayers' money. What I would like the Minister to do, therefore, is to explain to this House that the vesting of this land is not coming *ex post facto*. I would like to know if the land that is being acquired forms part of the complex that has been constructed.

Mr. SPEAKER: You are now on the right road.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Sir, you know with your guidance I always will be on the right track.

I wish to know whether the land which has been vested in the IDC in the past, or whether if this land which we are vesting now has already been built on and forms part of that complex, or if this is an additional bit of land that is going to be vested in the IDC. Furthermore, I would like the Minister to tell me whether the Industrial Development Corporation has a comprehensive policy for the use of new lands which have been vested in it during the last five years.

Lands have been vested in the IDC up and down this country. I state again, for example, that a bit of land costing more than \$2 million has been vested in the IDC in the Six Men's area, and that it is very clear to any industrialist, to any manufacturer, to anyone who is remotely familiar with the industrial development and planning of this country that not a single factory is likely

to locate on that spot in the foreseeable future. Even when the land has been offered to manufacturers practically free of rent, there has not been a single manufacturer that has considered it necessary and/or desirable to locate in that area for which a sum exceeding \$2 million was paid.

The honourable Member comes to this Chamber today to vest some lands in the IDC. Let him tell us what is the policy with regard to location of industry which requires the Government to vest even more land in the IDC. Let him tell us if, in fact, this vesting is to correct a mischief which has occurred. Let him and the Minister responsible for Industry and the Government as a whole tell the people of Barbados the full and complete truth concerning the large amount of lands that have been vested in the IDC, and for which no benefit can be seen in this country, for which no benefit has occurred in this country especially during the last year.

The reason why land is vested in the IDC is to create industrial parks. These parks are created so that manufacturers, both inside Barbados and those who will come from outside Barbados, would be able to find a ready place to establish factories and industries of a certain kind, to provide employment for the people of Barbados, to assist in the development of the skills of the people of Barbados, so that in the final analysis the economy of this country can proceed a pace and make preparation for intra-regional and extra-regional trade. I cannot take this opportunity to discuss the catastrophe that has occurred in trade between Barbados and other countries, but I can take this opportunity to discuss the catastrophe that has occurred on the sites that have been vested in the IDC by the Government. It is a calamity, and one of the reasons why the IDC continues to be clothed in righteousness insofar as these matters are concerned is that there is not an enquiring Press in this country on certain matters.

One understands the reason why at least one section of the Press would not wish to enquire into this vesting of land, and indeed certain other practices concerning the vesting of land and the IDC. I can understand, and, Sir, if I told you the details, you would understand why certain sections of the Press would not wish to enquire into these matters, but the rest of the Press in this country can investigate these matters. I say that when an investigation is done it will be seen that it has been virtually catastrophic for the people of Barbados what has been going on in the mismanagement and mis-planning concerning the lands which have been granted to the IDC for development purposes. The scope of this Resolution precludes me from going into greater detail, but I promise this Honourable House and the Government that before long the details of what I speak will be made available to them and to the public of this country.

It is not right for the Minister to come here and ask me to buy a pig in a poke. Blindly we are going to pass a Resolution vesting some land into the IDC. Were it not for the principle which we support, I would have extreme difficulty going into this Resolution; and if the Minister would pay enough attention to the details of his responsibility, he would postpone this Resolution, he would send for the plans and he would indicate in detail what areas of land are being vested in the IDC.

I wish to know, it is important that I know, exactly what it is we are doing before we pass the Resolution. When we pass the Resolution that is the end of the matter, and I am not happy about it. I do not understand how you can come down here time after time and present to us a commitment to purchase or to vest land, and every time we ask for the information we are not able even to get an indication. Sometimes it appears as if we are rude when we seek to do our duty.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said in another place that I have some personal reason for investigating or discussing matters relating to the IDC.

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not come into this place.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Well, Sir, if you knew the details of the vesting of the land, you will see that it does.

Mr. SPEAKER: If the honourable Member has such details, he knows full well how to deal with them. There is always room for Resolutions in this House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Not yet, Sir. I will deal with the matter in due course.
1.10 p.m.

I will rest at this point by saying that the story of the wastage of the money concerning the land that has already been vested in the IDC at Spring Garden is one which needs some explanation from the Government. When a sum in excess of \$4 million has been used in the way that that has been used, the people of Barbados deserve some explanation. I wish the Government, furthermore, to give us further and better particulars as to the use to which this land is going to be put, and the use to which land either close to it or a part of it has been put, the cost of it and whether the Government is still satisfied that, on a cost and benefit analysis, the IDC has performed properly in this particular area.

I am going to leave it at that for the time being. I do not think that circumstances warrant any more detail.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Mr. Speaker, it is always easy to end a speech saying that

there are terrible dark tales to be told and to hint that if only the speaker were allowed to say everything, what a dreadful story would emerge.

The fact is that this land has already been before the House of Assembly for acquisition.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: May we see the plan?)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Send the plan to the honourable Member. This has already been taken possession of by the IDC. Its existence was a great benefit, because this land was basically the ridge land between Brighton Terrace and the old swamp at Brighton. The IDC wished to have a larger space than was available on the level land at Brighton for building the furniture factory, which will give employment to hundreds of Barbadians, and which is going to be the foundations of one of our fastest growing indigenous exports – by “indigenous” I mean exports from factories owned only by Barbadians. The land had to be cut down in order to provide the level space required by the IDC. The IDC got enough money from cutting the land down to meet what was the purchase price of the land. In that area, there was a lot of coral stone, and when the IDC cut it down, the value of the coral stone that it cut down was more than the cost of the cutting, levelling and filling and the making of the factory area. The purchase of this land by the Government, in effect, provided a quarry for the IDC – although that was not the intention – to cut down a lot of land fill and save it from buying marl from private quarries. The whole operation, in fact, was economically a highly successful one, so far as I know.

I am Chairman of the Planning and Priorities Committee, and over a long period of time we have sought to motivate another committee which has charge of making recommendations to the Government on the use of all the land between the Cheapside Market and the end of Spring Garden, that is going right up to the private development, virtually up to the property of the Right Honourable Member for St. John. This committee exists. It has divided the land into, I think, fifty-four identifiable parcels, and it made recommendation that certain of the land to the west of the Farm Housing Area was not suitable, because it did not have an adequate foundation for building factory buildings, and we have set that aside for playing fields. We have not yet constructed the playing fields, because we are hearing submissions from the Barbados Amateur Football Association that it would like to have a big playing field there. We are looking at the matter. We think perhaps we should just build two large playing fields, two cricket ground-sized playing fields. This relates to the land which lies along the two sides of what was formerly Ocean Path.

We also have another parcel which includes what was the Brighton Swamp, which, when Brighton was first settled by human habitation, was the only source of fresh water down there. I have my doubts as to whether that

will be built on, but the IDC took engineering advice, they said that the building could be done successfully, and the building was done all the more successfully because of the existence of this parcel of land that we are discussing today, which the IDC cut down and used as a source of marl and, I believe, even aggregate, although I am not too sure about that – maybe they sold some. I do not carry the details of all that.

There is a little remaining parcel which is occupied by a gentleman who has been there for many years. He did not have title for the land. When we bought the land, we bought it over his head, so to speak. But we are satisfied that he has occupied the land without paying rent for many, many years, and therefore, we are arranging for him to be resited and to have access to the factory space to carry on the little manufacturing operation that he carries on. So the whole area will eventually be levelled out.

If there are any irregularities, I just simply do not know. I observed that the IDC has drained the swamp – it has been reduced to quite a small area where water collects. The recent rains have made it clear that the Spring Garden Road is adequately drained and that it is not causing a hazard to any of the nearby residential neighbourhoods, nor is it causing a hazard to the IDC's operations. I myself feel that Brighton Road is not properly and entirely drained and we need to raise the level of Brighton Road without hazarding the properties to the north or to the south. But Brighton Road always used to have a little water problem, even before the Spring Garden Road was there.

The IDC has built the factory, it is in the process of landscaping the area, and I would have thought that it is a development of which all Barbadians could be proud. Now I am hearing dire warnings, forebodings and hints of dark and sinister secrets. I really want to know about them, if such exist, because I can only say that this is a matter in which we proceeded entirely on advice. There were other things, which, if they had taken place, perhaps the honourable Member could complain of.

There is a parcel of land down there in residential use. Certain people came to the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister and to me and said that they owned or had an option on a parcel of land which the engineers said they could not build on, and they were asking for planning permission for this other residential piece of land to have industrial development on it. I discovered that it was quite untruthful that they have ever got any engineering advice disqualifying the other lands that they owned. Therefore, we were able to preserve the residential character of Brighton Terrace and the cross road that runs through the path – I do not know what it is called.

This land itself, the way the IDC has operated on it, has also been developed in such a way as to preserve the residential character of Brighton Terrace because the IDC has left a buffer between the houses in Brighton Terrace and the edge that it has cut down, below which it is carrying out the industrial development. So you have a residential area, and underneath the residential area, out of sight, adequately screened by trees in one place and by a little grass piece in another, a point of employment for the people in the Farm Housing Area, Edey Village and the other districts.

The kind of development that the former Government enunciated quite early in the 1960s carried factories to the people. It is the same concept that the Government previous to that enunciated in the 1950s and that this Government is happy to carry on. If the honourable Member for St. Michael West has something to say which reflects ill of the handling over of this parcel of land by the Government to the IDC, he should come out and say it, because we are talking about the acquisition.

1.20 p.m.

We divided up the area and every single parcel has been the subject of long, careful and, as far as I can see, sincere discussion at the Planning and Priorities Committee. We are still discussing it, because there must still be, I imagine, plenty of unused divisions of the land between Cheapside and the Spring Garden industrial area. Starting at Cheapside itself, you have a site just north of the General Post Office and you have sites on the Princess Alice Highway that have not yet been allotted. We have taken policy decisions on some; we are prepared to sell some to adjacent owners, we are prepared to sell some to a corporation — offers were made to the Insurance Corporation of Barbados to have a particular spot, we said, "No, have another." We are still in the market for some of those spots. We also have those spots on the new harbour development which all have not been allotted. We have been discussing plans for those, and we had a new proposal coming only this week for an employment generating activity in all of this general area. We also have the spots at Brandons and Indian Ground.

If there is anything to the discredit of the Government on the development of that whole area, I am yet to hear it authenticated. I do not see how you can point your finger at a public officer for incompetence or corruption, or anything other than

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of elucidation. I have listened and he has taken his speech down the road of almost illegal activity. I dealt with in my speech the incompetence arising from a development project that has spent \$4 million. You were not in your place, but the honourable

Members can tell you what I said. The whole concept of having that furniture project was built around a particular project, and that is what I am dealing with.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Is \$4 million a lot to spend on a furniture project — if it is \$4 million? I have not seen the IDC accounts. The IDC is a very economical organization. I know that it took the Government's grant every year and saved enough money out of it to build a building for itself, without calling on the taxpayers. It used to put down fixed deposits and save its money. I am not sure if that is in the best interest of the Government's subvention, and I have said that in here already, but that is not particularly relevant to this debate.

I think that what may have happened is that the honourable Member was formerly a Minister of Industry and he disagreed with the whole concept of the furniture project, so it is an old lick coming in here. He said that we should not have a furniture project, and he is criticising the furniture project indirectly on this basis. I can only presume that something like that has taken place. But it was always the Government's policy that such as the Spring Garden land that was acquired would be used for industrial purposes. We said so when we came in here to acquire this parcel of land in the first place. That was actually in the very acquisition notice, and if the Government is carrying out industrial development, the IDC is our path for doing it.

There are other parcels which the Government does not even own and which we recommend to people. A decision has been taken — I cannot recall if it has reached the Planning and Priorities Committee; if it has not, it will reach there on Friday. Somebody wishes to relocate an operation from Cheapside, and we have indicated where along the Spring Garden Road, because we have always promised that person that we would facilitate him — we think this operation should go.

We are trying to create employment along that road. We want to see some 2500 to 3000 people working between the Pelican and the Harbour Industrial Parks and the industrial area at Spring Garden. We want it to be a working corridor. That is the reason for having a big highway with adequate communications and a big population just within. Left to me, I would do what the honourable Member for St. Andrew (Hon. L. B. Brathwaite) suggested when he was Minister of Health and what the present Minister of Health also has in mind, and build a more efficient mental hospital either in a part of its present site, or on another site altogether, and develop the whole of the 27 acres of the old Jenkinsville Village and Estate for industrial and residential purposes, too. This is a heavily populated part of Barbados. There is a lot of wasted space at Jenkins, which is only a few yards from this property — the outer reaches of the Jenkins Estate are only perhaps some 150 yards from

the outer reaches of this property – and I would develop it, add to the Farm Housing Area and produce even more employment opportunity, if it was appropriate, within another part of the Jenkins compound. This is the Government's attitude towards the area, and I fail to understand what the honourable Member is complaining about, when we know that unemployment is our great problem and the Government is trying to do something about unemployment.

We have discovered that as soon as the IDC puts down factories, that is the incentive and the push for people to open businesses in them. This is what we are doing with this piece of land and I would be happy to do it with other pieces of land nearby. I am sure that the honourable Member for St. Michael North West (Mr. L. A. Weekes) would not want to go on record by any act such as voting against this Resolution and by voting against employment in his constituency. Because I will not fail to tell his constituents when the moment comes that he voted against 800 or 900 of them getting jobs on the land that the Government bought and put a factory on in the Spring Garden Road area.

It is clear that this is a matter which engages my attention often. Industrial development in the area has engaged my attention this week and last week, assisting to bring industries into the northern and western parts of St. Michael. We feel that these are potential employment areas for indigenous entrepreneurs to take advantage of. The background to the Resolution is no more or no less than that, so far as known to me, and I am really very happy to support it.

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this Resolution, because I believe that it is important for the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation to have land vested in it in order to accumulate a land bank for the expansion of the Government's policy in relation to manufacturing.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) wondered what Government policy was all about. The fact is that in 1983 the industrial sector recorded a growth in the manufacturing sector of 3.1%. Our policy, when viewed in direct relation to the growth in the manufacturing sector, has to be compared with the fact that we established clearly in our minds what we intend to do, and that is to vest land as we see fit in order to build up a land bank, because it is important in terms of the physical expansion of the manufacturing sector.

During 1983, the IDC completed an additional 10,637 square metres of factory space, and in 1982 it was half of that. If in 1983 we were able to build 10,637 square metres of factory space it stands to reason that in 1984 we must compulsorily acquire land for the

development of factory space in 1984, 1985, and 1986, that would take us into the 21st century.

In 1983, 8 085 square metres were under construction.

Mr. SPEAKER: We are not debating the development of the IDC. The matter before the House is to transfer land to the IDC. I do not want the debate to go into a discussion of the development and policies of the IDC.
1.30 p.m.

Hon. A. TRUSS: The point I am trying to develop, Mr. Speaker, and I crave your indulgence, is the fact that there is a direct relationship between the compulsory acquisition of land for industrial purposes and the expansion of the IDC at the same time.

Mr. SPEAKER: That may be so, but the substance of the Resolution is the vesting of land in the IDC and not the policies of the IDC.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I was just responding to the point made by the honourable Member for St. Michael West in relation to the policy of this Government and explaining the facts.

Mr. SPEAKER: As I specifically told the honourable Member, I will not allow him to debate the virtues or otherwise of the IDC, and therefore I cannot allow him to do so now.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I understand that, Sir. So I will not be able to tell you, Sir, that the IDC developed two new industrial parks last year, and this is why we need more land this year – to develop two more this year. The infrastructural work has been completed in the northern development section of the new Spring Garden Highway. So if we are developing areas which have already been compulsorily acquired, it stands to reason, Mr. Speaker, with respect, that the lands which we are now trying to compulsorily acquire are for the purpose of further expansion of the programme for the manufacturing sector as the Labour Party Government sees it.

I am not debating the IDC, but what I am trying to establish is that there is a clear link between further compulsory acquisition of land for IDC, because of the development of IDC factories in certain areas, the land bank is diminishing. If the land bank is diminishing we have to acquire more land compulsorily.

Mr. SPEAKER: I do agree that there is a link between the two, but the Rules of this Honourable Chamber do not allow us to move from one into the other that easily, therefore we have to keep within the Resolution before the Chamber.

Hon. A. TRUSS: Thank you, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I would be grateful if you would keep to that Resolution.

Hon. A. TRUSS: I support this Resolution because 15 manufacturing enterprises have received approved status during last year and they must have some place.....

Mr. SPEAKER: The honourable Member must keep within the Resolution. I am not going to allow the honourable Member to do that.

Hon. A. TRUSS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I support this measure.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): Mr. Speaker, I listened with great care to the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt), and after he had made one of his repetitive speeches, I was still at a loss to understand what was his stricture against this Resolution. The only statement which he made that appeared to be a stricture was that \$4 million was wasted in the construction of factory space on the land which is being acquired. He gave no further and better particulars. He has given Your Honour, so far as I know, no notice of those officers whom he alleges were incompetent, and it is probably the easiest thing in a Resolution such as this to make a general statement which conjures up figures without being able to justify an implied stricture.

This land, like some of the other areas of land in this Spring Garden/Brighton area, lends itself quite readily to industrial development. In support of this contention, I will argue that its position in relation to the Bridgetown Port is of crucial importance. Likewise, its position in relation to a main centre of population, the heavily populated areas of St. Michael West and St. Michael North West, not to talk of St. Michael North and St. James South is important. It is therefore easy to draw on a ready pool of manpower to carry out the purposes for which this land is being acquired.

The land also has in its favour a location next to one of the major secondary schools, the St. Leonard's Secondary School, which is geared for providing a large number of people for the work force, particularly in the technological revolution which must come to our country. It is also located near to the major commercial sector, another feature in its favour, and there is ready access to some of the other services that are necessary to support manufacturing development in this area. So I will expect that there will be support for the Government in vesting this land in the Industrial Development Corporation to be used for building factory space for manufacturing, particularly in circumstances where you have

these features and where these features go to constitute as well ready access to all the necessary concomitants to proper manufacturing.

The honourable Member made the point that there is no reason to give the IDC additional lands because there is no policy about lands for the use of the IDC. I have always understood this Government's policy to be extremely clear on this point. Firstly, that it is necessary to have a land bank in reserve for the future development of industrial estates in this country. One cannot wait until the need occurs then to scramble into this House seeking to acquire land. I see this, as indeed I saw the Six Men's Development, to which the honourable Member made reference in his speech, as part of that prong of the Government's policy.

There is more. It has always been a crucial part of this Government's industrial planning to move industry closer to the population, particularly where there is a growing population. Just as we have moved it right here into the constituencies of the honourable Members for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves) and St. Michael North West (Mr. L. A. Weekes), likewise we have moved it into the constituency of St. Peter and on the verge of the constituency of St. Lucy at Six Men's Bay. I am surprised to hear the honourable Member's implied suggestion, and this is an implication which I have drawn from his speech, although he did not say so directly, that he would not have acquired lands in Six Men's Bay for an industrial estate.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of elucidation: I did say that that particular piece of land in Six Men's, which was acquired at a cost in excess of \$2 million, is unlikely to produce a single factory in the near foreseeable future.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member has a prescience that I have not got. Perhaps he has become a modern Cassandra. But I do not believe that his analysis of the futuristic trend of industrial development in the north is based on any proper statistics or figures. The honourable Member probably never had the foresight to imagine that Six Cross Roads would have developed, because he was scrambling at the time of the bye-election to find a position on Six Cross Roads.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member would give way on a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member must know that I was the Minister when we created that industrial park at Six Cross Roads. During the St. Philip by-election they went on television and said that I had created that.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is another speech.

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

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The honourable Member did not create it, because he could have used it in the bye-election, but he did not even know. He had been so lethargic in his Ministry that he had not been able to do one thing about it. The honourable Member must listen, as the honourable member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) will tell him, to the points made in debate, because I will debate him on this issue, very carefully, right within the four walls of the Resolution.
1.40 p.m.

The honourable Member drew the inference that it is a waste of \$2 million to take industry to the North at Six Men's Bay. I hope he does not represent the policy of the Democratic Labour Party on this. This Government believes and believes firmly, that the people of St. Lucy and St. Peter deserve to have the IDC factories brought to them in order to provide them with working occupation in that area. For one thing, one must take into account certain movements of people. One must realize that you have to also satisfy the needs of the whole island, and although we are a small land mass and it would be preferable if our transportation system allowed for there probably to be an economy of scale in the concentration of factories in one area, it is certainly not sensible, given all of the characteristics of Barbados, both democratic and otherwise, to have that.

The Government can justify this Resolution on first class grounds. And in the absence of any concrete evidence to this House about a waste of \$4 million, I think that the honourable Member's statement must be rejected as just an empty pouring forth of views not based on factual content. The honourable member owes it to the House, he owes it to the IDC, to bring any credible evidence which he has which will stand up to scrutiny to show that \$4 million has been wasted in this point.

I wish to throw out a point to Government. I believe that it may be helpful for a comprehensive review of the Crown Lands Vesting and Disposal Act, Cap. 225, to take place. The Act was passed in 1836, a long time ago, almost some 148 years ago. Since then, it has had several amendments, 1845, 1862, 1890, 1894, 1942, 1956, 1954, 1965, 1967, 1977, 1980 and 1983, but what we have done is that we have provided in the legislation for piece-meal vesting of particular areas of land in the Crown. The Crown in Barbados, it being a settled colony, was never in the same position after the settlement as the Crown is in relation to land ownership in other areas, and we have never comprehensively looked at the legislation both to rationalise it in terms of Government's present needs for land policy and also in terms of use of parliamentary time.

One would not want to suggest or in any way to undermine Parliament's control over wide areas of policy,

but it seems a little bit of a waste of parliamentary time where the Government is acquiring land for a Government statutory corporation, in which the beneficial ownership of the corporation and the assets are vested in the Crown, for the Crown to come down first by way of Resolution and acquisition to vest the land in the Crown, and then to come back to the House for the House's approval to vest that land or part of that land into Crown's corporation. Many countries have attended to this point.

In such instances, parliamentary time is not necessary. As I understand it, Parliament's scrutiny is necessary first at the initial acquisition stage because Parliament wants to ensure that the land is being acquired for public purposes and there is fairness in the acquisition — that is why sometimes honourable Members call for a plan and enquire as to whether the land was being negotiated by treaty — and what is the reason for the compulsory acquisition powers. But it seems to me that the second stage, the vesting stage, if the vesting is in a corporation such as the IDC or National Housing Corporation, or any other corporations that are solely owned, by the Crown, is a transaction that could take place either at the time of the original acquisition when the matter is before Parliament, or it can take place either at the time of the original acquisition when the matter is before Parliament, or it can take place by the Minister making a vesting order, if it is appropriate under the Act, and notifying the House of the same, if the House really wishes to be notified, or by the conveyance from the Crown to the legal personality of the corporation without any more effort on the part of Parliament. It would have been opened to honourable Members at the time of the original acquisition, for instance, Mr. Speaker, to have spoken about the purposes for which Government was acquiring the land so that the scrutiny of Parliament would not have been curtailed in any way, and I would like to suggest this to the Government.

I am pleased to hear the Right Honourable Member for St. Thomas (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams) speak of the fact that the acquisition of this land brings to mind the necessity for the whole area and areas in the locality and the Government's proposals which have been formulated for dealing with the area known as "Jenkins". I hope that as we develop a new mental institution, we would use the area near this one for industrial and other developments, including housing, compatible with that area, and that people would take note that it is part of this Government's policy to approach industrial development in the area in this well thought-out and well-planned manner.

I have great pleasure in supporting the Resolution. I understand that the land being vested in the IDC will be used for the manufacturing of furniture in this island. That is a proper purpose. In fact, the furniture industry which is being located on this spot has already had a

fillip from this development and from this action on the part of Government. I only hope that the furniture manufacturers will be able to cope with the potential market which exists for them in the United States of America.

I am sure that this particular area of land used for this purpose will contribute to the development of a bigger and better furniture industry in Barbados and to the growth of our exports, the creation of additional jobs, and the saving and earning of very vital foreign exchange. The Government has a proper policy. I trust that the honourable Member for St. Michael North West will be supporting it, and I am sure that the honourable Member for St. Michael West will also support it. It is too near home for him to do otherwise, otherwise I will have to challenge him in due course on the platform outside of the very industrial compound.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North). Mr. Speaker, before me is a plan outlining the portion to be vested in the IDC. I want to be informed by the appropriate Ministry whether or not it is a fact that that portion which is to be vested is now vacant and does not carry any of the buildings for the furniture industry, as is believed by some of the speakers. If this is a fact, I want to know, secondly if there are proposals for the actual use of that portion of land. The plans show that Government had previously owned a strip of land which, to my own personal knowledge, now has the furniture building on it.

The Honourable Prime Minister has stated that that parcel of land came in handy since Government was able to quarry it and use the marl.....

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: If the honourable Member will give way on a point of explanation, because I have dealt with this in another capacity. Part of the area of land which was acquired was owned by the Parravicino family among others, and that is the area where part of the furniture factory is going. I do not think the honourable Member is looking at that plan and can say that is so.
1.50 p.m.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, the question is whether or not there are any buildings on the parcel of land now being vested, and whether or not there are plans for that parcel of land being vested to be used for the expansion of the furniture industry, because it is within my knowledge that the buildings now catering to the furniture industry are on lands previously owned by the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation.

The Prime Minister stated that that parcel of land provided the IDC with marl fill to fill the other portion of land which, he said, was not suitable for building,

on the advice of the engineers. So it would appear to me that the purpose of acquiring that portion of land was to make good existing lands owned by IDC that were not suitable for building, that would have been costly, as it subsequently proved, to be made adequate for building. I want to know whether or not the cost of that parcel of land being vested, together with the lands owned by IDC, is not really the true cost of lands owned by IDC before, whether or not the Government in its acquisition of the portion of land on which the furniture buildings are now housed took into consideration the cost of remedying that land to bring it to the standard for building; whether or not consideration was taken when the purchase price was being negotiated for the purchase of that land from the owners by the Government agency.

The point I am making is that if the only reason that Government acquired the additional 1.2099 hectares was to provide marl fill, as said by the Prime Minister, to remedy that site, it was a very expensive exercise, and the land bought in the first instance was not suitable land for industrial purposes.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: On a point of order: The honourable Member is obviously misrepresenting the Prime Minister's speech. The Prime Minister never said.....

Mr. SPEAKER: There are two honourable Members on their feet. Can I hear the point of order?

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: The point of order is that the honourable Member, in keeping with the Rules of the House, cannot misrepresent the speech of another honourable Member. From my recollection of the Prime Minister's speech, he nowhere said, either expressly or by implication, that the purpose of the acquisition of the land was to provide marl fill, so, in my view, the honourable Member is therefore misrepresenting his speech.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: I said that the Prime Minister said in his speech that the Government was able to cut down the coral stone from that parcel of land and use it in the existing lands that were not deemed suitable by engineers for building, to bring them to the stage where they could have been used for the building of the furniture factory. If I have misquoted the Prime Minister, I am sorry, but that is the impression I got. I went on to say that if that was a fact, that the true price of the original parcel of land bought by IDC was the collective price of these two parcels of land plus the cost of quarrying that marl fill to put into them, because if it was suitable land for industrial purposes and for building in the first instance, the amelioration work that had to be carried out, which was costly, would not have had to be done.

What I want to find out is whether or not IDC took into consideration the physical state of that land when it

was being acquired and the cost by IDC to bring it to a stage suitable for building. I want to know whether or not IDC has in its plans a future plan for actually using the portion of land, the 1.2099 hectares, for further building, or if it is just to be used for car parks or any allied use, which would be a very expensive allied use. I am seeking to know from the Ministry whether or not the IDC in its acquisition took into consideration these items and whether or not the IDC did not find itself having to spend thousands or millions of dollars to bring the portion of land to the state that was acceptable to the engineers designing the building for the furniture factory.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member is obviously not talking about this parcel of land. He is talking about the rest of the IDC lands, and therefore, I submit, is being irrelevant.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, in the Honourable Prime Minister's speech to this House he did state that IDC was able to use the marl quarried from the acquired portion to build up the former portion of land owned by IDC to the stage where it would be suitable for the construction of buildings for the use of the furniture industry. So it is a fact then, Mr. Speaker, that the purchase of the second portion of land, the 1.2099 hectares.....

Mr. SPEAKER: It appears to me that the better way to deal with this would be a substantive Resolution on IDC lands in Barbados, because it seems as if we are moving up and down that area of areas of land which apparently might not be before the Chamber at this time. The matter before the Honourable House is the transfer of certain areas of land, which are at present owned by Government, to the IDC. It does not appear to me that the Resolution is so wide that we can deal with the deficiencies or otherwise of the IDC in its land use, and I believe that you, a person versed in that area, might agree with me that we are dealing with the IDC's land use policy rather than the vesting of land and property in the IDC.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, I should then like to enquire from the appropriate Ministry whether or not it was absolutely necessary for Government to vest this portion of land in IDC for its immediate use, the expansion of the furniture complex at Spring Garden.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation. Will it help the honourable Member if I interrupt to tell him what the IDC's own views were? The IDC made a submission about this land.

Mr. SPEAKER: I think we have got ourselves into a situation in which we can go on and on on a question which really and truly should be dealt with in a substantive motion to vest land owned by the Government in the IDC.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: This letter relates to that and nothing else.

Mr. SPEAKER: Under our Standing Orders, the honourable Member is entitled to clarify issues before the House. What does the honourable Member want to do at this point?

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Obviously my speech has been misunderstood, and I would like to elucidate it for the honourable Member, since he has given way.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will give permission for the honourable Member to elucidate his own speech under the Standing Orders, but I would prefer the honourable Member for St. Philip North to complete his speech and his questions, because he has raised several questions which obviously should have been set down in a different manner if he requires answers to them. Having asked these questions, which are based on a speech made by the honourable Member for St. Thomas, then the Standing Orders clearly allow the honourable Member to elucidate his speech if it is not understood by other Members.

Has the honourable Member for St. Philip North finished his questions?

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: No, Sir.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I do not wish him to end his speech, but I have some material which will help him.

Sir, the Government, not the IDC, bought both pieces of land originally. The Government assigned six acres to the IDC, following a study saying that it should be zoned for industrial use, and the IDC wrote us this letter.
2.00 p.m.

I believe we are not supposed to take letters off Government files unless a part of the published record in Government, but, informally, I do not mind the honourable Member reading the letter.

Mr. SPEAKER: A Minister is entitled to quote from Government files without making them documents of the House.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Thank you, Sir.

The letter says:

"The Corporation has already commissioned Surveying Services Ltd. to complete the boundary survey, Richard Gill Associates to the physical development planning, and engineers, David Lashley & Partners, have completed the soil investigations.

"The investigations have shown that there is a strata of top soil unsuitable for building which will have to be excavated and replaced by imported fill. As a consequence, the land development costs are high in comparison to our normal expectations.

"The purpose of this letter is to apprise you of the status of the plans for the six acres allocated, and to make representations to you on the possibility of obtaining a further three acres, east of the area allocated, for an extension of the area for industrial development. The enclosed drawings help to show the proposed plans."

Honourable Members have the plans which will show what is meant.

"We understand that the area shaded blue has been earmarked for housing, but that no plans for use of the land have commenced. The plans for developing the six acres have shown that a significant reduction in land development costs could be achieved, if the three acres earmarked for housing could be re-allocated for industrial use. This area has a steep gradient falling from 40 feet to 5 feet above sea level, and appears to be mainly of rock formation and probably marl. In short, if the rock and marl from this area could be cut out, it could be re-used as fill for the furniture project with a reduction in the overall land development costs."

There is also something about storage, and warehousing.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Read on. I want to hear the whole thing.)

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: You do not even know where the land is.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: There is another thing about storage. I am sorry, I thought this was in the IDC's letter. Richard Gill wrote a letter in which he recommended to the IDC — this is copied to us — that the extra land should be acquired because,

"It should be used first for stone, secondly for quiet uses, like lumber storage and warehousing"

That is the other question that the honourable Member asked.

Then he went on to say the IDC should own the whole site,

"and have a buffer zone planted with, say, mahogany trees rather than have residential development situated in close proximity to the machine shops and workshops."

I did not have the letters in my hand when I made my speech, although I am familiar with what is in them, but I believe this elucidates all that I have said. The

land is required to reduce the cost of the development of the below land, and to have a buffer zone between the residential development in the constituency of the honourable Member for St. Michael North West and the machine shop at the IDC. I do not mind if the honourable Member sees the letters.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The Minister of Housing says that he will break any Official Secrets Act if he allows that.

Laughter.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want honourable Members to understand that Standing Order 28, 15 says:

"No Member may speak more than once on any proposition except....."

and they are certain provisions. The Right Honourable Prime Minister was allowed to make that second speech by virtue of Standing Order 28.16. which says:

"A Member who has spoken to a question may again be heard to offer explanation of some material part of his speech which has been misunderstood;"

If the honourable Member for St. Philip North wants to complete his speech, he may do so now.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I am further convinced, since the Honourable Prime Minister was so good as to read a part of the correspondence, that the vesting of 1.209 hectares that we are now dealing with is a direct result of a bad decision made formerly by some agency to acquire a portion of land six acres, for which the engineers in the said competent engineering company advising the body said....

Mr. SPEAKER: Is that not a question of the efficiency of the IDC?

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: The IDC did not acquire it.)

Mr. SPEAKER: The question as to whether or not it was a good decision, a bad decision, an expensive decision or not is a question of the management of the IDC. We are not dealing with the management of IDC. We are dealing with the question of Government vesting a portion of land in the IDC. It must not be tied to the IDC's management.

The honourable Member must understand, if you want to discuss or debate the management of the IDC, do it by a Resolution; then you will be free to roam all over IDC. But at this present time, let us deal with the vesting

of land from Government to IDC, whether they use it good, bad or indifferent.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Speaker, I will be guided by your ruling.

It is unfortunate that the vesting has been done after the actual use of the land which did not give this House an opportunity to look at that. Government has a responsibility to the taxpayers of this country to make sure that all land owned or acquired by Government, whether it be vested in the IDC, NHC or otherwise, be done only after the best advice made, to make sure that the taxpayers are not the ultimate payers for any incompetence at any level in Government in its vesting policy and in acquiring lands to be vesting in any institution in Barbados.

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that this sitting be now suspended until 3.00 p.m. today for lunch.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed. The Honourable Minister of Housing.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, a number of questions have been asked in connection with this Resolution. The Resolution itself is replete with information, which I do not think it necessary to go into in detail, but since a number of strictures were levelled at the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, although I do not have any brief for any agency of Government, I would like to put the record straight. Since departments of Government cannot defend themselves in this Parliament, we have to defend them.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) made a number of complaints about Barbados Industrial Development Corporation, and he said that he wondered if vesting of the land in the Industrial Development Corporation would correct the mischief. I do not know what is meant by the mischief. The honourable Member should take this House into its confidence and, if there is mischief, set about to put the mischief in its true perspective. Of course, we have a right

to know — I am prepared to give way if the honourable Member is prepared to say what the mischief is.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I just wish to make the point, if the honourable Member will give way, that "correction of the mischief" was a term of art. I was not speaking specifically of a particular mischief. I just wish to clarify that.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: One got the feeling that something is wrong after listening to the speech made by the honourable Member. I want to put the record straight that this Government would not agree at all to vest land into the Industrial Development Corporation unless the Government was satisfied beyond all shadow of a doubt that by so vesting the land, it was doing what is right and proper. We do not vest land because we can vest land. We do so after careful consideration of proposals put to the Ministry, and the Ministry puts a case to the Government, or an agency of the Government puts to Government and then Government puts to the Ministry, and we arrive at the type of allocations that should be made.

Committees were appointed after the Spring Garden Road was built and a number of recommendations were made, as the Right Honourable Prime Minister mentioned, and the Planning and Priorities Committee as well as the Cabinet took a very careful look at all of these proposals and arrived at certain conclusions. We considered that in the opening up of the areas down there, it was in the Government's best interest to have a number of firms which operate in Bridgetown, and which normally use heavy duty vehicles in their operations, removed from central Bridgetown to the Spring Garden Highway. In relation to the furniture factory, it is important that that factory be very near to the port to facilitate the delivery of heavy equipment, lumber and other materials used in the manufacture of furniture. And when you consider the construction now of the Airport Access Road for industrial purposes, obviously you have to think in terms of an area where there are easy links to the harbour and other industrial estates, in addition to central Bridgetown. Such a location is necessary and important, and this is why the Government has been very willing to comply with the request made by the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation to let them have this land.

The honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) was rather positive that no building is on this land we are dealing with. There is a building on this land, and this is part of what we are vesting into the Barbados Industrial Development Corporation. He should borrow the plan, which was lent to the honourable Member for St. Michael West, and see what is going on there.

We consider that, bearing in mind all the facts that came before us, the site would serve the purpose ideally

for which the request was made. The drop which has been created by the excavation and the leveling that was done there would create to some extent a peaceful zone between the plant and the housing area that is to the north of the factory. The wall which is there it tends to reduce the noise level, and I am sure that the people on the top of the cliff will not be easily polluted as a result of any dust which might come from the factory. I hope that it will be a comparatively clean factory.

Although you will see separate pieces of land on the plans, they are part of a total of just over 13 acres of land. These lands were bought from the estate of Hugh J. Parravicino. The cost of the land works out to something like 76 cents per square foot, and you cannot get industrial land anywhere in that area to cost you less than \$3.00 or \$4.00 per square foot. When you take into account the excavation work that was done, and what it cost to do the reclamation, you will see that we got a good deal. The site cost \$367 000 and the marl fill that came from this area came to \$225 000, so in truth and in fact, the land itself has only cost something like \$100,000. You have virtually begged for it, and I do not see how you can quarrel about that.

The honourable Member for St. Michael North West (Mr. L. A. Weekes) raised a number of questions: about the environment, drainage, the conditions of the surrounding area, the safety of workers and the safety of people traveling on the highway. These are matters which are important to any representative who has a deep interest of people at heart and a person who is concerned with the interests of his constituents. I want to assure him that with respect to the housing stock in the area, the Ministry of Housing and Lands will quickly carry out a survey on housing. I know for sure that the Government has been given a direction that the National Conservation Commission should do a bit of cleaning up in that area and keep it free of garbage and growth. I am sure that the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works would have listened with some understanding to the problems enunciated by the honourable Member for St. Michael North West and will give consideration to the points which he has mentioned.

The Government always seek to ensure that workers in industrial areas are carefully looked after. We have some of the most modern industrial legislation in the whole Caribbean — in fact, I believe we are the most progressive in that area. We also give sanction to the most updated conventions that are hammered out by the ILO from time to time dealing with workers and workers' conditions at their place of work. It should not be a problem to see that workers are taken care of at their place of work. I assure the honourable Member that this will be carefully looked at.

3.10 p.m.

The vesting of lands in the IDC is the result of a request made to us. The honourable Member for St. Michael West wanted to know if I could give an idea as to the use of the lands vested in the IDC and the purpose for the vesting of this land. The IDC is there to carry out industrial development work, and if they make a request to us on researching the market, which they are entitled and well placed to do, that people desire to go to St. Philip or St. John or any part of the island for some reason or another, and they believe that it is feasible to do so, they will put the proposal to Government to locate a piece of land in the particular district in order to satisfy the requirements of any industrialist or any entrepreneur, local or overseas. If the lands are not immediately utilised, it does not mean that they will not be utilised.

It is unfair and unreasonable to come here, where you know that you can speak with freedom and have the liberty to attack the subject with immunity, to cast aspersions. When we think of making statements against certain corporations and people, we should be careful in making these attacks. We have to bear in mind that if you aspire to govern, the very people you attack you may have to live with when the time comes to govern, so you have to be very careful how you treat them.

I am not suggesting that all is well in Spain. I am not suggesting that all civil servants give of their best. I know better than that. But I know that quite a lot of them do, and I know they try hard. I feel that you should not come to seek justice unless you come with clean hands. Therefore, whenever you are ready to attack, you should do so based upon good and proper evidence, truthful evidence, and a willingness not only to make your statements in this Parliament, but in a court of law if you are called upon to do so.

The Government is in control in so far as it makes sure that its properties are not abused and that if it vests land in a corporation or any other body that that land is used with due consideration not only of the needs of the present Barbadians but of future generations.

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

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, earlier in the day I said I would seek the permission of the House at a later time to deal with a number of Resolutions which were introduced at the time. These Resolutions are very important. One has to do with the unfortunate weather which took place only last week in this country and which will affect the victims who suffered as a consequence of those unfortunate experiences. There is also a Resolution standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney General for \$60,000, which seeks to make

provision for the repairs of a number of vehicles of the Fire Service Division. It is imperative that those provisions be made and that we deal with this matter today.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the honourable Member seeking leave to deal with these Resolutions?

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Yes, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are there any objections to those Resolutions being dealt with in all their stages today?

I hear *sotto voce* here that there is no objection. Therefore leave is granted. The honourable Member may proceed. We will designate them as Order No. 2.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

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

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1984-85,
No. 17 - \$ 807 000

PART II - CAPITAL HEAD 71 - PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Subhead 2 - Central Emergency Relief Organisation

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, first I would like to apologise to the House because the first page of the Resolution that has been circulated says Part II - Capital - Head 71 - Prime Minister's Office - \$870 000. I would like that changed to \$807 000. The Addendum to the Resolution is correct.

This Resolution basically is to seek to have some money to cover the estimated damage caused by flooding between the afternoon of October 31 and the night of November 4, particularly in the areas of St. Peter and St. Andrew. Other parishes in the island were affected, but not as badly as these two parishes in the north.

Rain varying from eight inches to 15 inches fell during the night of October 31 - and it continued. As a result, approximately 26 inches of rain fell in less than four days, unprecedented rainfall in this country. As a result of that we saw that 37 houses in the St. Peter area, principally in Church Street and Around the Town, were damaged or destroyed, and a number of families were made homeless. Fifty adults and 16 children were accommodated at the Heywoods complex with the

kind permission of the management of Heywoods. These families have now been transferred and are housed at the St. Joseph Convent, through the charitable gesture of the Sisters of the Convent. Others whose homes were uninhabitable due to flooding sought refuge with neighbours, friends and family and are therefore not counted in the list of homeless. There was only one incident where there was the loss of life resulting from the flood. The circumstances surrounding the loss of this life is being investigated by the police, but foul play is not suspected.

3.25 p.m.

The floods in the area of St. Peter, particularly, caused a lot of debris to be thrown into the roads, drains, and culverts. This required the efforts of the Barbados Defence Force and the Ministry of Transport and Works to restore things to a state of normalcy as soon as possible. We are quickly returning to that state of normalcy, but, in the meantime, the Welfare Department has carried out a survey which showed that approximately 47 families suffered some loss or damage, and of this number, some 37 of these have suffered extensive damage to their homes and will need repairs, and have lost a great deal, if not all, of their personal effects, their furniture and things of that nature. About six people who are tenants require housing for relocation.

The Chief Welfare Officer estimated that requirements for food, clothing and replacement of household effects will be between \$75 000 to \$100 000. The National Assistance Board estimates that they will have to replace six houses for elderly people, ranging in cost between \$10 000 and \$12 000 per house.

The Ministry of Transport and Works, did their little study very quickly, and these, of course, are just tentative submissions. For the rental of small equipment to help clear debris from culverts and canals, for protective clothing, for the repair to the Canefield Bridge, for provisions of gabions for repairing landslides and for the cleaning of suck wells and so on, the Ministry of Transport and Works estimates that they will need approximately \$230 000 to get things restored back to where they were.

The Ministry of Health, on the other hand, for the overtime of public health workers and supply of effects primarily in the areas of St. Peter and Christ Church, would require \$30 000.

The Ministry of Housing in order to repair, resite and replace houses will require \$400 000.

In the parish of St. Andrew, the rains which continued Friday and Saturday caused a great deal of damage to the roads and bridges and a great deal of land slippage. Reports indicate that three houses were damaged and need to be replaced. Preliminary estimates indicate that the damage in St. Andrew will amount to some \$150 000.

In the time available to make the assessment, one can fully appreciate that the damage figures that I have just given to this House as compiled by the Ministry of Housing and Lands and the Ministry of Transport and Works are preliminary, and, in turn, are subject to change. In the case of damage to roads and bridges in St. Andrew, detailed studies are being carried out.

To summarize, the Welfare Department requires \$75 000, the Ministry of Health requires \$30 000, the Ministry of Housing and Lands requires \$400 000, the Ministry of Transport and Works requires \$230 000 and the National Assistance Board requires \$72 000, a total of \$807 000.

In closing, I would point out to the Honourable House that the Pan Caribbean Disaster Project Office in Antigua has been notified of our emergency and the first step, they will be sending in an engineer to inspect the damages to our roads and bridges and, based on his recommendations, they will approach their funding agencies for assistance in meeting the repairs and reconstruction as would seem necessary. Consideration is also being given to approaching the IADB for assistance from their Disaster Fund.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN (St. Philip North). Mr. Chairman, first of all let me express from this side to all the people who have suffered loss, the greatest sympathy from all of us. We hope that they will return to normalcy as soon as possible.

It is strange that only last Tuesday, in this same Parliament, for some reason I drew to the Minister of Transport and Works' attention the fact that I was not certain that the Ministry was equipped or the Ministry had given enough serious thought to the whole question of drainage particularly relating to the new roads, but to Barbados in general. The reason I drew this to the Minister's attention was that after very small showers of rain, not even covering parts of an inch, sections of these new roads are subjected to flooding, to the inconvenience to a lot of people. The Minister assured this Parliament then that his Ministry was giving very careful consideration to the whole question of drainage, and that the roads of Barbados, in his opinion, had been properly designed with all due consideration to drainage.

Within the last couple of days, I have been having some talks with the residents of St. Peter, both in my professional capacity, because I have been doing some work on behalf of some insurance companies, and otherwise, and they drew to my attention the fact, and I am talking particularly of the people to the east of the new road, that during the construction of the new By-pass

Road, a little to the south of the part that crosses Queen Street, they, on numerous occasions, had made representations to the builders of the road and to representatives of the Ministry, when they were available, that, in their opinion, the culverts that were being put on that road were inadequate.

This brought to my mind a situation going back to 1964. I remember that when I worked on the East Coast Road, we had an engineer who was designing a drainage system for that road. Before he completed the design, a very elderly gentleman came up and he said to the engineer, Mr. Hecheviera, that he was not making adequate provision for the water that comes down. Mr. Hecheviera thought that a lot of us who are semi-learned or believe we are learned had no contribution to make, and that the advice of this old man was stupidity, and he dismissed the old man's advice.

By some stroke of coincidence, the rains fell very heavily about 4.30 the afternoon, and when we got to the East Coast Road, about 7 o'clock, this is the first bridge going out of Belleplaine, we found then all the provision made for what we thought was adequate drainage, about half of a mile downstream, was completely destroyed. The old man was there and he said, "You see what I told you, Sir? You do not know this area like me. I lived down here all these years and I told you that it was not adequate." That taught Mr. Hecheviera an engineering lesson in common sense, that you must always listen to the people who, by hard experience, know what is going on.

The story told to me by the people in that area of the By-pass Road led me to take a look at the area, and if the Honourable Minister of Transport and Works figures that there is some kind of sense in everyone of us, I would invite him to have a look at a map that I am going to make a document of this House. The map is an entire 1/10000 of the parish of St. Peter, designed with 20 foot contours, and showing all the drainage sections of St. Peter.

3.35 p.m.

Starting from the St. Peter-St. James boundary, you will note that the first outlet happens to be around the Gibbs beach area, and this drains two main gullies starting from the St. Peter-St. Andrew boundary, or around the 800 foot contour, which happens to be the water shed of this part of the island between St. Andrew and St. Peter. That outlet at Gibbs collects the main water that comes through Mangrove, Black Bess, Bakers and Rock Hall and empties itself at Mullins. A small calculation will show that the area that that drains is approximately 607 acres of land. The second exercise is done if you are going towards the north where you will find two other outlets, one at Little Battaleys and one at Goddings Bay.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: What is the date of that map?

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: The lot is one of the series of Barbados. Sheet 31; it is a compilation. It is a 1/10000 map of Barbados. The contours do not change. This map was printed in 1956.

As I said, if you go further north, you will see that there are two outlets, and then further north you will find one that we want to discuss, and I invite the Minister of Transport and Works to inspect this for the purpose of cleaning it. This empties in Speightstown, and I am a little bit surprised and sorry that the people did not listen to the residents.

Let me tell you about the gullies' configuration. Starting at Rock Hall, around the 800 foot contour, there is a very big well demarcated ravine section that is as deep in certain places as 30 feet, so you can hardly change that, and it goes all the way down and it eventually joins at the Whim. This is the crucial point. If you go further north you will find that there is another ravine section starting from Orange Hill, coming through Sailor's Gully, through the Rock and converging at the Whim again. You go further north again and you will find that there are two or three large gullies going as far north as Mount Brevitor and that too converges at the Whim. All of these then come in one central stream from the Whim through the ravine that empties in Speights-town.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: On a point of order, we are listening to a technical dissertation which the honourable Member is giving. I personally would like to be able to follow the honourable Member, but I do not have a map to follow him. His map is not offered as a document of the House and the type of line which he is adopting here would certainly suit a schoolhouse, where you can have a blackboard and a demonstration of what he is doing. I am unable to follow him, and I do not know if you can, but I think any discussion in this Parliament should be for the enlightenment of Members inside this Parliament.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I believe the honourable Member who has technical ability no doubt is enlightening the House on the contours. What I would like to tell the honourable Member is that it seems to be rather extensive, and his time will probably soon be gone before he gets down to making the point that he really wants to make. But that is not the problem for the Committee; that is his problem. Please continue.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, this is a very serious national matter, and I figure that at the level of Parliament, we owe it to the people to have a serious approach in this debate to this matter.

If you look as I have said, you will find that emptying in the sea at Speightstown is the runoff from approximately 2 000 acres of land. I am certain that the technical staff of the Ministry of Transport would have, or should have taken into consideration the points I have just illustrated to him, that converging at The Whim were about four to five well defined water systems providing drainage for runoff of approximately 2 000 acres of land away from the 800 foot contour down to sea level, or a vertical distance of some 800 feet, which naturally would have some effect on the current of water as it comes down.

Having set that background, we now come to the section of the new road. I am the first to agree with anyone that 15 inches of rain in a short time is nearly unprecedented in Barbados. We have some rainfall figures here that we have collected to show that there were certain places in 1975 that had more than 25 inches. In 1938 in the Speightstown area we had 24 inches of rain over a twenty-four hour period.

Getting back to the point, you will find that despite the representation made by the people who are aware of the fact that the new road crosses that culvert at a height of about 7 feet, 8 inches above the lowest point of the culvert where the new road crosses — the new road is about 3 feet, 8 inches above the level of the surrounding lands to the north and south of the new road at that point — you will find at that point that the design of the bridge at that new road has three elliptically shaped gabions to the bottom separated by about 3 feet of concrete fill with two reception chambers, giving you a total area per culvert of about 37.3 square feet collectively, and taking into consideration that they are elliptical, the critical point is that at that very second last point before it empties into the sea where you would expect debris, and the openings are so small that any type of debris would block them. What would make them even easier to be blocked is that you have them separated by three or four feet of solids and therefore the water cannot even move along to find an outlet. Even with reduced rainfall, anything over five inches, those residents down there are going to see the effects of, and I invite the Minister of Transport and Works to discuss with his technical staff whether or not the provision to allow water to pass there is adequate. If he goes further down, he will find that in the outlet to the sea, there are three openings, sometimes 16 feet wide, about 8 feet high, in the last bridge.

3.45 p.m.

These openings accommodate twice the volume of water, because they are boxed drains and boxed drains can carry the full capacity from top to bottom, which is not the case with lithical drains, but you will find that in this modern day, they have reduced the capacity that the

bridge could accommodate — only something like 600 feet upstream from the existing outlet into the sea.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): Mr. Chairman, I rise to speak on this Resolution because not only do I have a duty to support it as a Member of the Government, but because it has relevance to my constituency.

I rise to query the amount which is allocated for bridges, and repair work in St. Andrew.

(Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I agree with you. It is not enough money.)

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I do not believe that the amount which is allocated can.....

(Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: It cannot even scratch the bottom.)

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE:..... Touch the surface, from the extent of work that I have seen there to be done.

St. Andrew has special problems. It is the only parish in the whole country that is entirely within the Scotland area. The Scotland area consists of some fourteen thousand acres of land and of that amount, St. Andrew has about eight thousand acres, which constitutes the total area of St. Andrew. In St. Andrew, you have the Joe's River muds. Part of the Joe's River muds are in St. Joseph, which would be the only parish other than St. Andrew with such a significant portion of its land mass in the Scotland area. St. Thomas also has a portion, and St. James and St. Peter have small areas of the Scotland District.

The soil structure of St. Andrew is of such a peculiar nature that, unless you keep in very close touch with what is happening in respect of your roads and other structures, problems will invariably set in. It is always in the interest of all Governments to ensure that money is spent on a constant basis in order to keep the road system up to at least a reasonable standard.

What is not particularly understood is that, much as St. Andrew might be regarded as the place where a lot of money is spent, St. Andrew makes a very significant contribution to the development of the country. Every cubic metre of sand, until recently when a sand pit was opened up in St. Joseph at Springfield, came from the sand pits of St. Andrew, destroying the coastal protection and opening Walker's Valley to flooding. Therefore, with that type of contribution which it makes to the national well-being and the constant pressure which is put upon its

roads, roads that were not designed for such heavy traffic — there are vehicles going in there with eight wheels, and bringing out considerable tonnage on bridges that were just made for donkey carts — you have to spend some money in the upkeep of the parish. Obviously, if you impose those heavy burdens on these bridges and roads, you must of necessity expect to have the roads succumbing to the pressures which they have to carry, so it is important and necessary that the bridges be kept in a very good state of repair.

Not only do we make a contribution in terms of sand, but in terms of brick from the soil there. A lot of people are not using the red bricks for construction, they are using the bricks as tiles. I hope that they would use more of the blocks in building because they do not carry any foreign component. They do not call for cement. Fortunately, we now have the Arawak Cement Plant; before that, you had to import cement. The clay blocks are indigenous and with the cement plant coming on stream, clay from St. Andrew is now used to provide the clinker used in the production of cement.

Far and above all of that, long before Woodbourne in St. Philip and Carrington and those estates were regarded as areas fruitful for the delivery of oil and natural gas, St. Andrew, from the well-known well No. 19 at Turners Hall, was satisfying consumers in St. Michael, Christ Church and St. James, without itself enjoying any of these benefits. I submit, therefore, that the time has come when St. Andrew must get something of what is going. We are not greedy. The people down there are spiritually rich, not materially so. They are not begging, they do not beg for anything, but they expect to be treated well, and I am making my appeal in that direction.

The honourable Member for St. Philip North in his very brilliant dissertation on his knowledge of the topography of the country, with special reference to St. Peter, which is significant considering this important period of its development, has told us a lot of things about what we have done, what we have failed to do and what we should do. What afflicted the country last week was an act of God, and no matter how powerful and mighty you are, when that affliction comes, you cannot push it back. It is all well and good to prepare. People talk about buildings that withstand storms, hurricanes and earthquakes, but when the storm really comes, we see how the concrete and steel can be twisted, and when the earthquakes come, they just collapse like trash.

3.55 p.m.

The Government must be advised by technical people. The Minister of Transport and Works is not an engineer. I hope that he is not one, because if he is an engineer he should not be the Minister of Transport and Works. You might wonder why I said that. Any time you get a Minister who is of the same discipline of the Ministry he runs, you are looking for trouble.

The honourable Member for St. Michael West could never be the best Minister of Education, because he himself is an educationalist, and he knows it better than anybody in there. He would turn out to be a greater Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education than a Permanent Secretary who was trained to be there. Equally so, an engineer as Minister in the Ministry of Transport and Works would turn out to be an extremely difficult person to have running that Ministry. It calls for a person who could sit down in his office and listen to the conflicting views of all the technical and administrative people and arrive at a decision based upon the advice given to him — a person who is virtually unconnected to those disciplines.

The honourable Member for St. Philip North should never, and I hope that he never does, head the Ministry of Housing and Lands, or Transport and Works, or any of those technical Ministries. By his very display today we have seen the attitude of a typical civil servant, who would make it extremely difficult for any of the staff to function, because he is a technical man and therefore you must conform with all that he trots out, because he knows it better than you.

Mr. Chairman, we have had the advice and — this is being frank with you — we are suffering a massive dose of over-advice in this country, not only in this country but in the whole of the developed world. The people who are advising you are only coming to see what they can get from you. Invariably when they come, they come after being advised by the local people and carry out all the money there is. I hope the day will come when they will stop coming, and I speak to you from my heart on this matter. I have always felt strongly on this.

Like the honourable Member, I would go to St. Andrew and listen to the people down there who understand how the water runs, and I would want to hear what they say about the water courses in St. Andrew. Water will find its level and its natural course. No matter what you do with it, it will always do that. That is a fact of life.

Nobody wants to see a square foot of land or a house washed away in this country. We all have sympathy for the people who have suffered not only in St. Peter, but in St. Lucy, Christ Church, St. Philip, in my own area, (St. Andrew), and where the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central lives. We have sympathy for all of the people affected. Do not let us get up in here and try to pull wool over anybody's eyes by trying to make them believe that any person in here has more sympathy than anybody else for the people of St. Peter. That matter will be fought and won in the appropriate forum, and this party is not afraid of that battle, a battle of which we have no doubt we will win. We will fight our case on the basis of honesty and high principle

— not any cheap, partisan political politics, which will not work.

You cannot stop the rain from falling, you cannot stop lands from sliding. And the honourable Member should know that after a very dry season and you get an avalanche of water, you normally will get more flooding than during a period when you have been having comparatively reasonable rainfall. Trees become loose after dry periods, and any steady flow of water will bring those trees down. Only the bridges can stop them. If the bridges are not strong enough to withstand the strength of the trees and the current of the waters, the bridges will collapse.

I want to ask the honourable Member a question. Why is it that the houses in Around-the-Town were wiped off their props by water and not the buildings on the main road in Speightstown? The road that he is talking about is between the houses at Around-the-Town and the houses that run on the main road at Speightstown. But as Homie Corbin used to say, "Who can stop the current? — Only God can stop it." I do not know if the honourable Member believes that, by some divine act, the Barbados Labour Party could mobilize its physical force and go down there, wrap up as an army of baboons and stop the current from flowing. It is physically impossible to do that.

I have seen the road. The early stages of the development of that road were formulated while I was at Communications and Works. The advice given to us was reasonably good advice. But the road design and everything to do with that road had its genesis in the Democratic Labour Party, and if we did not wipe out some of the bad turns in that road, the curbs which you allowed the former owners to put in and which we insisted should be taken out, the whole system would have been worse than what it is today.

Mr. Chairman, I did not want to speak on this Resolution today. But we have to be honest with ourselves. We have to stop playing the game of politics. We have come here with a Resolution, and the least I would have expected from the other side is that they would let us get the Resolution out of the way as quickly as possible and start the rehabilitation programme for the people in Speightstown and St. Peter, and wherever damage is done. That is what we need to do. Let us stop playing the game of politics. We have sufficient time to do it — night and day. The Public Order Act is removed in relation to St. Peter in the next few weeks. Those of us who will be involved have the courage, the capacity and the stamina to fight the battle down there.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON (St. Michael West Central): I have listened over the last few days to formal and in-

formal debates, post mortems, on the disaster which occurred in the parish of St. Peter. I have had an opportunity at first hand to study the extent of the destruction and I am satisfied that most of us seem to have a desire to be soothsayers or prognosticators or tellers of doom. I would like again to formally express my own feelings of sympathy and commiseration with the people who have suffered during the last few days. 4.05 p.m.

I visited Italy some time ago and had the opportunity to see the before and after effects of a natural calamity. For hundreds of years people have lived in a particular village unmindful of any possible danger. Houses of imposing stature were built on the slopes of the hill in what was one of the most popular communities in southern Italy, and without warning a hill which had lain dormant for many, many centuries just suddenly erupted with chilling force and devastated every single house, mansion or no mansion, that was on the side of that hill. So chilling was its effect that today, whenever visitors go to that part of Italy, they make it a point of duty to take you to the site where you will be able to appreciate what it looks like today, and then they show you pictures of what it looked like before that disaster occurred.

I suspected that Barbadians have a difficult time conceptualising what natural disaster is, because otherwise it would be difficult for frustrated land surveyors to come in here with outdated maps to try to explain the inexplicable. It is not possible for a land surveyor to tell me that because a natural contour runs in a particular way, he can predict with any certainty what will happen when unnatural events are unleashed. What happened last week was an unnatural occurrence for Barbados. We are not accustomed to that kind of activity, and I do not care how sophisticated the design of any outfall drain is, how carefully the engineers plot the forces that a bridge would be expected to bear, when the Almighty determines that His force is to be more powerful than man's, He so demonstrates that He is in charge of this universe. It is really a little mockery for frail little men to try with a map to explain how it is that water coming through a drain can destroy 25 or 30 houses in a matter of minutes, when those houses have sat in that watercourse for all of these years without any difficulty.

Every once in a while engineers will tell you that the normal design rhythms call for particular designed phases. One designs for expected rainfall over ten years, one for 20 years rainfall, one for a 50 year rainfall, meaning that if you have the resources you can design a structure that will withstand most of what will happen conceivable to man in a hundred years. What we cannot design for is that variable that I just identified, the unnatural happening. It is unnatural in the sense that we

are not accustomed in this country to having 24 inches of rainfall within the space of 16 hours.

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: If you do not like "unnatural," it is unusual, and we are not able to predict the frequency with which that occurrence will happen.

People have lived in that Round-the-Town drain. It is a natural outfall. The honourable Member has to resort to maps. I believe that I can identify every single outfall area, every natural contour, in St. Peter, because I come from that parish and I have run through all those gullies. I know all of those watercourses that empty into the Salt Pond, from Mount Brevitor, Pleasant Hall, Welch Town, Farley Hill, Orange Hill, Four Hill, Indian Ground, Prospect, Sedge Pond, right across that ridge. All of those waters eventually find their way.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The honourable Member has just made out a good case for his resignation from office.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please continue. That was no point of order.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: All of these areas are on the elevation to which the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) pointed. You can just sit down and try to fathom it. Twenty four inches of rainfall dropping from a height of 800 feet down into the valley in Speightstown is bound to create problems. When three inches of rainfall fell in that area before, you used to have flooding. When we used to have three inches of rainfall at Holetown, that honourable Member there would know you had to get a boat, up until no more than three or four years ago. That was always a problem, and since design changes were made to that particular outfall we have discovered that they are now able to cope more efficiently with accelerated run off in that particular area.

It does not help the community, it does not help anybody at all, for honourable Members to come in here and seek to explain the inexplicable. You cannot explain what happened last week no more than I can. I do not care how long you talk, you cannot convince yourself or anybody else that anything you could have done could have stopped the Almighty from letting 24 inches of rain fall. What happened was that he decided that 24 inches of rain would fall, and it fell all at once. What is a miracle is that only St. Peter was affected, because if houses were built in the northern drains up Springhall — and I went through most of those drains during the night of that heavy rain when you were at home sleeping — the honourable Member for St. Michael North (Mr. P. M. Greaves) would know that drain that comes through

slightly west of Durhams by heart, if houses had been anywhere on those banks in St. Lucy, we would have had a catastrophe in St. Lucy as well.

The problem in St. Peter was simply that the natural course which the water had to take was partially obstructed by houses. If St. Lucy or St. Andrew had houses in those same run-off areas, we would have had a natural catastrophe of unheard of proportions in Barbados. I say so, because I saw how the water ran down, because of the sheer force at Mount Gay.

Twenty four inches of rain, Mr. Chairman! Do you understand that 24 inches of rain is the natural quota for some parts of Barbados for a year? Do you understand that all of that 24 inches fell within 16 hours in some parts of Barbados? Let reasonable minds be brought to bear on the matter. I do not care how many maps you trot out, I do not care how you seek to apportion blame, it does not serve or suit for anybody to talk about engineering problems. I have seen bridges designed for millions of dollars washed away like if they were pieces of straw, because the design considerations that went into their construction, and which man in his infinite wisdom believed would never be matched by the forces of nature, were eventually outstripped by the Almighty. 4.15 p.m.

Hotels in New Zealand, built and reinforced with steel, have collapsed. In San Francisco, near to the San Andreas Fault, I do not care what kind of structure you design near or across the fault, sooner or later the earthquake is going to hit, and it is going to shake them together as if they were so many hairpins. You have to see the destruction after these things happen to be able to fathom what can happen. In Barbados, we are extremely fortunate, and rather than sitting down here, jumping up and down and seeking to blame this body and the next person for not building a big drain — you should have built it 18 feet instead of 16 feet, and 6 feet instead of 5 feet, and all that nonsense that I have been hearing when we all know that that part of St. Peter has always flooded, we should be thanking God.

What is remarkable is that the extent of flooding did not extend to the north of Church Street, because north of Church Street used to flood. But the waters are being handled more efficiently, I submit to you, by those same outfall drains that you have just sought to fault. Because of the construction of those outfall drains, waters are being handled far more efficiently.

I heard some simple-minded people saying that if we had only cleared the Whim Gully, cut out all of the vegetation out of that gully — somebody said that they had asked a question in the House of Assembly about clearing The Whim Gully — we would not have had the flooding. If you had cleared the Whim Gully, you would

have, by that same act, cleared all of Speightstown, because Speightstown, the Mall — everything — would have been washed away. The natural obstacles that the trees in that drain presented to the cascading waters slowed down the effect of that flood. The waters, instead of running uninhibited, had to be hitting against these baffles. It is almost like the water was dammed by the natural resources coming down, and naturally running from one obstacle to the next was slowed down in its path. Therefore, when the water got into the valley, its force would have been significantly diminished, and that, I submit, has a great deal to do with the fact that the waters only extended just beyond the natural course. As a matter of fact, they hardly rose outside of their natural boundary. If you went into the watercourse and walked it, you would have seen that the only house, Mr. Lopic's house, right there was hit, and that a house inches away from Mr. Lopic on the bank was not touched because the water stayed pretty much in the course it was supposed to travel in.

Asides.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: I am saying to you, and I have said it all along, that the water was travelling in a natural watercourse. The problem was, and is, that people have built their houses inside that watercourse. The houses on the banks of the natural watercourse that were there for all of these years, houses that were not in the valley, were not affected. The ones that were in the path of the water got 'licked-up'. If you do not believe me, go and look at it.

The outfall drains are designed to coincide precisely with the mouth of that water-course. The only reason we had problems was because of the sheer volume of water. The drains, which were not designed to cope with that kind of unusual volume of water, had difficulty feeding it off, and it banked off a bit to the north and to the south. But it cannot be said that it was a design fault.

I mentioned earlier that in road design or in design of any sort, one has to take into consideration the costs involved in what may be regarded as predictable risks. You can design a bridge for loadings of 500 tonnes or you can design a bridge for loadings of five tonnes. The considerations that go into that class of design is what kind of stress will that bridge be put to, and if the bridge is not expected to carry tonnage of 500 tonnes, you do not design for that. You design for what the bridge is going to do plus a fail-safe margin, and once every 50 or 60 years, perhaps, the bridge or whatever the design is, may be asked to carry more than it was designed to carry. It may cope or it may not cope. I say this only to point out that we in this country have only been shown that there are things which we can control and, being human, there are things which we cannot control. Ultimately, it is man against God and the forces of

nature. We can cope with some of them but there is a time when we have to put down our hands and admit that in as much as we are frail human beings, we cannot cope with some of the problems that we will be asked from time to time to deal with.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): I find myself speaking on many subjects in the House. It comes about because in our system the Prime Minister does chair the Planning and Priorities Committee, he does tend to hear a lot of people who know what they are talking about putting arguments and tends to read a lot of documentation.

The whole of the St. Peter coastline and its drainage has been examined in connection with the building of Heywoods. The honourable Member producing a map to show watercourses, in fact, may be the Democratic Labour Party's electoral map for St. Peter marked with the polling stations and electoral divisions. It only comes in here as an afterthought to suggest an expertise that does not really exist. The talk about contour lines and watercourses — anybody who is taught elementary Geography is familiar with the Hunting Air Service Surveys of Barbados that were eventually published by the Directorate of Colonial Surveys. The first maps were published in 1950 and corrections were made since then. I am not very happy about the maps. Perhaps if the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) wants to talk about surveying could tell me whether he agrees with the triangulation methods used to transfer the parish boundary from the Admiralty Survey Maps between 1884 and 1888 are the correct methods used, or whether we should use the old internal landmarks that the Admiralty Survey Map shows. But that is a different problem, although it has some electoral importance.

4.25 p.m.

The fact is that anybody can drive along Highway 1 or the By-pass Road and be familiar with the drainage points on the St. Peter coast. There is one at the foot of Maynards Road by Six Men's where the old walk used to be. The next, if I remember correctly, is the salt pond itself, and inside Speightstown there are one or two more. There is also the Scantlebury River, this is the river that comes out by Cobblers Cove, I think. There are four or five and there are all known to people, and the fact is that in this current flood virtually the only one that did any damage is the river which the Whim Gully becomes in time of flood. The Whim Gully debouches right onto Round-the-Town, and clearly in time of flood, water will come down there.

The only works which I know have been done there is the canal from the Round-the-Town bridge and the drainage at the point where the new by-pass cross the

ultimate drainage area. I would draw honourable Members' attention to the speech of the Minister of Transport and Works — there are certain natural catastrophies that simply cannot be prepared for. Perhaps you will argue that flooding is not one of these, but the only ultimate way of dealing with the problem of potential flooding in Speightstown is to move everybody from living in Round-the-Town, Church Street and those districts, because there is no flood works which will absolutely and totally prevent a sufficiently severe flood from entering the houses that are built below a certain contour line if we are going to talk grandly about contour lines.

The honourable Member can calculate that the volume of water that fell during the night of last Wednesday in the area that serves the Whim Gully going right back up to Pleasant Hall, right back into the country, is approximately 15 cubic metres per acre. He can make a calculation, convert the inches, and multiply out and so on. That volume of water falling over a period of time is going to turn what the Whim Gully normally is, a relatively dry gully even with a trickle of water in the dry parts — that is one of the few gullies in Barbados that tends to carry water most of the year — from being a gully with an inch or two of water into being a gully, even in its wider parts, with 20 feet of water, and there is actually no drainage system that is going to prevent houses that are built less than 20 feet in the path of 20-foot torrent from receiving water damage. They are the realities of the situation. You can divert the water so that it is not going to be there, but once you accept that Speightstown is a viable city — and there is a lot of property in Speightstown and it has been a commercial centre for 300 years — you have to choose how much and what precautions you will take in respect of drainage.

This is only the second time since Barbados has been settled that there has been a major flood quite of this level in St. Peter. I am told that the salt pond often rises and that the houses in Church Street are no strangers to water. I used to visit a house in Speightstown many years ago — I have never lived there — but it appeared to me that the family viewed the ground floor as a place into which water was liable to enter at times of heavy rain, and several people who have lived in Speightstown have told me this also. So to suggest that something has been done in the last five years which has caused the drainage in Speightstown to become worse is as ridiculous as it is partisan — at a time of tragedy for a great number of people affected by the flood.

I used to have a lot to do with St. Vincent some 12 to 15 years ago, and became very familiar with Vincentian politics. I remember how Mr. Joshua at the time of the 1972 eruption of the St. Vincent volcano held a series of meetings *seriatim*, and how one week he

would say it was not the hand of God, it was the hand of man that was responsible, then the next week he would tell them that there was a Canadian in St. Vincent flying an aeroplane who used to fly up over the Soufrière, and then the next week he said, "I want this question answered: 'I want to know what Cato gave the Canadian pilot to drop in Soufriere?'" I must tell honourable Members opposite, and Mrs. Leacock also, that that is what they sound like. Mrs. Leacock suggested in Speightstown that the Prime Minister had something to do with the flood. She is ascribing powers to the Prime Minister which, if I ascribe to myself I would be rightly struck down for my impiety as the honourable Member for St. Michael South, (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) said. He says he knows I have achieved many things, but he does not think I have yet achieved mastery over the rains.

We have had a severe flood in Speightstown. It is comparable in volume to the one that fell in 1901, the most severe flood ever recorded in Barbados. In 1901, 19 inches fell in the same period that 15 inches fell in this time, choked up all the outlets, all five, and as the Minister of Transport and Works, it flooded to the north of Church Street with the same force and determination as it flooded to the south. The Heywoods Swamp, with which we are all familiar, was largely a legacy from the year 1901, as water actually stayed there until we pumped it out in the building of Heywoods. That was a flood nobody could have possibly thought in those years of blaming any individual for, but people had a little more realism then. They knew when the rain fell that water came down.

Asides.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Do not talk nonsense, man! I have a caves' study of the weather. If somebody has lent you a copy that I believe I gave the House of Assembly some years ago, do not pretend that by opening the Caves' study of the weather you have suddenly become an expert. I am speaking to the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes). A great deal of amateur knowledge by people whose function is criticism, and whose most secure role is dragging down others, will no doubt be perpetrated in the House in the course of this debate. 4.35 p.m.

When we came to build the By-pass Road, as I have said in another place, we presented the World Bank with a study of the cost of the road, and the World Bank said that it would be the single most expensive road ever built over flat ground anywhere in the world. We explained that the reason for that was for the particular needs of drainage in Barbados. I touched on this recently in the House, when we did the debate on Heywoods before the flood — the reason Heywoods Road is the way it is, the money we had to spend repairing the Gray

Wilkie Road and all of that. I have already dealt with all of this.

We stuck to our guns and we built the road to what is called a fifty year standard, the highest standard. As far as I know, since 1976, the only roads ever built in Barbados to a fifty year standard are the drainage at Oistin and the drainage at Heywoods. Previous to that, the highest standard that MTW ever built on roads was what was called the twenty year standard, a flood that is expected once every twenty years, as far as I know.

We built Oistin to a fifty year standard. In other words, the road should be able to withstand the conditions of the Jordan flood in 1901 without causing undue flooding, undue drainage problems to the surroundings. The fact is that the road at Oistin and the road at Heywoods have withstood it. The swamp at Heywoods was pumped away to the north and the storm drains at Heywoods withstood the flooding. The storm drains in Speightstown itself also withstood the flooding.

The flooding at Battaleys, where there is another water course, was moderate. It was less than it was in the days when there was no drainage whatsoever. We could not stop the Whim Gully from coming down. The Whim gully's drainage, bear in mind, depends on the bridge in Around-the-Town. The Whim Gully and the Around-the-Town houses, where the main damage took place, are not places that any drainage works were built by our Government, as far as I know. We have not raised the bridge in the Whim Gully because the level of flooding that we have met on this occasion has only once before occurred. That is a separate problem, because Around-the-Town is right at the outlet of the Whim Gully and the By-pass Road is much lower down the water course.

So the places where we have put in the drainage worked perfectly and adequately. But people's houses were carried away because more water was in the Whim Gully than the height of the houses. As I said, no specific works have been undertaken for many years, because that kind of flooding at Around-the-Town is really not a once in a lifetime but once in two lifetimes' flood. The last flood like that was in 1901.

It would be possible to move the people from Around-the-Town, as we moved the people from Delamere Land. It would be possible to resite Speightstown. But in the same way that the villages of Chateau, Bellair and Georgetown in St. Vincent remain where they are, along the northern end of the island, despite the volcano, in that same way people prefer to take the risk of a natural disaster that recurs once in a great number of years.

In San Francisco — the Minister of Transport and Works referred to that — it is obvious to anybody that the owners of land in San Francisco have preferred to build skyscrapers and the Golden Gate Bridge and the Oakland Bridge than to give up San Francisco as a location yet it is equally obvious that what happened in 1907 will happen again. There will be another San Francisco earthquake, and perhaps the bridges built with all the engineering expertise in the world will break in half. As people have said, it is possible that the whole of western California, from San Francisco to Los Angeles, will actually break off from the rest of America if the fall sundered sufficiently. You will then get destruction and devastation on a scale never seen in the history of this planet in natural disasters, because populations have been concentrated in the path of a natural disaster.

We have not done any of this in Speightstown. An overwhelming flood has come down and a number of houses have been washed away. We think that the Government should be complimented for putting in drainage along the By-pass Road, with the help of the World Bank loan, making it the most expensive road ever built in Barbados and one of the most expensive ever built in the world. We should be complimented that Speightstown has not suffered worse under the flood, because it would have been worse had not the drainage been there. The site of Heywoods would have been flooded. We stopped that from happening without diverting the water into Speightstown, we diverted it to the north. The water from Heywoods goes into the sea or it goes to the north — none of it flows southward into Speightstown. While the rain was still falling I was ringing the Manager at Heywoods and asking him to have the storm drains inspected to make sure that Heywoods was not throwing water into Speightstown. He had had the drains inspected before, and he assured me that they were clear and working.

The houses in Church Street, always liable to flooding, had rather more water because there was rather more rain than is the custom. In Around-the-Town the Whim Gully came down and washed away houses which were at the appropriate contour, to quote from the honourable Member for St. Philip North.

(Aside: Do not forget the Defence Force.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: If I have to speak about the Defence Force, I will speak again.

The Government, I think, has a first class record in dealing with floods, really first class record. Nobody has said, 'How is it that the Constitution River did not cause any damage?' The Constitution River overflowed into River Road on the second day, not the first day. All of the drainage works that were undertaken in the raising of Constitution Road, the building of enormous culverts, the

works indeed that have been undertaken at Bridge Road, the canalization and the cleaning up there, have prevented a major Bridgetown flood. There is no doubt about that.

Exceptional rainfall, over and beyond the fifty year rains have caused flooding in Speightstown. But faced with the works of God, the works of man are very small, as A. G. MacDonald once had to say in respect of the game of cricket. But that is another story.

I think that all concerned, the Ministry of Transport and Works, the Defence Force, the Royal Barbados Police Force, the Ministry of Housing, the Ministry of Welfare, individuals who worked so far into the night and I am not only speaking of a candidate like Owen Arthur who at 10.00 p.m., 11.00 p.m., 12.00 p.m. at night was going through Heywoods to make sure that all the resettled people were comfortable, accompanied by his Prime Minister, I may mention — apart from people like that who may have an interest, the public officers in the Welfare and the other departments, who have really worked to relieve the effects of the Speightstown flood deserve our congratulations, not the sniping of the Opposition, especially at a time when the real work is before us. The real work of rehabilitation as opposed just to the work of rescue is before us.

Obviously, Sir, I support this Resolution. I would deplore any attempt to seek to make political capital out of the whole event.
4.45 p.m.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, exactly what the Honourable Prime Minister said he would deplore, he succeeded in doing, by talking about the candidate for St. Peter going through Heywoods.

I am a little bit surprised that you cannot come in this Chamber at anytime and seek to bring some type of intelligence to the debate unless you get some people reducing it to the ridiculous, referring to frustrated surveyors when you are looking at it objectively. What surprises me even more, is that from the tone of the debate of the Government it appears to me that nothing will be done for the area, because they have thrown their hands in the air, they say that it is an act of God, although the Honourable Prime Minister did admit just now that it is because Heywoods was designed with a fifty year plan there was no flooding at Heywoods. All I am saying is that if you have designed Heywoods with a fifty year plan, and there is no flooding at Heywoods, we should use the experience of this flood to make sure that it will not recur, and not just throw your hands in the air and say that it is an act of God.

It is also the height of ignorance to suggest that a proper interpretation of the runoff cannot guide you, because not one of them have moved from the point that the

water did leak into the course predicted by the contours and the topographical section of Barbados. Not one of them disagreed with the fact that the water did not go off course, but the water spreaded wider because, as we have said before, of the extraordinary down-pour of rain.

I am inviting this House to let us use this as an experience to correct the problem. The same way that Heywoods has been done, we can certainly seek to bring some type of remedy to the people. If you did not have the floods would you have corrected the river coming down through Tweeside Road and going into River Road? If you did not have the floods at Wotton, would you have introduced that at Wotton? All of those would be exactly where they were if you did not have flooding in those areas.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation. I did not say that there was a remedy possible for Speightstown that we did not choose, but we chose a remedy for Heywoods. Heywoods is not in the path of the water course.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I did not say that. I want the Prime Minister to say whether or not the drainage in and around Speightstown was done on the same fifty-year plan as the drainage in and around Heywoods. And I am inviting the Government to use this experience for the betterment of the people of St. Peter. Why are we getting so flustered and running off because there is to be a by-election? I never interjected the by-election in St. Peter. The Honourable Prime Minister should know me better than that. I do not make my points because there is a by-election or otherwise. He suggested that the map is a by-election map of St. Peter. Yes, it is. I have used it before, but instead of compiling a new map of St. Peter, it is a control map, and can be used intelligently for us to approach the debate in a serious manner.

I am not accusing the Minister of anything. I am saying that we should use the experience of the flood we have just had to make sure that whatever engineering ability is available to the Ministry, we try to alleviate the situation in Speightstown so that whether we plan for a fifty year flood or seventy year flood, the people of Speightstown would have a better opportunity of riding it out without the type of damage and deprivation that they had. If we do not use the experience of this, we will never develop Barbados. You develop by experience. You learn by experience. You have to use experience for your own betterment. Do not just turn your back and say nothing can be done about it, throw your hands in the air and say it is an act of God. It is an act of God, but you are a man of God, and God has given men wisdom to design systems. So do not let us reduce the debate to that level of stupidity. I am saying that we should use that experience and to intelligently approach the problem

to make sure that the people of St. Peter do not suffer again as they have suffered.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: On a point of order, Sir: The honourable Member for St. Philip North has recited the same phrase at least six times in the last three minutes. He keeps repeating, "All I am saying." I submit that he is not supposed to do that under the Standing Orders.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: Mr. Chairman, in summary, what I am saying is that this Parliament should objectively look at the situation. Let us forget what is coming in St. Peter. I am really surprised that Members are interjecting it and talking about fighting out there. I did not introduce it. I did not have it in mind. You can believe that I did not have it in mind. I would have made this same speech if this had happened in St. George, or Christ Church.

I said that the Ministry should make sure that they apply whatever expertise that is available to them, and as an informed layman, I made certain suggestions that you should look at. The Honourable Prime Minister would not deny, if he took the level, that the water backed up right back to about the same level of the road. The Honourable Minister would understand as well that prior to that, you had your wide section of water to drain off any flooding into Speightstown, before you had that kind of intersection. Before you had that, that whole reception valley was free for water to flow, disperse and work its way to the sea. If it was dispersed, you would not have that height of water. Let us put some logic to the discussion.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The level of the water depends on the ultimate outlet into the sea, not an intermediate level. If you build a road in the path of a water course, you may very well spread the water more widely on the side of the road from which it is coming, and it would be more shallow on the other side. The water has to go somewhere. The ultimate outlet of the water depends on the outlet to the sea, and if the water cannot flow quickly enough through the Salt Pond and through the other rivers, it is going to go to a certain height. The road may distribute the points of greatest mid-change, the points of greatest flooding, but it is not going to cause more of a flood than otherwise. In fact, this road is a causeway road, and, therefore, as you said, it spreads the water along a greater area. If the road had not been there, there would have been more flooding in Church Street, where the houses are. The flooding would have spread to Battaleys if the road was not there.

Mr. W. O. FRANKLIN: If the Honourable Prime Minister had spoken to the people just east of the road — let us take it dispassionately, let us not get heated about this — those people would have informed you

about the problem. If you went down there and took the level of the water that reached those people's houses, you will see that it is almost exactly the level of the road, because it formed a type of lake at that particular point, and it was only when the water reached the stage that it could have gotten over the height of the road that you had the run-off. If the road was not there, you would have had that valley and the water would have gone through as before, continuously. I am only inviting the Minister to use this experience and let his experts go back to the drawing-board, let the Prime Minister go back to the fifty year design and see if we can do anything with that particular area to make sure that the flooding does not recur.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE and Dr. R. C. HAYNES rose.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE (Christ Church West): I was on my feet first.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I was here all the time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member does not catch my eye.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You do not see me?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: This is a national issue and I intend to approach the matter from a national point of view, and what better point of view to begin in a constituency that has faced this problem on several occasions and to remind honourable Members in this Committee that this is not the first time that I have adverted to the bad drainage conditions that exist throughout the whole of Barbados. While one could not anticipate 15 inches of rain falling in St. Peter and in parts of St. Lucy, one can anticipate five inches of rain falling in the Christ Church area. I think that if honourable Members will take the opportunity to research the records of this House, they will find that I have previously drawn to the attention of the House, when I was in Opposition, the very bad flooding conditions that exist in the Barnes Land area, in the area of Pavilion Court, in 2nd Avenue, Hart's Gap, and School Gap, St. Matthias' Road next to the Girls' School, just below the Marine wall, the land owned by the Skeete family.

4.55 p.m.

Aside.

Hon. H. deB. FORDE: I am going to deal with the honourable member for St. Michael South Central, my constituent, a little later and represent his interest fairly. I hope that he will see the light and vote for me next time on the basis of the stout representation that I am putting on behalf of his area.

I remember debating this issue in here and making a point that I think has escaped the attention of the Committee. I am concerned that planning permission is given for the development of what are well known flooding areas. In my own constituency planning permission was given for the development of an area of land in 2nd Avenue, Hart's Gap. From the time I was a child growing up I have always known that to be one of the worst flood areas anywhere — planning permission should not have been granted to develop that. We need to demarcate those areas that are prone to flooding and make it quite clear that if the Town Planner is discharging his duty fairly and sensibly, he must either ensure that adequate drainage works are carried out or refuse planning permission.

I do not know where all of the honourable Members were last Friday night, but I was certainly in 2nd Avenue, Hart's Gap, up to my waist in water, helping to evacuate some of my constituents who were threatened by the flood waters. This is no new road, and I cite this for the honourable Member for St. Philip North, because although the Speightstown issue will no doubt be foremost in the mind of each one of us in this debate, we must not make it appear as though that is the only issue, or that this problem is any new problem in this country. In fact, we had to use a boat to evacuate two families from two of the houses.

In the case of Pavilion Court, friends, residents of Hart's Gap in St. Matthias and I actually had to go into Pavilion Court itself and clear the well area which was placed there by the British Forces back in the 19th century, in the 1850s, in order to let out some of the water, while at the same time assisting in the evacuation of three families, including Mr. Barry Gale, an attorney-at-law, whose young child and his wife had to be evacuated from these areas.

The position was serious not because of a new road but because of our failure to answer properly — and I am not talking about the failure of this Government, I am talking about the failure of Barbados as a country — to answer properly the question of drainage. This is a problem that has eluded our engineers, it is one that has eluded successive Governments, and it is one that does not at all call for a partisan approach. We must look at it sensibly and recognise that we have to properly plan over a period of time for preventing flooding from occurring, not merely when we have 15 inches of rain, which you may not fully anticipate, but when we have even the slightest downpour.

Another area in my constituency that floods is Golf Club Road, what is now referred to as Golf Club Meadows, very near to the house of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I think that the

people of that area have good reason to be very angry indeed at the Town Planning Department. Anybody who has the slightest knowledge of that area would know that it is the sort of land for which planning permission should never have been granted. The Town Planning Department proceeded to grant permission. I have been in correspondence with that Department and asked them what they have done about ensuring that any conditions that they have laid down are properly carried out, and their answer to me was that it was a matter for the Ministry of Transport and Works. In the meantime, people have bought land on the basis that the land was capable of development. It is a flood area, it is causing danger to the residents, the Leaches, the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central and other persons living in the area.

I feel that strict directions should be given to the Planning Department in respect of these areas. The result is that Government is at some time or other going to have to deal with the problem that is created by a bad and senseless planning decision, and a failure of executive Ministries to police even the minimum conditions that have been laid down.

In the area of Kings Village, very near to the constituency of the honourable Member for St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) — our two constituencies abound — we have a similar problem. Both the honourable Member and myself have spoken about it. Paddock Road is an example. It is terribly impassable, and it was only because the people there know what to expect that they started evacuating. Those persons who were listening to Voice of Barbados and CBC Radio would have heard the appeal which went out for people to assist older persons in the Kings Village area whose homes were being flooded on the night of the flood. Those are areas in which we should take effective measures to prevent flooding. They are not, in my view, in a normal water-course, in a sense that you may find that part of the Speightstown area was in the watercourse that empties just above the market.

So I am not too happy about the national approach to this issue. The Government has a strong case for approaching development agencies on this matter. It is the sort of matter that no one would quarrel if we had to increase the National Debt to save future generations from this sort of problem. I am sure the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central could not quarrel about borrowing for this purpose, and I do not believe it is beyond the capacity of Barbadians, if they really seriously attend to this problem, to take measures to prevent the occurrences of major flooding.

I am not saying that we can always prevent flooding. No matter how foolproof the measures we have made, the acts of God are things over which we have not got complete control. But we do have some control over

stupid decisions like some made by the Town Planning authorities, to which I have alluded. We have some control over the measures taken for cleaning the wells of Barbados. There must be a regular programme for the inspection and frequent cleaning of wells. I am not satisfied that in my constituency this is attended to properly. I have on the floor of the House, both at the time of the Estimates and on Supplementary Estimates, raised this matter.

I have pointed out that the water from the Garrison comes through Barnes Land right across Hart's Gap to find an outlet to the sea through Pavilion Court and into the Hastings sea. Some of the water goes right under my mother's premises, if you look at the conveyance you will find that we undertook to give to the Government, the Crown in perpetuity, a leeway for the passage of this water. I have not known anybody in the last 25 years coming and inspecting the drainage in that area, and as a result there is flooding in the Beach Court area. Let me declare an interest, because Beach Court is part of my mother's estate, and I would have an interest in that. I am not pleading to this House to provide funds for that. I want to make it clear, however, that the failure to provide regular and proper inspection can one day be very disastrous if we are not careful.

5.05 p.m.

I would like the Minister of Transport to tell me how many suck wells there are for drainage purposes in Barbados, what is the regular programme of cleaning of those wells, how much money is provided for them and, specifically, I would like for him to answer the problem in relation to my own constituency. I would like him also to answer the problem that I have written to the Ministry about on numerous occasions, the failure to place additional wells in what are well known areas, prone to flooding. When Mr. F. G. Smith, Q.C. was Minister of Transport and Works, I raised this matter. When Dr. Caddle was Minister of Transport and Works I raised the matter, and I have, I think, flooded out the Ministry of Transport and Works with letters continually on this, and I do not believe that we have to go on interminably raising these problems.

We do not have, as I said, to look at St. Peter. We can look at no new road and see continual flooding and an evacuation of persons. We had to open the St. Matthias School to deal with the problem. Luckily the people up there are accustomed to it and many of them know how to begin to run. But I do not think that it is fair that we will continue to allow this problem to persist without being able to answer it properly, and I hope that the Minister of Transport and Works can assure me, so that I can take that assurance back to my constituents, that the Government has firm measures for ensuring that the drainage problems in the low-lying areas of Christ Church West, which is a receptive area,

like Speightstown, will be corrected. For the Minister's benefit, in case he does not know, the water comes from Britton's Hill. Some of it comes from as far as Sargeant's Village. Some of it goes through Clapham, Forde's Road, and down Club Morgan. Some of it comes down Dayrell's Road and it accumulates in certain areas. Some of it comes down Golf Club Road, the Hastings area, Hart's Gap area, the Barnes Land area and, of course, in parts of Worthing View. I would think that there should be enough knowledge in this Department and that I can hear of a concrete programme for putting right these problems.

Let me express my regret to all the people in Barbados who have suffered in what is obviously a tragic disaster, and particularly to those persons in the northern parishes who have lost their houses, their belongings — there has been one loss of life — and, obviously, those who have been inconvenienced.

I think that we are glad to see that the Government has brought this Resolution. I hope it will not hesitate to come back to the House if additional funds are called for in order to deal speedily with the matter. I am glad to see that the Minister of State has direct responsibility for this. It should be treated as a matter of greatest urgency, and we should do the remedial work on a national scale and not be diverted by any other event which, fortunately or unfortunately, may happen to fall about this same time.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): I join with all honourable Members who have spoken before in expressing our sympathy at the loss of life, loss of property, and the suffering and discomfort which the people of Barbados, in general, and the people of St. Peter particularly, may have experienced.

In many respects, the speech of the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) has made a significant input to this particular debate and the level at which he is calling for a national approach to this matter is one, I think, that both sides should listen to very carefully. And it is for this reason that I hope that he should get up and support the call that I will now make on behalf of this side of the House for the establishment of an investigation into the drainage problems facing Barbados in general and the people of St. Peter in particular, and that this be approached on a national basis. We are making this particular call because we believe that this is a national problem and that it must be approached on this basis. We believe that we have our priorities wrong when we go to the international agencies and ask for huge sums of money to support a massive road works programme, to the exclusion of dealing with the problems of drainage as a priority matter. Then we have to believe that something is wrong with our planning, and it may be that the Planning and

Priorities Committee of the Government, so-called, may very well have its priorities wrong.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: On a point of order, Sir: I am sure that the honourable Member does not want to mislead the House, but he might be inadvertently doing precisely that, in which case he would be in transgression of the Standing Orders.

The fact is that when approaching its financial agencies for road building, a significant component of the funds is attributable to drainage. That is one of the reasons why the By-Pass Road is safe, because it has a significant drainage component in it, and whenever roads are built, any road, there is a very substantial component of drainage, and, therefore, by extension, new roads mean a significant improvement in the drainage system.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I will leave someone else to deal with this particular pattern of argument. I am not dealing with gutters at the side of the roads, and slipper drains and maybe the culverts under the roads. I am well aware that in some roads you put in some drainage. That is not the major problem that we are talking about. The honourable Member for St. Philip North has already explained that the problems arise, in fact, from the nature of the terrain in Barbados, that as it rises in steps or terraces out of the sea to the highest point, which is just over 1 000 feet, the water flows from the highest points down to the lowest points for outlet into the sea, and we should not be dealing with the problem when it comes down near the low-lying areas or in the low-lying areas, but we should look at the problem much higher up.

This is a national problem. I am certain almost every Member in this House has problems of drainage in his or her constituency, and our problem is that this amount of money that is being requested may prove to be inadequate for the purposes indicated. We are forbidden by the Standing Orders to call for an increase in the amount, but we would very much like to see that a more substantial amount was being requested to deal with the problem.

5.15 p.m.

Let me look at this whole question of the flood as an act of God. I believe no one will deny that we do not have control over the rainfall. That is within the province of the Almighty. However many inches of rain fell, and if it was unprecedented as was said over there, or if it was a very large amount which had not fallen for the last 10, 20, or 50 years, the fact is that even if smaller quantities of rain had fallen, there would have been problems of flooding in most of the constituencies of this country. So let us put this question that it is an act of God aside and not believe we can excuse ourselves from dealing with the problems that we have in hand.

I know that when the honourable Member for Christ Church West mentions his constituency, he is merely using this as an example of the problems that we have to deal with. When I raise examples in my own constituency of St. Michael South, this is illustrative of the problems that we have to deal with. Earlier today I made reference to the fact that there was a question on the Order Paper before the floods came and beat upon our houses. I raised that question from in September of this year that there is flooding in certain areas of my constituency. Up to now that question has not been answered, but yet they would give the impression that they are so careful and so sedulous about the problems facing this country and that they have everything in hand, but yet we do not have the problems being dealt with.

From 1977 and before, almost yearly, I have been raising the question of flooding in my constituency, and religiously every year I have to call upon the Fire Services to come and pump out water so that residents of my constituency can get in and out of their homes. Up to today before this House actually met, there was still water surrounding the buildings of Luke's Avenue and Clarke's Avenue. The Fire Service was pumping water from in Brittons Hills. I was up there in my rubber boots in that part of the constituency. I believe each one of us can speak in this kind of way. In Grant's Avenue there is flooding, and the problem has to do with the existing wells that we have, the need for further wells and the need for more equipment to pump off water quickly and efficiently when the flooding occurs, because it is a question of the prevention of flooding and also the question that when flooding occurs, we take the necessary remedial action to abate the matter as quickly as possible.

This is really a national matter that needs to be investigated, and that is why from this side we are calling for the establishment of this particular Committee. I sincerely hope that if the Government pays heed to what is said from this side and sets up that kind of Committee of Enquiry that they will pay attention to each representative of each constituency in this country, because we all represent the people of this country, and when disaster comes, we are all one, we are all Barbadians in disaster and indeed out of disaster.

The fact is that in this country the problems of people tend to be given too little priority, and I believe that we have got on a national basis to try and give a new social approach to the problems of people and the problems which these people encounter and experience. Our problem stems from our own political system, because we strut around as representatives; but whether we are in Government or in Opposition, unless you are on the front bench — and even sometimes the front bench members find it difficult to get things in their

constituencies — we do not really have any power in this country. We come in here, talk sometimes, and we beg.

A distinguished former foreign Minister of this country is heard pleading for his constituency. A former Minister of Communications and Works is there pleading that the money provided is not enough. His constituency, he says, makes a great contribution to the development of this country. They are all pleading, so something has got to be wrong with our system, and it starts with the fact that the parliamentary representatives, each one of us, has no status and no power in our constituencies, and no control over anything in this country. We have status in terms of the name "Member of Parliament", "Parliamentary Representative", but when it comes to getting things done, it is useless in this kind of political system that we have, which is not really meeting the needs of our country, so we have got to look stark fundamentally to a rude and brass approach to our own political system.

When it comes to drainage, it is not a question of the Government saying that it is drawing upon the resources of the different agencies of Government and of course mentioning Owen Arthur and not mentioning what Sybil Leacock does in a disaster. We cannot have that kind of approach. If we are dealing with disaster, all of these interested groups have to come in and have a say in it, and I hope that this money which is going to the Central Emergency Relief Organisation will be so channelled that it meets the needs of all those who are suffering. CERO is potentially a most important institution in this country, and I hope it will be given the necessary resources to do the job that is required to be done. I know it has the leadership, I also know it has a lot of problems in it, but I hope that it will be given the necessary resources so that it can tackle and deal with those problems on a national basis.

In this whole matter of flooding, nobody in official circles has asked anybody from this side of the House of the problems that we have been encountering in our constituencies. You have thousands of people working for the Government, somehow or another, we have one side called Government another side called Opposition, and yet we do not get that kind of co-operation in dealing with national problems. It appears as though in such matters you are expected to go cap in hand and to beg to be given a little marl fill here, can you send the Fire Service to pump off this thing for us, I will salute and kick my heels.

We have got to have a new approach to these problems in this country, a new social conscience, and I make the repetition for the call to establish an enquiry or investigation into the causes of the drainage. No one is saying that it was not an act of God who sent down the rain, but if your house leaks there is no point in saying it

was an act of God. Of course, it was an act of God that the water came from on high, but you have to take the necessary steps in order to try to deal with the particular problems to the extent that they are within your power.

I want finally to dismiss a few cobwebs made by the honourable Member, my friend, for St. Andrew. The idea that a Minister must not know anything about his Ministry is the old-fashioned, eighteenth century cult of the amateur; this idea that you must go in there, you must not know anything about it, that your civil servants and the technical experts are the ones who know, and all your expertise is in judging the advice that is given to you. That is old-fashioned nonsense.
5.25 p.m.

There is no harm being knowledgeable or even expert in a given area, so long as you have the other qualities that are required, that is, to listen and to assess information. The Minister of Communications and Works says that he has that kind of balance. I think we would have to try him out on the Opposition benches to give him that kind of testing through steel before we can give him that particular accolade. We have to dismiss that as the cult of the amateur coming out of the old-fashioned Westminster model on that particular matter.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, I certainly would like to join all the previous speakers in expressing my sympathy to those people in St. Peter who have suffered as a consequence of the flood.

(Hon. H. deB. FORDE: Christ Church.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: St. Peter and elsewhere in Barbados.

I would not blame the Barbados Labour Party for rain. The rain was an act of God. The fact that the loss of life was limited, that the loss of property was limited, that the damage was limited, was also an act of God. But all the intervening are largely due to acts of man. Let us get that straight.

LEAVE TO SIT AGAIN

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that you do now report progress to His Honour the Speaker and ask for leave to sit again.

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

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

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be now suspended for ten minutes.

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

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

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

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

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The House is in Committee of Supply. The honourable Member for St. Michael South Central.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, as I started, I set the framework of my contribution in the context that the Barbados Labour Party could not be blamed for the rain since that was an act of God. I also said that it was also an act of God that the damage in St. Peter was limited to the extent which we have seen. It is however my contention that all that intervened between those two events are largely due to acts of man, in particular due to neglect of the parish of St. Peter and bad planning by this Government over the past eight years, and I have come to this conclusion for a variety of reasons.

When I heard of the flooding in St. Peter, it seemed to me rather odd that St. Peter, which as far as I know, for many a year has not been subjected to that kind of flooding, should be in such a state, I therefore decided to do some research on the problem and I went first of all and got one of the earliest maps of Barbados. It is a map which you will find in front of a well known history of Barbados of 1657, that is, Ligon's History. In that map, there is incontrovertible evidence that the drainage area for the parish of St. Peter starts in the area of Speightstown and climbs up to Mount Iberton and then over into the Boscobelle area. It is clearly shown here on the original map also going right through the Whim.

I have talked to a lot of people from St. Peter. I have done a lot more background research. I also went and looked very carefully at the Journals of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, August, 1962, and investigated the word of Edward Price, which sets out very clearly what has been happening to the drainage in that parish. I will get back to that. I also went and did an investigation of a hydrological study entitled, "Our

Water Supply" by W. H. E. Garod, which was published in the Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society in May 1952. I also investigated, as background, the contents of the commemorative issue of the Journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, 1627-1977. It is against this background that I can speak with authority on what took place in St. Peter.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: When the honourable Member was doing this research, where was the honourable Member for St. Michael South? In rubber boots in the Bay Land!

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: No, Sir. I was in St. Michael South Central and St. Peter during the day, and during the night, I was at home doing my research.

Let me tell you what the factors are. The honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) pointed out that that area drains some 2 000 acres. The background is very simple. In the early days when cane holes used to be dug in fields, a larger absorptive area was formed for the rain that fell and it held on to a lot of the water that fell there. You just have to look at the multiplication factor in the surface area when a cane hole is dug. The second thing is that by statute law introduced in this country in the seventeenth century, it was mandatory to have wells and sucks adjacent to the roads of plantations and to maintain roads from the fields that led to those wells in order to drain the fields and stop the water from going on to the roads.

The fundamental thing in the early stages of Barbados was that the drainage in Barbados was excellent until the process of modernization started, and haphazard planning under this present Barbados Labour Party Administration. As far back as 1949, Sir Grantley Adams introduced in this House a Bill for \$1 million, which many people thought was exorbitant, because he understood the hydrological impact which that must make and the impact on drainage in building up the backbone of the parish of St. Peter, which has now been severely fractured and dislocated by the present Administration.

In order to prevent malaria and yellow fever....

(Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Yellow fever?)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Mr. Chairman, it was the main area of preventive health in Barbados to have a proper drainage system. The fact is that in the modern means of dealing with the mosquito, people here have de-emphasized drainage in public health protection, and that is one of the problems. It was mandatory for survival to have an adequate draining system that was predicated on the fact that the island slope upwards from the sea on one side and downwards to the sea on the other side.

In Carl Watson's work you will see a beautiful description of the escarpment and various ravines that correspond, and this map shows you clearly how this problem developed in St. Peter.

5.50 p.m.

I have no doubt that the By-pass Road and the Heywoods Development contributed to the flooding down there. Barbados is not the first place that that has happened. We have seen it before in Jamaica, where a hotel was built at the estuary of an ancient river and nobody bothered to check the old maps. There was the same kind of debate in the Parliament of Jamaica, and the Government tried to defend their position in the same way the Government is trying to defend their position now. When it was flooded out a second time, it was only then that a historian pointed out to them that the fundamental problem was that the hotel was built at the estuary of an ancient river. Then they had to go and spend millions of dollars to try and build a dam to block further flooding of that hotel which is just on the way from Ocho Rios going into Montego Bay, a road that I have travelled on many and many occasions.

If you look back through the hydrological studies of Barbados, you will find that loss of water is of extreme economic disadvantage to Barbados. We throw away all of the water during the periods of high rainfall and then you ask people to cut back on their water use, or you cut off their water supply, when the reservoirs are empty. This is because our road system has been allowed to degenerate to a point where, as soon as you get a heavy flood, almost every road in Barbados becomes virtually impassable. In the area that I live in, Golf View Terrace, you cannot walk on Golf Club Road or Dayrells Road. Those are just like all the roads in Barbados when it rains, and everyone knows of the discomfiture to pedestrians and motorists alike. That is due to chronic neglect of the road system in Barbados by this present Barbados Labour Party Government, and you cannot escape that charge.

If we had paid attention to the wells, if we had paid attention to the drainage above Speightstown over the years, if we had continued to clear the Whim Gully and did not cut down the branches and dropped them in the gully, but had removed them, as they had been removed in the past, you would not have got that torrent of water going down towards Church Street. The water would have gone off on either side of the Whim Gully and it would have trickled down towards the seaside. So the fundamental thesis advanced by the Honourable Minister of Finance in relation to the Whim is incorrect. What happened because of the lack of drainage is that a greater volume of water was actually delivered down towards the Speightstown area. In this context, it is a good thing that Doc Husbands' house was not moved, because I believe that helped to save

some of the residents. I understand the downstairs was washed out, but nevertheless the house formed a kind of breakwater at that particular junction. Otherwise, there would have been more trouble.

There is much information that can be got which will re-emphasize my point of the kind of negligence you get here. You can look at the work of Dr. Alfred Sen and the work of Otis Starkey. I went through all of this stuff, because I really wanted to understand what is going on, and I enjoyed it. In fact, if I knew on Wednesday what I know today about the gradings of Barbados, I would not be living where I am living now, because I have a better knowledge of the problems relating to drains.

The fundamental problem you have to deal with, before you go rushing to the IDB to try and borrow money, is to start looking at the drainage system where the water comes from, the high ground. Get those canals and wells sorted out and get a proper drainage system. I am not suggesting that you go back to cane holes, because, obviously, it would be uneconomic — in fact it was referred to way back in the 18th century as being an uneconomic way of growing canes — but find some mechanism of localizing the water as much as possible when it falls on the higher terrain of Barbados. If that is done, there will be less water to come down, with less force, with more water going through the coral structure in due course, for recapturing for proper use in our water system.

This money will hardly deal with the problems of St. Peter. St. Peter has been ravaged. Its agricultural sector has been seriously damaged, not only by the rain but because of the drainage problems. So most of Government's agencies would have to bring more and more assistance to the people if they are to be properly looked after. But I must warn that because of the event which is likely to take place in St. Peter in the next two or three weeks, any such assistance should be done with the sense of responsibility which is expected from a Government that can put good management before instant political considerations.

A tractor used to be down by the Salt Pond under many Democratic Labour Party Ministers of Communications and Works to clear the area that lies directly to the sea. It was this Administration that removed that tractor, and therefore contributed to the back-up of water between the new road and the sea by the Salt Pond. The man who looked after the tractor was fired because they thought he was a member of the Democratic Labour Party and that was why he was given the job. If that tractor was down there, then there would have been less flooding, because the opening of the Salt Pond to the sea would have been kept open, as it was kept open by the Right Honourable Member for St. John, and under his

predecessor, the late Dr. Cummins, and under Dr. Cummins' predecessor, the late Sir Grantley Adams — people who clearly understood the importance of drainage to the economy and to individuals within this country.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Time.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I have only got started. Is my time gone?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I am sure the time clock is still working. You can come back again.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS and Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW rose.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable Member has spoken at least three times already, and I have not spoken yet.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Two honourable Members are on their feet.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The one who is not the honourable Member for St. John will have to sit.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Mr. Chairman, I was going to ask the Leader of the Opposition for his indulgence, because I am not going to be very long.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I am making my submission right here and now, with the indulgence of the Chairman of the Committee.

Asides

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: You have to stand up to catch the eye. You cannot sit down and talk to the Chair.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Prime Minister.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I would like to speak.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW (St. John): He has spoken three times already.

First, I should like to say that we owe a debt of gratitude for the honourable Member for St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin). I am not an engineer. I can only speak as a Barbadian and as a representative of the people in two constituencies, which, although it does not have any sea — the constituency which you Your Honour represent part of it, and the constituency of St. John — certainly have a lot of water running all the time down to the sea, and we did have flooding last week when we had an enormous amount of rainfall.

6.00 p.m.

There is an unfortunate tendency in this place when anybody has any particular expertise or experience whereby he can make a contribution to a debate for people who sometimes cannot even read and write — and I do not mean that literally — to decry and run down the particular honourable Member. So you will find that although I spent seven years of my life after leaving school in the aviation industry, if I make an intervention about aviation all the Air Vice Marshals and Air Commodores on the other side will want to say that I do not know what I am speaking about.

If the honourable Member for St. Philip North, who is one of the most highly qualified adjusters and surveyors in the whole Caribbean, makes an intervention, he is accused of not understanding what he is speaking about. I just want to inform honourable Members that the East Coast Road, which is the first major road project in the 20th century in Barbados, was constructed as a result of the engineering research done by the honourable Member for St. Philip North and a gentleman called Mr. Hecheviera. The honourable Member for St. Philip North was specifically assigned and he did all of the drainage studies for the East Coast Road. From the time that road was built I have not heard of anyone not being able to pass or any houses in St. Andrew being washed away. He may not say it himself, but I will say it for him. I was very impressed by the factual presentation which he made. I am not a hydraulic engineer, I am not an engineer at all, but we need a certain amount of wisdom.

I will give you some facts now. In October 1970, in the parishes of St. Peter and St. Lucy we had 23 inches of rain within 24 hours.

(Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Not true!)

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: It is absolutely true. I became aware that we were going to get heavy rainfall because I was at Charnocks inspecting the radar, and although it is not a ten centimetre weather radar, it was showing up on the radar. I then went with Mr. Willie Alleyne to the north of the island and I still have photographs that I took. The St. Lucy top soil was washed completely off, exposing the rock on hundreds of acres of land. There was no flooding in St. Peter. There was flooding around Discovery Bay because of the terrible drainage, which, I believe, you would still have. There was flooding at Worthing, and I am surprised that the honourable Member who is so completely parochial in his outlook and has on his blinkers today is aware that Worthing is a bad flood area; that he could not venture pass Hart's Gap and go up to Worthing where with even one millimetre of rain you get flooding outside of Sandy Beach Hotel, and also by Bunyon, by Big B supermarket. I really should like to congratulate the honourable Member for removing the focus of the debate from St. Peter alone and drawing to the attention of the Government that there is an islandwide problem.

I am just stating facts, that when there were 23 inches of rain in October. And I will tell you the periods that we had heavy rain, because the Right Honourable Prime Minister has probably seen the belated issue of the Barbados Sugar Review. In this issue which has not come out for a long time, but which came out maybe a couple of weeks ago, they have presented the rain tables from 1847.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: On a point of elucidation, Sir, if the honourable Member does not mind giving way. The standard authority for rainfall in this country is nothing from the Barbados Sugar Review or anything. It is a series of studies of the rain from 1844 to the present time collected by the Cave family on a daily basis. If the honourable Member wants to know what the weather conditions were on the day he was born, I can send to Ilaro Court, which I am going to do right now, and get my copy of it.

Dr. Cave was the Director of Agriculture, his son carried it on, and a third generation of the Caves brought it up to date to 1970. That is the last year of the supplement which is published. It gives daily figures. It will tell you that the most amount of rain that has ever fallen in a day, if I remember correctly, fell on Andromeda on the night of October 1, 1970. The next most happened also to be that night. The most that fell in St. Peter was in 1901. The figure of 23 inches is completely phoney. I can assure the honourable Member that, whether he has the sugar industry thing or not, they are not the figures.

(Mr. P. M. GREAVES: It was 22 inches).

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: It is not 22 or 23.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: The members of the Barbados Sugar Federation will be pleased to hear that the figures are phoney. I do not understand the honourable Member getting up and attacking me for quoting from the Barbados Sugar Review. The records to which he referred were purchased by the Government of Barbados during my regime, because those records were in danger of being either discarded or some such thing, and we paid for them. I am aware of those records. I am now surprised to hear that he inherited them at Ilaro Court. They have no right up there, they belong to the Ministry of Agriculture. But to give it a little authenticity, he says he is sending to Ilaro Court for them.

I was flying with Mr. Willie Alleyne, who is one of our best photographers, on the day in October when we had 23 inches of rain. I believe on the same day on which 25 inches fell on Andromeda we had 23 inches of rain in St. Peter and St. Lucy. On that day, and I have photographs showing the cloud coverage, flying at about 1400 feet because of the lowness of the cloud, we came in from Maycocks, went over to Mount Gay and then

came down to St. Peter. I still have the photographs. Then we went to Drax Hall in St. George and took some pictures of Drax Hall as well. We had 23 inches of rain, but there was no flooding.

In November 1948 there were 10½ inches of rain; in 1975 there were 14 inches of rain. You will find during the months of October and November that you will invariably have very, very heavy rainfall, except for the years 1960, 1968 and 1983.

The point which I am making is that Speightstown has never been known to be a flood area. The flood areas are in the constituency of the honourable Member for Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde), in Worthing, and I want to issue a warning to the Government right now. The gates at the Stream in Graeme Hall used to be run twice every day – the honourable Member would know the name of the caretaker who used to run the gates – but they have not been run for eight years. The only reasons why we have not had excessive water or overflows in that area is because Mr. Lisle Emptage dug a lake, which varies in depth from eight to 18 feet, which has acted like a syphon, preventing excessive flooding in that area.

What the honourable Member said about Town Planning is correct. When we acquired Wildey Plantation, we allowed the owners of Wildey, the Webster family, to develop the rab land, as it were. The land on which Cable and Wireless stands, the land on which the housing development stands, the land on which the CDB stands – all of that we took over from Wildey Plantation. It was specifically stated that that depression, let me put it that way, stretching from Aberdere and coming all the way down to Roodal's Drive-in, should not be built on. I drove up there last night to check, and houses are being built in that depression. The next rainfall we are going to get, houses are going to be going down Rendezvous Hill sailing.
6.10 p.m.

I have pointed out the problem with Maxwell Pond. There was an old expression in Barbados about Maxwell Pond, something could not happen till Maxwell Pond run dry. Maxwell Pond is running dry now because they are filling it up with a lot of garbage and debris, and I have pointed out the danger of not following up our development control in this island, as the honourable Member for Christ Church West has done here so ably today.

This is not a partisan matter. It happened in our regime and it is happening worse now, because permission is being granted now to do all kinds of things in places where building was prohibited. I think people sit down in an office and they present a brief drawing with lots and so on shown. Nobody presents any contour survey of the land. Nobody goes out there and studies the drainage.

Putting in gutters is not drainage. Putting in gutters is only defining the sides of the roads, as far as I am concerned. Barbados is the only place in the world in which you have open sewers.

I should like to point out that the Garrison Savannah should never flood because there are drains underneath the Garrison Savannah, including the one that exits under the property to which the honourable Member refers. Another one exits under the Holiday Inn and the Restaurant and another one exits by the Barrier Bridge just above the Ministerial Building in Bay Street, and those drains are so well constructed that you could walk in almost all of the points of the culverts. But what has been happening is that they have allowed those drains to be blocked up. You could get out at Dayrell's Road normally and walk underground all the way down to the Holiday Inn, because those drains were kept opened. Instead of that, we celebrated Independence in the Garrison way. We did not celebrate it in the Garrison because they have all those drains plugged up.

The Royal Engineers who were here understood about drainage. They did drainage at the Pavilion Court. They did drainage at the Garrison and all over the island. They have completely ignored it, and all we have been asking on this side is that they investigate now, from A to Z, the drainage problems in Barbados. Let us investigate the way in which planning permission is given to pieces of paper without any contour surveys showing how you are going to get rid of the surface run-off.

The honourable Member for St. Thomas, the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister, mentioned that since they built the bridge at Bridge Road, we have not got any floods. You have not had any flooding there for years, because one of the first things we did as a result of the bad experiences of 1948 was to remove all the people from Delamere Land all the way back up to St. Thomas, to Jack-in-the-Box Gully, all the way down to the back of Bibby's Lane, and all the way down past the Belle Gully, and put in suck wells in order to take off all the water before it reached Bridgetown.

We cannot afford to allow this terrific amount of surface run-off that is going on even now in a light shower, because the more asphalt roads you have, the more surface run-off. We have a natural underground reservoir in Barbados that we should be replenishing all the time with a proper system. This is fundamental, so I do not regard this as any occasion to thank the Barbados Labour Party. I am very much concerned about planning permission in the way it is being granted. I am concerned Maxwell Pond is being built up.

We expressed concern to the honourable Member for Christ Church West Central (Mr. M. A. King). His neighbours said that he is building up a pond aback of him. He said that is the case, but they are putting up some big satellite dishes and blocking his light, so he is only retaliating by

building up the pond. But do you know that in even something simple like filling up a pond — this was a shallow pond; he was only levelling his lawn — his neighbours complained saying that he was throwing the water on them.

We are in a very ticklish situation. Our top soil is only about 2 ft. 6 ins and I saw on that same day in October, 1970, acres and acres of land in St. Lucy that had gone straight into the sea at Archer's, at Maycock's and by Fryers Well. But, strange enough, in the Heywood/Speightstown area, there was some water running down to the Salt Pond but there was no flooding, so you can draw your own conclusions from that.

There was a time when if we had a hurricane or fire in Barbados, we could go to the Housing Authority. If we had a fire last night and three houses got burnt, we were given three houses in place of them. I think it was Mr. Louis Redman, another engineer of the Housing Authority, who designed some concrete houses with slabs. You put up the stanchions and then you drop in the siding. We had a fire in St. John in Kendall Village and within three days that family was housed in as commodious and stronger accommodation than they had before.

I have had during the past six months — in one case it is more than a year — two fires in St. John, in the Coach Hill/Society area. Up to now, those people have not been able to get any accommodation. One family had to move all the way to St. Patrick's in Christ Church. I think the honourable Member for Christ Church West would know that family. The other family, I think the husband works at Society Plantation, has not been able to get a house. Although they have been able to get a little financial assistance and contributions, they could not get a house from Housing Authority at all, and even within the time period — there was a time-frame — they would have to look for some \$28 000.

We have to have a reserve of houses for calamities. Put down your slabs and so on in the yard at Country Road and when you have a fire, the next morning move in two lorries and give the people a house in return. If you had done that, then these people in St. Peter would not be homeless tonight.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I would like to deal with the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. When he started off by saying that three inches of rain fell in St. Peter and St. Lucy in 1970, I feared that we were in for a number of misrepresentations. I believe that what he has is a chart saying that the average rainfall in Barbados for that month was that amount. I have sent for the other charts.

The fact is that the nights of October 1 and 2 of 1970 were the nights of the Bridgetown flood. That was a well known Bridgetown flood comparable to the flood of 1949

and the flood of 1919. The Speightstown floods in this century would be those of 1908 and 1984. They are the two flood areas in Barbados. There are roads which flood. Hole-town should not be a flood area, but Discovery Bay has blocked, to some extent, the free flow of the water through the hole, and therefore in 1970 Discovery Bay flooded also. The areas that flood in Barbados are the areas of dense human settlement on the West Coast.
6.20 p.m.

Government headquarters was once a swamp. It was a swamp from which the soldiers in the Garrison caught yellow fever sufficiently to kill more of them than Napoleon could kill in the entire peninsular War, and when you fill in a swamp you get difficulties. All through the Bay Land, Clarke's Avenue, was part of a river from which John Beckles used to supply water to the 18th century ships calling in Barbados. Where you have the shed on the Esplanade was the mouth of the river where you used to collect the water, put it in barrels and sell to the sailing ships. So all by Gullyfield Avenue, all through there in the Bay Land, is a former river that drained southern St. Michael, and this is the reason why not the Barbados Labour Party, but the people who built up the Bay Land and Bridgetown are responsible, and that is the reason why you get flooding. If you look at the old maps of the Bay Estate, the maps will show where Mr. Sobers, who is Sir Gary's great grandfather, had his house when it was still an estate, you will see there was a river there, and that is why there is flooding.

It is very misleading to tell the House that Speightstown is not a flood area. In the nature of Barbados, since, in the classical and immortal words of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central Barbados slopes up on one side and slopes down on the other — wonderful words, a truism that I congratulate him on having learnt since last Wednesday — since the slope down in Barbados is down to a beach, that is different in character from the East Coast beach. It tends to be a beach where sand builds up at the mouth of the river.

The whole of western Barbados was a series of swamps and blind ponds when the first Europeans came here. There was a blind pond that ran from the relatively high ground at Needhams Point right into Bridgetown; the Graeme Hall swamp — the road from Graeme Hall is only a causeway — was another of those blind ponds semi-fresh-semi-salt; going north the Indian River at Brandon was another large blind pond; and there was a blind pond where the Spring Garden power station is now — by "blind pond" I mean ponds in the sand that only escaped to the sea when there was a heavy rain — going up to the salt pond at Maycocks Bay and all these places. The character of the west coast of Barbados

was not of a lagoon character like the coral islands in the Pacific, but a series of ponds. Sandy Lane pond was the most stinking pond in our life time until the hotel was built. What has happened is that at all or most of these points construction work has gone on and the ponds have been drained, therefore throwing water into other places.

In Speightstown, one can presume that the salt pond had an outlet in pre-historic times, but people built in Speightstown, they raised the banks of the salt pond, they blocked off the water, built a bridge and therefore Speightstown became one of the places not where water used to collect over a wide area, but where the water was concentrated between houses, just like southern Bridgetown, just like Delamere Land and all the other places that flood in town. These are potential flood areas in Barbados, and all palliatives aimed at dealing with these areas are going to come across the problem that you have to carry the water somewhere, that rain will fall. Less rain falls now than used to fall before the island was settled, but still a fair amount of rain falls. We get a heavy tropical rainfall for three months of the year, sufficient to support a rain forest — Barbados was a rain forest in the year 1600 — and the rain has to go somewhere.

The reason why I am not going to be critical of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition is that the more he went on, the more he reminded me of some words of wisdom that I heard in the year 1971, and as I thought where I had heard those words of wisdom, I realised that I was hearing them as I had spoken them. I do not expect that any honourable Member on the other side or many on this side may recall that when we presented our candidates in Independence Square — the only time we have ever done so — in the 1971 general election, the subject I was asked to speak on and decided to speak on for my party was "Drainage", and virtually all the points being made by the Leader of the Opposition were in that speech. I am not suggesting he read the speech; I am absolutely sure he did not waste his time, he was too busy putting forward the philosophy of the Democratic Labour Party which was to "Keep Dipper Skipper". No question of policy informed the party's councils upon that occasion, but the points that he made are good points. Perhaps we have both been trained in the same school. You know they said that any two German Generals who had passed through the General Staff course — he was talking about air marshals and so on — given a problem would come up with the same solution, because there is only.....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I think it is only fair that I inform the Committee that the time for this Resolution is running out. We have about ten minutes more. That time will probably be taken as the wind up speech.

Rt. Hon. E. W. BARROW: I should like to say that I concede that we both went to LSE, but the honourable Member only went for one night.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I will try and hustle.

The point is that there are common problems that cause the drainage difficulties in Barbados. These problems could be identified from the date that the island became built up. The problems mainly are a shift of people from living, in the main, in country districts, where their houses do not rest on concrete foundations and they are surrounded by earth, to moving into the urban areas, which are more subject to flooding than the country districts, and cover the natural drainage of open ground with concrete.

When you build up Regency Park, put in roads, yards and garages, the water cannot go into the earth any more — it eventually will run off down on to the Maxwell Road and into Graeme Hall and outside Big B. I would not have to go through every district. This is also the fundamental cause of flooding in the low lying areas of the western coast of Barbados, and as Speightstown is developed more and the quality of urbanisation changes in Speightstown, no matter what the Government does, there is going to be more water to deal with. That is the real point, because when you put down concrete, you automatically provide a surface that is going to discharge more water into the drains.

Having said that, I wonder if I really need to say any more about Speightstown not being a flood area. It has to be obvious to everybody that indeed Speightstown shares with Bridgetown the flood conditions that the whole western coast of the island is liable to share. I have got the figures here. In 1970, there was 23.16 inches of rain in October, but that is the island-wide average taken from a number of stations. It varied from 36 inches in St. Joseph to 12 inches in south-eastern coastal districts. The flooding was in Bridgetown; that was the Bridgetown flood. If the honourable Member wants to see an analysis of the winds, the barometric pressure, how much rain fell in St. John and St. Philip, the appearance of the clouds in St. John, I would be glad to send over the book to him. But the significance of October 1970 was that this was the most amount of rain that ever fell in Bridgetown, not St. Peter.

6.30 p.m.

The most amount of rain in St. Peter fell in July 1901, and created a major flood. The island's rainfall in 1901 is the greatest ever known. There was an average of over 90 inches of rain in Barbados that year. Nineteen inches fell in July. The greatest fall of rain in the whole 114 year-old period was recorded at a station in St. Peter. It amounted to 18.80 inches at that time. No part of the island had a total of less than five inches. It was caused by a hurricane that passed near to the island.

All the rainfall records are to be found in this book here. They will put matters into perspective. The honourable Member may think that this book belongs to him, but it has had my signature in it for a very, very great number of years. It is my personal copy.

I was moved to amusement when I heard the speech of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. When I heard him quoting Ligon, I decided to ring Ilaro Court to make sure my copy was safe. I have here, a First Edition, I believe, of Ligon, which was once owned by the poet Thomas Gray. If anybody wishes to come and see his signature, I will be glad to show honourable Members. This is the 1673 edition. I think the honourable Member has a reprint, the green reprint that was available from the Cloister Bookshop a few years ago.

If the honourable Member is able to identify from Ligon's Map which shows a wild boar by Four Hill, camels in St. John, wild boars in Britton's Hill, a large river near somewhere called Marshall, which shows Speightstown half way down the coast, and shows three more long rivers, one running from St. Andrew right down into St. Lucy, a river which I do not recognize, if the honourable Member is able to identify any of this, including the men with prongs on their head carrying bows and arrows, and invites the House of Assembly to say that we should have looked at Ligon's Map — this is the original that I am holding in my hand — if the honourable Member is honestly able to tell me that from a map showing camel, wild boars and men in suits of armour that the engineers of MTW or the Cabinet of Barbados must look at that map to determine how to build Heywoods.....

(Certain remarks made by the Rt. Hon. Member for St. Thomas and the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central were ordered to be expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.)

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: The honourable Member might not be aware that one of my minor interests is the history of Barbados, particularly the maps. I have a complete collection of the printed maps of Barbados, as far as I know, even including Thaland Mapp's little map that the Cunard Gallery has never seen, so I am not unfamiliar with this subject.

The honourable Member for St. Michael South, who knows Ilaro Court, may be in a position to say if he has noticed that on the walls of Ilaro Court do hang a complete collection of printed maps of Barbados. So the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central need not overawe anybody by pretending to an antiquarian knowledge which is not vouchsafed to other Members of the House. More than ever I realize what the honourable Member for St. George South (Hon. L. R. Tull) says about his brother-in-law is true, that he is the only man educated to his level without the slightest knowledge of literary, historical and antiquarian matters demonstrated at any level whatsoever.

The honourable Member talked about Sen and Starkey. Dr. Alfred Sen was brought here. He had a daughter at the Convent with me. I remember him well. He died of an ailment caught down in the well at Cave Hill, which he found covered with a lot of decomposed sheep which were polluting the water supply of Barbados. Dr. Sen came here to deal with the underground water supplies in Barbados. He was a water engineer.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: On a point of order: I said it was a hydrological study, dealing with the underground water. Also, you would find not only in the references but in the text, indications of the ravines and the drainage above the water, and the places where you get the breaks at the edges of the cliffs. In one particular part, I remember he pointed out where you get a five foot break where the water goes down into the coral.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You cannot ignore underground supply and its relation to on the surface supply.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Please. The honourable Member is not on a point of order.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Starkey wrote a book in 1939 called "The Economic Geography of Barbados". I remember reading that book as a teenager for enjoyment. I did not have to read it this last Wednesday. The honourable Member must have a little more humility and understand that there are people in the House better read, more knowledgeable and more capable of extracting a fact from a premise than he is. The Leader of the Opposition is one. Mr. Sandiford is another. Henry Forde is another.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The time has come. You have just about one minute more to wind up.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: One other point was made in the speech of the honourable Member for St.

Michael South Central that needs answering. It is ridiculous to say that failing to clear a gully causes a higher volume of water to go down. The volume of water is the same. The honourable Member said that if you do not clear a gully that the water would come down with great force and it would not overflow. He is obviously....

Certain remarks made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central were ordered to be expunged from the Record by Mr. CHAIRMAN.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will have to extend your time.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: I think I can clarify this matter. It was not the Member for St. Michael South Central who made that point. It was your own Minister of Communications and Works who said were it not for the fallen trees and so on across the Whim Gully,....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you elucidating? You are not elucidating.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: On a point of order, Sir. The honourable Member for St. Michael South is attributing words to me that I never spoke. I never said anything about any fallen trees in the Whim Gully.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: He is putting words in your mouth.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Right.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Prime Minister, please continue.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I actually copied down the words of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. "A higher volume of water cascades down" — they are his exact words. And he is wrong! When the gully is full, it overflows on to the road. If you clear the gully, the same volume of water rushes down the gully, but with greater force. It is only if the trees act as a plug and the plug comes out that you will get a surge. But putting trees in the gully has no effect on the water one way or another.

As a matter of fact, the Chief Technical Officer at the Ministry of Transport and Works, when I put this same point to him about whether the trees in the Whim Gully, which I went to see, had worsened the flooding, he said they had made it easier. He pointed out, a point that should have been made in the debate and has not been made, that the Ministry of Transport and Works not immediately in connection with drainage, but in connection with beach erosion as a result of a beach erosion study, is now formulating plans to dam certain of the west coast gullies and put suck wells to catch the overflow because the down flow of water is causing beach

erosion and carrying pollutants from the land into the sea and damaging the corals and so on.

Aside.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Yes. The honourable Member for St. Michael West, I recall, discussed this matter before. We have not canvassed this, because it deals with a different problem. We have ranged everywhere, except in relation to some of the points that matter. There are honourable Members who prefer to talk foolishness about yellow fever and drop a few names like Starkey, Sen and Ligon than to talk seriously about drainage.

6.40 p.m.

Mr. Archer pointed out that in relation to the particular area of the Whim which had become a point of controversy, because it was controversial, the suggestion was made by Mrs. Leacock — there is nothing disgraceful in the suggestion, it is a thoughtful suggestion — that because the trees were blocking the gully that the water was going to overflow down Bowling Alley, which is a point in Around-the-Town close to the hill, and it seems to me that that was a possibility. But the Chief Engineer said that the trees held up the water sufficiently not to destroy the bridge at Around-the-Town, because if the water had surged down, unimpeded by the trees, it might have easily broken down the Around-the-Town bridge. That is the engineering advice available.

Hon. L. B. BATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, in the light of the very good contributions which are being made to this debate, I want to propose that consideration of this Resolution be extended for another hour — I believe that the other side will be willing to agree on this — and that the speech of the Right Honourable Prime Minister be extended for 15 minutes.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Housing has proposed that the debate on this be extended. I would have to have concurrence on both sides of the House.

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There seems to be no objection. I take it then that it is the pleasure of the Committee that this debate should continue for another hour.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Sir, I do not want to take the whole 15 minutes, because the debate may be getting a bit ragged following the intervention of the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central. I will sum up what I have been saying, and what the Government's case is. It is not true that every road in Barbados becomes virtually impassable whenever there is even slight rainfall. It is not true that 50 inches of rain threatened Yellow Fever in the island. It is not true that

when gullies fill up a higher volume of water cascades down. These things are merely matters of style when you really get down to them. It is only the style of the honourable Member's speech, and his speech is better ignored. He has admitted that everything he is talking about he has learned since last Wednesday, and what he had to say shows all the signs of hasty knowledge and preparation.

I should state the Government's plans, but I do not want to raise hopes. We are talking about drainage now. The problem outlined is well outlined in the speeches of the Minister of Transport and Works and the Leader of the Opposition, and the vignette of the honourable Member for Christ Church West dealing with his constituency and the parish chronicle of the honourable Member for St. Michael South dealing with Clarke's Avenue. The fact is that the majority of the population of Barbados does live in areas relatively low-lying, into which a number of gullies discharge water in time of flood, and so we have a general problem. It is not a problem created by one political party or whose solution is impeded by a political party. All of us are involved. The rain falls ever so often in torrents, every eight to ten years, a minor flood; every twenty years, slightly bigger; and so on.

The particular problems of the West Coast may be solved if the Government adopts the idea of damming the major gullies. In 1971, I had a lot of talk with Dr. Rasserhoy from the Caribbean Meteorological Station, and he put forward the idea of injection wells, which idea was duly placed in our party's manifesto for the election of that year. The idea has been tossed around for many years now, never successfully. The advice goes both ways, but whatever, we now have a new report saying that the coastline itself is threatened by the run-off of water on the western and southern sides, southern to a lesser degree, of Barbados.

The Planning and Priorities Committee of Government has considered this question of damming. This would immediately alleviate the flooding problems in a major way, but you are talking about millions of dollars. The damming of the Hometown gully would save Jamestown Park and save the Leader of the Opposition from having to clear the bush quite so often when the floods come down and floods his property and that of other owners, and also fertilize them greatly — but at what cost? To spend \$2 million dollars in damming the Whim Gully, when you can move every single house in Around-the-Town that could be threatened for a lot less than \$2 million dollars, is a matter that the government will have to decide on. These are all priorities and assessments which the Government has to make. You have to assess how much damage the Whim Gully is doing to the West Coast, then you assess how many houses will be saved if you decide to go ahead with the project on the basis of drainage, and you assess whether it is worth it. It is not an easy problem.

Honourable Members dropped remarks.....

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: On a point of elucidation if the Honourable Prime Minister will give way. During the course of my speech on behalf of the Opposition, we did call for an investigation into this question of drainage on a national basis. I wonder if in this reply, bearing in mind the Prime Minister has just said that it is a problem and a lot of things have to be investigated and that it is not an easy problem, whether he will support the call from the Opposition for that investigation on a national basis.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: Unless I am mistaken, when the Opposition was in power it commissioned a drainage study and did nothing about it. What I am trying to say is that the Government is considering drainage on a continuing basis. Every project that we look at has a drainage component and we consider it, and we worry about it. We have also done a lot of well cleaning.

We heard about the business of the tractor down by the Salt Pond — everybody is catching at little petty solutions. I know the history of that. The Salt Pond was canalized in the Democratic Labour Party's time, when Mr. Boxhill was the Minister, and the outfall from the Salt Pond acted as a groyne and defeated the purpose of the canalization, because sand built up on the outfall. Before the Salt Pond was canalized, there was not so much sand at its mouth, and Mr. Boxhill sent a tractor down there to clear out the sand that he himself had put there as a result of the faulty engineering works. After a time the tractor was no more able to clear the sand than the dredge was able to clear the sand at Miami Beach, where 11 feet of sand built up in the Coast Guard harbour built by the Opposition. The Salt Pond canalization itself is responsible for the size of the sand bar that holds it in. I have not used that in here, although I have discussed it in the dining room with some honourable Members opposite, to accuse the Democratic Labour Party of the flooding in Speightstown.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman. The honourable Member has now been speaking in excess of 30 minutes. I have been trying *sotto voce* to draw it to your attention, but the fact that we have extended the debate does not give the honourable Member or any other Member more time than 15 minutes. That is not the rule.
6.50 p.m.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: A Member may speak for 15 minutes at any one time. When the time limit was reached by the Prime Minister, it was the time when the debate on this should have been closed. It was at that point that the Honourable Minister of Housing rose and asked that the debate be extended for one hour. I canvassed, I looked around as regards compliance, and

nobody disagreed with him. After waiting, I looked around and my eyes caught the Honourable Prime Minister, so he now in the new round has 15 minutes to speak. I will inform the honourable Member, however, that he has used up ten of those minutes.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: We have not accused the other side of bad drainage works that help the flooding in Speightstown, because I do not believe that the people at MTW had other than the most decent and sincere motives in canalising the Salt Pond. The intention was to reduce the flooding, not increase it, but so arcane are the mysteries of sand movement in Barbados that their intention was blocked by the hand of the Lord. As a result of that particular exercise we know more now about the dangers of attempting to drain the low-lying areas of Barbados just by pushing works out into the sea.

Works have also helped to build up the sand within a small area at the mouth of one of the drains off the Spring Garden Highway. It is a drain that drains what is known as the Bayswater River. That drain is full of sand, because even that little box close to the shore has been the occasion of the build up of a lot of sand. All of these problems are the problems that both sides of the House share, and therefore I am not assigning blame to one side or the other.

Mr. N. K. SIMMONS (St. James South): Mr. Chairman, I believe I can speak with some first hand knowledge of the events of last Wednesday evening, because I was on my way to Heywoods Resort when I was stopped by some youngsters at Church Street and advised to turn around and go back home. When I got by Cobblers Cove, the water there was so high that I sought refuge at Cobblers Cove Hotel and spent a couple of hours there, compliments of the management.

I am glad to see that we have not only looked at the question of flooding in Speightstown, because there was some flooding also in Husbands and Durants Village. It seems to me that the major problems confronting us at this present time is one of drainage.

I can recall that on the 30th December last year, after writing numerous letters to the Ministry of Transport and Works, an officer of that Ministry was sent to me and he visited various areas in St. James South, including Wanstead Gardens, Husbands and Durants Village, to see what could be done with the drainage in those areas. Unfortunately, up to last weekend the drains have not been cleared, so it seems that there is a need for constant inspection.

I can remember as a boy, when my father was a member of the Police Force, that it was the responsibility of the police officer for the district of the zone to visit the area, especially the plantations, and make sure that

the wells were cleared. Obviously, if someone had that responsibility, then the plantation owners would make sure that they were cleared, because it was an offence, as I understand it, not to have them cleared.

I believe that the events of Wednesday night and Thursday should be a lesson for us in many areas. There is the question of dumping. My understanding from the residents of St. Peter is that when the Heywoods Project was under construction a number of trucks dumped stuff in the Whim Gully. I am not sure if that is responsible for the flooding, but this illegal dumping does cause some of the problems with drainage in the country.

There is the question as to what should happen with dead animals. Those of us who visited Speightstown after Wednesday, and possibly over the last weekend, would know that there were a number of dead dogs and sheep lying around the place. The residents of the area were complaining that they had made representation to the Ministry of Health and they were told that they did not work over the weekend and nothing could be done until the Monday.

I am not sure who is responsible for these things in emergencies, but surely some contingency planning should be made for situations like this. I remember seeing the Honourable Prime Minister passing through on Saturday afternoon, and while I was there some residents were asking what to do with a dead dog that was in the road. My suggestion was to burn it, and we burned it. When people believe that there are certain agencies responsible for these problems, and then when they phone up and the responses are negative, they tend to panic and are confused. Something must be done, because dead animals lying around can be a health hazard, and I believe that people should know exactly what should be the procedure in such circumstances. Daily we see animals along the road and nobody goes to collect them, so it is not only a matter for Speightstown.

There is also the question of the destruction of roads. We will have noticed that in certain areas the roads seem to have caked, as I call it. I do not know the technical term. Only last week I was discussing road building with a road builder, and he was telling me that one of the problems facing us in Barbados is that we tend to lay the new roads on the old surfaces, so whenever the rains come, they tend to get under the new surface and cake up the road.

We should look at the foundation of the road. If you go to Holetown, Black Rock, any of the areas which are not new, but where asphalt has been laid on top of the roads, you will see that we have to spend a lot of money now to resurface the roads. I should like to suggest that whenever resurfacing is being done the entire road is dug up, the foundation is looked at, and we lay

the new road. If not, we will be spending and wasting enormous sums of money.

I think we should look seriously at the organisational structure of CERO. From speaking to a number of people in Speightstown and in the Husbands area, I found out that they were at a loss as to who they should call, and in one instance in Husbands in particular they called the Defence Force and got no positive reply from them. They called the Fire Service at St. James and were given the run around. Then they called St. Michael and it was explained to them at that time that so long as the rain is falling, then the Fire Service does not pump the water, that the Fire Service has to wait until the rain abates to start pumping the water. I do not know if this is true, but that is what I was told. People are concerned about these things, because when the water is coming into your house and it is getting to a very dangerous level, something must be done, and when those whom they see to be responsible for these duties are telling them all kinds of things, there is a problem. The people need to have more information.

7.00 p.m.

There seem to be some problems in the organizational structure of CERO. One of the problems is the hurricane shelters. All the shelters in this island are schools, and I can remember during the 1970 floods at Hometown — I was not a member of CERO then — I was called to the St. James Mixed School where there was a young teacher who was in charge of operations, but who was scared to call the Chief Education Officer or the Permanent Secretary in charge of CERO because he was scared of what would happen if his observation of the situation was wrong, and he asked me if I would be so kind as to call them. This is true. I am telling you of facts. I am not saying that he would have been terrorized by the people concerned. What I am saying is that he was scared to call the people because he felt that he was at such a low level in the hierarchy that if he made a mistake of judgement, there might be a problem.

Another problem with the hurricane shelters is that the headteachers of the schools are in charge of the hurricane shelters and we have situations in Barbados in which you find that a headteacher living in St. Philip can be in charge of a school in St. James. Can you ask that lady to leave her house in St. Philip and come down to St. James when it is pouring? It seems to me that a better arrangement would be to give some responsible person in the area the responsibility of supervising such a centre when an emergency arises. This is important, because unless we do that, then we have the problem that some centres will not open until such time as the headteacher comes or gives permission. This is a problem especially in the St. James area, where when a little rain falls sometimes the phones go dead, and the caretaker who has the key to open the school says he can do nothing until he hears from the headteacher.

That is exactly what happened in the Speightstown area during the flood. I was told that although they were trying to get help from as early as 6.30 p.m., no help came before 9.30 p.m., because they could not get in contact with the officials. I believe that these are matters which we must look at carefully and have them ironed out, because it is pointless telling somebody, after perhaps they have lost \$1 500 and \$2 000 in furniture, that they should have taken a different step. This is being wise after the event, and there are a number of lessons which we can learn from the events of last Wednesday night.

I am not here apportioning blame to any Government, because I do not believe that any party would be so foolish as to want to create a situation in which there would be flooding. But I tend to share the view of my friends from St. Philip North (Mr. W. O. Franklin) and Christ Church West (Hon. H. deB. Forde) that whenever we are developing areas, we pay attention to the people who live in the area. It is true that we have experts, but unless they can listen to the people in the area, then mistakes will be made, and mistakes are usually very costly, especially when you are thinking in terms of digging up the roads and putting down new roads. We can ill afford that type of expense, and, as my friend from St. Michael South (Mr. L. E. Sandiford) has said already, there should be some enquiry into this matter so that the mistakes that might have been made, might not be made a second time.

Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW (St. Michael South East): Mr. Chairman it is not my intention to deal with any technical aspect of the flooding or anything of the kind. I rise to say a few things that the residents who were affected as a result of the flooding would like to hear. I am sure that they will be glad to hear what plans Government has to have their lives restored as normal as possible. Government has already taken steps to put in place machinery whereby people could return to their homes, maybe in the same area, or elsewhere, to continue their lives under normal conditions.

I must say that I share with all honourable Members of this Chamber the deep regret that there was loss to property, and even the loss of a life, as a result of the flooding in St. Peter. But it makes no sense our repeating what caused the flood and trying to score any political points on this particular matter. We should move the debate from the political arena and understand that the people in St. Peter and in Barbados generally, and even outside of Barbados, expect this Chamber to resolve this matter after debate and to announce the plans we have to put these people back in their homes.

I should like, therefore, to commend the Barbados Defence Force for taking part and assisting in clearing the debris and in helping those persons who were affected in Speightstown in particular. Ever so often we do not

hesitate to criticize them. When money is voted in this Chamber to spend on the Defence Force we hear all kinds of criticisms. I do hope that honourable Members on that side in particular will, on this occasion, reflect on the criticisms that they have made as far as the Defence Force is concerned and be men enough to compliment them for making such a contribution and helping relieve the plight of the people of Speightstown.

I think we also need to commend CERO for having moved swiftly to mobilize persons on the Committee, and for carrying out their discharge in such an able and efficient manner to date. I should also express our thanks and gratitude to the Red Cross, which has played a very important role in helping to relieve the people of the flood stricken area; Barbados Rediffusion, which has managed to raise some funds, over \$20 000, to help the victims of the flood; The Welfare Department, the Chief Welfare Officer and her entire staff should be commended for the work which they have done and are at present doing in St. Peter.

7.10 p.m.

I am sure that the brunt of the work will be left in the hands of the Welfare Department, the Chief Welfare Officer, and people like the Housing Officer of the National Assistance Board, Mr. King. As early as 9 o'clock when Owen Arthur called me and told me that there were people in St. Peter in need of assistance, when I telephoned Mr. King to find him at home, he immediately got into his vehicle and travelled to St. Peter. That was on the night of the flooding. I should think that people ought to be grateful to people like Mr. King.

I should also wish to commend the management of Heywoods for showing that it is also a public-spirited management in assisting us and the people of St. Peter with the accommodation that they have had. I am sure that with all the criticisms that have been levelled at the Heywoods Project and the Government for building what some people term a white elephant, people will understand that sometimes the stone which the builder rejects becomes the head cornerstone. We should all be grateful for having Heywoods, and I am sure the people of St. Peter welcome Heywoods. It is not now seen as the area for criticism because people did not get jobs, they realise that housing them in a time of need is what matters, and I hope that people who seek to make that particular institution a political football will understand that they should desist from such criticism.

I think that the drink and beverage companies, which have donated quite a few hundred cases of drinks to assist with the operation, must also be commended, as well as all Barbadians and persons who have made contributions and have assisted, not forgetting the good residents of Round-the-Town and Speightstown in particular, and St. Peter

generally, for coming to the rescue of their fellowmen in that area. But what we must turn our attention to is the Prime Minister's announcement that there is a Minister of State who will help to co-ordinate the work and see that it is expedited, to make sure that there is none of the delay that is usually common in times such as these. I think that is one of the first positive steps that we need to commend the Honourable Prime Minister for.

One honourable Member questioned the political involvement. I wish to give him the assurance that we do not see our role in this whole business as one seeking to pull any political punches. As the honourable member for St. Philip South (Mr. H. A. Blackman) knows, his wife works as a welfare officer and she is involved in St. Peter, and I say that with all due respect to the honourable Member and his wife. We are not selecting people on a political basis to work down there. We see this as a community and a national effort.

The Welfare Department has quite a stock of new clothing, and I have told the welfare officers that as far as possible all new clothing should be given to persons in need. There is a need to do this. I think Barbadians do not like the idea of castoffs, and despite the fact that we have lots of other disasters, on this occasion we have had much clothing donated. Those people in need are asked to go in and select rather than our giving them, and I think that augurs well for the whole operation.

The honourable member for St. James South (Mr. N. K. Simmons) talked about help coming. What was said earlier will give the lie to that; we were on the ball. I was informed and we moved in the officers, and the Chief Welfare Officer worked around the clock and could not even get back to St. Philip with her husband and family, and I think these are things that we need to commend the people for.

As far as the return to normalcy is concerned, I do hope that all the carpenters, the artisans and all involved will make a concerted effort to co-operate and help to get the people back in their houses. Housing (Welfare) has already started the construction of two houses, and one house is already available. Despite the fact that this Resolution is now seeking parliamentary approval, Housing (Welfare) has proceeded to start the ball rolling. I hope that honourable Members will understand that the Government is not sitting down and making any promises, but Government is taking positive steps in order to remedy the situation and to return the people to normalcy as soon as possible.

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

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There are two honourable Members on their feet. We still have some time, so I will hear the honourable Member for St. Michael West and then the honourable member for Bridgetown.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move that Your Honour do now report progress and ask for leave to sit again.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

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

SUSPENSION OF SITTING

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move that the sitting be suspended until 8.15 p.m.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I beg to second that.

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

7.20 p.m.

ON RESUMPTION

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This sitting is now resumed.

When the sitting was suspended, the House was in Committee of Supply. To that it now reverts.

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. The honourable Member for St. Michael West.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for this opportunity in the light of the speech made by the honourable Member for St. Michael South East, in which he took the opportunity of the debate to thank almost everybody in christiandom for the role they have played in this recent disaster in St. Peter.

I do not know whose fault it is that we have had the floods. I have to go with those who say that the rain-fall is an act of God. But I would have to go with those persons in St. Peter who have said to me — and there are large numbers who live Around-the-Town and other areas that have been affected — that they have been living in these areas, some of them for in excess of sixty years, and they have seen a lot of water come down in the past — but they have never seen this kind of disaster. Those persons indicate that the only thing new that has happened that they know of is the road. Those persons attribute all or most of their suffering to the building of

the road and the manner in which the road has been built. I will come back to that.

I want to take this opportunity of the few minutes given to me to put in the Record of this House the appreciation of those of us in Barbados who became aware of the sterling work that was done by a distinguished woman in St. Peter from the night when the rains came down, when she was caught doing the thing she has been doing for the last thirty-eight years, serving the people of St. Peter. She found herself in the Parish Church.

(Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Amen!)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I wish that honourable Members on that side could at some time find themselves in any kind of church.

(Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: Amen.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: She found herself in the church. She was there carrying out the duties which she had taken unto herself long before she became an honourable Member in here.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: She should have been in Around-the-Town.)

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I am afraid that this side will have to take the same attitude that the honourable Member is taking, and we are going to open this into a wide debate. I will have to ask the indulgence of the House that we extend the debate further if this is the line which he is going to take. We are not dealing with a person now. We are dealing with suffering in St. Peter. It is a matter of what efforts we should make in order to make the conditions right. We are not dealing with personalities at this time.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I agree with the honourable Member. We are dealing with CERO and the incidents in Speightstown. Let us not bring the political platform into the House of Assembly.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: But it is remarkable, Sir. I have not even said who the woman is, and already you are talking about politics. I am talking about somebody who did something in the face of a serious disaster and you are telling me about politics. I am not discussing politics. I heard the honourable Member discuss CERO. I heard the honourable Member talk about the Red Cross, Rediffusion and the Welfare Department. He named everybody in sight. I am helping the honourable Member to pay attention to the fact that there is a distinguished woman in St. Peter.

He even talked about one Owen Arthur calling him. I am not saying anything about that. I believe that

Owen Arthur called him. I really believe that, because the people could not find anybody at all in St. Peter. I have no doubt that a number of people tried to get him.

I am discussing a woman who worked for three days helping the people in the disaster.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That has no place in this debate.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, I.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: This debate is not about any female person. This debate is about CERO and the incidents involved in St. Peter.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. It is about \$500 000.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: I will not permit the honourable Member to continue his debate on that matter.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, with the greatest respect, I am discussing the suffering of the people in St. Peter arising out of a disaster. I am discussing voluntary relief that was brought to them. I wish you to tell me if you are saying that you do not want me to talk about voluntary relief.

(Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: Talk about Mrs. Norma Roach.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I know you do not want to hear about the distinguished woman.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I know you do not want to hear about the work she did.

Mr. CHAIRMAN:.....on both sides of the House.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am saying that for three days and three nights she cooked for them, she walked around for them. And all of them that went down to Heywoods.....

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. B. M. TAITT:.....on political activity.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: An honourable Member is on his feet. On what does the honourable Member rise?

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: On a point of order, Sir.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. We must have order in this debate.

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: The honourable Member says he is speaking of a distinguished lady. The Resolution before the House has to do with a vote.....

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: A distinguished Resolution.)

Hon. V. L. JOHNSON: It is a distinguished Resolution, I am told, to relieve the suffering of the people in St. Peter. The only distinguished woman I know who was doing yeoman service is Mrs. Norma Roach, the Head of the Welfare Department.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: And Miss Beverly Arthur.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: You see, Sir, that is the sort of thing we have to put up with. Anybody who goes.....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Let the honourable Member develop his speech.

(Aside: The honourable Member introduced it.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Of course, I am going to introduce it, because you are not going to introduce it. All the people of St. Peter know that she has worked.....

Asides.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. I cannot have this behaviour.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman, I want to know which part of the Resolution.....

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order. He cannot ask that.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will both honourable Members take their seats. Order, please. This debate must not degenerate, I will not allow it to, into this sort of squabble. I will not have it.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: I agree with you, Sir.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Will the honourable Member continue.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am saying that there is a tremendous number of people whom I would like this House to go on record as thanking as well, a number of volunteers who have not been identified by the honourable Minister and who may not be known to the honourable Minister.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are these people who have been assisting CERO?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: CERO? They have assisted CERO. They have assisted everybody. As a matter of fact, when CERO was not present, they were there. That is the point I am making.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It has to do with CERO.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: CERO came to the issue late.

(Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW: Where were you?)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: If it has nothing to do with CERO, I cannot entertain the debate.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, Sir, with the greatest respect, this is about....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: There are two honourable Members on their feet.

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Mr. Chairman.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: On what does the honourable Member rise?

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I rise to draw your attention to an item which the honourable Member could have well used when it was called by the Clerk of the House, "CONGRATULATORY AND/OR OBITUARY SPEECHES". It is under that item that he should have chosen to make his speech.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: If the honourable Member wishes me to make an obituary speech about him, Sir, I would be willing to do it right now.

(Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: You can do it now.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I am saying, since the honourable Member for St. Michael South East was congratulating all the people who assisted the down-trodden, the bereaved, the hurt, all of the people in St. Peter, that there are a number of people in St. Peter who are grateful for the assistance which has been rendered. I wish to say on behalf of those people who made contributions to the extent of \$4 000 in food and large quantities of garments that cannot be quantified...

(Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: Who brought in 20 questions in one day.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. We have not got much time left.

(Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I must speak.)

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The Member for the City will have to speak. As it stands now, we have had an extension for one hour, and with all of these interruptions, I may have to extend the time further to make sure that everybody gets a chance to speak.

(Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: To give me fifteen minutes.)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: As I was saying, Sir, there were a number of people who did not and have not yet received the assistance of the governmental agencies. I wish to draw to the attention of this House that for three days, and continuing since that, there have been a number of volunteers who have been working towards assisting the people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member said, "who have not yet received". Is that to indicate that they will get at some time?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: No, Sir. I am drawing to Your Honour's attention.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Are you suggesting that they will not get?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: I do not even know that, Sir. I am drawing to the honourable Minister's attention that there are large numbers, and that this amount of money will only scratch on the surface. I thought they would come in for anything like \$1.5 million. Our estimate is that we would need \$1.5 million to restore the people in St. Peter to anything near the standard which they had before this disaster. I would like to hear from the Minister how they arrived at this estimate, because our estimate, based on the people in Around-the-Town and that immediate area, a large number of whom voted for the Democratic Labour Party last time, is that they will need in excess of \$1.5 million.

The Prime Minister gave us a lecture on his holdings in ancient history concerning Barbados, but the Prime Minister does not appear to have visited the Whim. If he had visited the Whim, he would have seen that the water on the sides of the road came out at such force that it only could have occurred if the waters had swollen beyond the level of the road. I am suggesting, therefore, that there is some validity in the statement that the failure of the MTW, or whichever agency it was, to remove some of the debris from that gully, which has a confluence or can be seen to be a confluence of more than one major stream coming from up in the hills. Sailor Gully and places like that.

8.25 p.m.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Anybody who wears a three-piece suit in St. Peter after a flood would not understand what I am talking about.

There was a time when in the Whim Gully they used to be able to play cricket in an area — you must go and see it yourself if you have any doubt about that — and the people of St. Peter — not me, Sir, I am not an expert in the field — are saying that when that area surrounding the gully used to be cleared and used to be maintained, this kind of build-up of water would not have been possible. It is not the volume of water which affected the area — it is the force. There is a difference between the volume and the speed at which the water is travelling. If you have 18 inches of rain and it is able to drain steadily over the period the rain is falling, it is likely, even if the flow is considerably large, to cause less difficulty and less destruction than if you had what, in effect, was a spontaneous damming of the water. A spontaneous damming occurred and, suddenly, because there were 18 inches, the water overflowed to a point where it broke with sufficient force to sweep all before it, and it is that water coming out of the Whim Gully which swept everything in Around-the-Town and beyond all the way to the sea.

There is too much time wasting and foot dragging in restoring the people. The Government already owns enough land in Jerusalem and Maynards where, if they wish to resite those people, they can get on with the business. When the Honourable Speaker of this House resigned, when his letter was read, the following day there were carpenters out in force repairing houses, some of which did not even need any repairing. That may have not been on the instruction of the government, but it is a fact that it happened. Now we have had a real disaster, a number of days have gone by, and what did we hear from the honourable Minister? "A house has been built!"

I think that if they use the land that they already own in Jerusalem, that would keep the people of Around-the-Town and the people of St. Peter in St. Peter. They already have had one traumatic experience, and it is totally unacceptable for the Government to disburse them in all directions, some to Passage Road, some to St. George, and one or two from St. John. In 1984, we should have reached the stage where we are able to provide some kind of psychological counselling for persons who have had that kind of traumatic experience, and we try as much as possible to keep them together. We were able to do it when we removed the people from Emmerton and we carried them as almost one unit to Clapham Park.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable Member has now warmed up, but you have a half minute to wind up.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The people from Emmerton are functioning as one of the most cohesive communities in Barbados, as one can discern from the cultural programmes which they put on.

I am suggesting that the Government should as far as possible keep the community of Around-the-Town together, and they have enough land to do it. Mike has some land in Battaleys, or there is land in Jerusalem for this purpose. It is not necessary and/or desirable to disburse these people in every direction.

Asides.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Mr. Chairman, what is it now?

Mr. CHAIRMAN: That is it. Time.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER (City of Bridgetown): Mr. Chairman, reference was made to Ligon's by the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central (Dr. R. C. Haynes). He actually brought a copy of Ligon's history here. Being an impressionist, he imported his own impressions of Ligon's map. We heard some discourse to do with rivers and contours. But if the honourable Member for St. Michael South Central had, in fact, read Ligon's — you know how it is sometimes, like little children who look at the pictures but do not read the words — if he had concentrated less on looking at the pictures and the map, he would have seen that in Barbados, from the very beginning, early settlers settled mostly on the coastline what, almost continuously from Bridgetown right through to Speightstown, was a very unhealthy and unwholesome swamp. Of course in those days, in Ligon's days, they were mangroves which protected our coastline and formed the basis of an ecosystem which helped to feed and protect early Barbadians. In the name of progress a great deal has been done and we have destroyed the mangroves. I think there are hardly any left on the west coast.

References which the Right Honourable Member for St. Thomas (Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. Adams) made to the importance of the water courses and the role that they played are not to be laughed aside lightly. The west coast of Barbados is terraced, they are coral terraces, and the natural water courses, which we call gullies have been much interfered during the last sixty years. The water courses have been altered and blocked in all sorts of ways and diverted, to a large extent, not so much by the Speightstown By-Pass, as people would have it, but by settlements in places where it is quite unsuited. I do not know why Barbadians would settle in places that are not necessarily wholesome for them — and people continually settle on the edge of gullies. I have lived on the edge of a gully on the west coast for 15 years. I know where of I speak. All that water coming

down the gully — we saw it on Saturday and Sunday — when the ground was saturated and, particularly in St. Peter, washing the top soil away into the ocean is a serious matter, and a source of pollution which perhaps Barbadians do not always recognize.

The coral reef on the west coast in some cases has been severely damaged. I do not know if Barbadians readily understand that coral needs certain conditions in which to live and flourish. Water has to be a certain temperature and a certain degree of light has to be available for it to thrive. When that run-off water is thick with mud, and you can see it spreading like a stain right along the west coast this weekend, it blocks the light out, the coral becomes damaged and, in some places, it dies. Being an animal like us, once it is dead it cannot be resuscitated. The coral reefs play a very protective role along the east and west coasts, so all of these are important considerations.
8.35 p.m.

I do not know why it is necessary for honourable Members to try to politicise what is a natural disaster. This is not the first flood. We have had floods in Barbados from time to time. Floods are not new to Speightstown. This is not the first time that the Whim Gully has "washed out", to use a Barbadian phrase. But because there is a bye-election pending, honourable Members on that side are seeking to politicise this.

In truth and in fact, short of moving all Barbadians off the coast and on to higher ground, which is perhaps how they should have settled Barbados in the first place, but that is 300 odd years too late, I think it is our business as individuals, as a Government, to persuade people not to settle in areas which are prone to flooding. We saw it happen along Halls Road. I hear merit being claimed over on that side for the resiting of people from Emmerton to Clapham. "We did this," I heard. All the Democratic Labour Party did was to start to dig pit latrines at Clapham.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: On a point of order, since the honourable Member does not usually give way on a point of elucidation. I think that the honourable Member would be in error if she attributes the word "we" to mean only partisan political we, political party. "We" here means not the Democratic Labour Party, it means the people of Barbados. When we say "we" moved the people from Emmerton to Clapham, we are not talking about the Democratic Labour Party, we are talking about "we" as a people.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: No point of order. I will now have to allow the Minister additional time to carry on. Please continue.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: We are hearing all about the things that Government agencies have done. We know

that the Defence Force was on the scene in Speightstown and its environs at the earliest possible opportunity, that they worked through Thursday night until 3.00 in the morning, and were there again with the Police, with the Public Health Inspectorate and with all the other agencies who work with CERO. I personally visited Speightstown on more than one occasion during the past five days, so we know all of these things. But what do we do now? Wait until the next natural disaster, be it a flood or whatever?

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition spoke about the need for the Government to have a reserve of houses in the event of fire, flood and hurricane. I think that this is a statement which has to be addressed with great care. I do not know that Barbadians should be encouraged in 1984 to view the Government as the insurer of last resort, or in some cases as the insurer of first resort. We have reached the stage in our development, we have reached the kind of sophistication in our style of living and our style of Government, that home insurance should be compulsory in a little island like this which is subject to hurricane and flood, in a little island where we have seen a dramatic rise in the number of house fires, not only in the country but in the towns and in the suburbs as well. I think that this idea that National Housing is always there, and the Government is always there to replace houses and furniture is too much abused.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: One minute more.

Hon. Miss B. A. MILLER: I saw on Thursday a man coming from a location where his house had been virtually washed away, and what was he bringing out? A barbecue pit in one hand and 12 golf clubs over the shoulder in another. We hear people claiming against the Welfare now for the replacement of not one, but two colour television sets, double door refrigerators and so on. If people live in that style, is it too much to expect them to insure, Mr. Chairman? I can quote the Honourable Minister who has these matters in his charge. A four room chattel house completely destroyed, losing two single beds, antique furniture, refrigerator, gas stove, stereo, T.V., three radios, three trunks with china and cutlery, valued at \$50 000. What do we have to understand now? This is no different from what you or I have in our houses. Is the Government to be expected to be the insurer of all of this?

I think the Government must be called upon to look seriously at this question of mandatory insurance for homes. When I was a child it was not uncommon to see every chattel house with those little tin insignia representing the fact that they were all properly insured, and that is something that we need to get back to in this country, a little self help, so that people may encourage themselves.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Your time is up.

The question that Head 71 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

HEAD 73 – MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND PLANNING

Subhead 10 – Loans and Advances

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to move that Head 73 stand part.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

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

HEAD 83 – CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM DIVISION

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE: I beg to move that Head 83 stand part.

Hon. L. R. TULL: I beg to second that.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES 1984–85, No. 16

A Resolution for the sum of \$60 000 was called.

HEAD 32 – FIRE SERVICE

Hon. L. R. TULL (St. George South): Mr. Chairman, recently the Chief Fire Officer drew to the attention of the Ministry of Legal Affairs that two of the crash tenders at the airport are out of order, and these funds are seeking only to get some spare parts from Britain and to repair those two tenders. It is necessary for us to do this immediately, because at the moment we are operating at the barest minimum strength required for coverage of the airport.

I understand that they need four crash tenders, a water tender, an ambulance and an auxiliary tender. Although we have the amount of coverage that is required by the International Civil Aviation Authorities, it is necessary that we not go below the existing strength, so we want this passed in order to repair the two tenders.

I beg to move that this Resolution do now pass.

Mr. L. L. SISNETT: I beg to second that.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask the Minister a question concerning the Fire Service, when he is giving me his full attention. Recently we

had some fires in Barbados and I read where the Fire Officers themselves made a complaint – and complaint may be too strong a word, but it is the best word – that there was some difficulty in fighting fires in buildings of a certain height, because we did not have the necessary equipment. Obviously, if that is true the Minister might not be able to acquire the equipment within a short time, within weeks, but in light of the fact that we have now started to build ten storey buildings in Barbados, and in light of the fact that when this complaint was made by the Fire Officers, they were not dealing with a ten storey building, but, in fact, a building of three or four storeys, I wonder if the Minister could enlighten us as to whether he is taking steps, or intends to take steps, to provide this new equipment which the Fire Department seems to be calling for to be able to fight fires at certain levels.
8.45 p.m.

It seems from what I read that the Fire Department was saying, through one of their spokesmen, that a Bridgetown fire is infinitely more difficult to fight because of the lack of these high ladders – I think that is what they called them. I am not an expert in the field, but since someone who is supposed to be an expert is quoted as saying that they needed this equipment, I wonder if the Minister could enlighten us whether it is his intention, or whether it is the intention of the Government, to seek to acquire this type of equipment, and if not, why not? I have no doubt that this is not a matter that would escape them, but I think the opportunity could be taken now to enlighten the House.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD (St. Michael South): The Fire Service is generally considered as one of those disciplined services which respond only in times of fire, but, in fact, the Fire Service has other roles to perform, and during times of intense flooding they do perform a more important role. If you try to get through on their lines, you might find that they are very concerned that lines must be kept open so that emergency calls in respect of fire can be answered while they are trying to deal with calls coming in in relation to flooding.

We are going to support this particular Resolution, but it is my own view that, in as much as the Fire Service has a major role to play in disaster, and in this case we are talking about flooding,.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: In this case I think we are talking about the service at the airport, and the fire tenders at the airport.

Mr. L. E. SANDIFORD: We are talking about the tender, Sir, but it is the same tenders that have to go to help pump off the water. They need the same kind of equipment, and I am just making a plea for more resources. I am sure that the Fire Service has enough equipment, resources and rolling stock to deal with some of the problems that we have been talking about today.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Mr. Chairman, we are pleased to support this Resolution, and to end in the evening in the spirit in which it began this morning.

Asides.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: To end the evening in the spirit in which it began this morning. That is better now? I will tell you this. If you were right about the Whim, nobody in the world would have high blood pressure. It is a fundamental law of physics.

The Fire Service should be complimented for the efforts which they have been making over the past three or four days. I know that they have been called out on several occasions, often to the same spots, and they have pumped the water off. But I believe there are a few private companies in Barbados whose main function is draining off wells and draining off water, and I wonder whether in an emergency situation like this, the Fire Service should not have the authority to contract out some of this work to the private operators so as to get people out of their homes.

Last night, for example, at about 11.30 p.m., I called the honourable Member for St. Michael South to let him know that a lady from Britton's Park called me, thinking that I was the representative. I had to tell her that that part was taken off from me by gerrymandering and that the honourable Member for St. Michael South was now the representative. She was there for three days. The Fire Service tried to help her but they could not get back to her, because they had too much work to do.

I know certainly there used to be one of these services in Bay Street that had three or four trucks. I believe that there is one somewhere in Bank Hall now. I have certainly employed the services of one or two this year and I feel that in an emergency like this, we in the public sector should be able to mobilize what is available in the private sector in order to get.....

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is totally off. Let us stick to the Fire Service.....

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: If two fire tenders are out of order, and if there are two other crash tenders in Barbados, the Fire Service should not be able to get those in an emergency at Grantley Adams. That is the point I am trying to make, Sir.

The basic point is that the Fire Service is doing a good job, but I feel that if they had the authority to rope in the other people who have the equipment in Barbados, that would have been to the advantage of the people in Barbados, and I believe that that facility should be made available to the Fire Service in these circumstances.

It is very interesting to know that in cities, for example, like Boston, 90 per cent of the emergency services in fact centre around the Fire Service. There is one feeding system for the ambulance services, for the helicopter services, for the fire services and for the police services. This system works tremendously well, so the integration of these emergency services may be a direction that we should be looking at in the future in Barbados as a disciplined body.

Firemen, for example, as part of their training in the City of Boston – I know this very well because my brother-in-law was then head of the emergency services there in the medical side –

Aside

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: He can talk, but when it comes to the exercise of discipline, he has to listen to what I say. 8.55 p.m.

The point I am trying to make is that I wonder if we should not look towards an integration of our emergency services in Barbados. We are a small island and I feel that is the direction in which we should be going. The people who operate these fire tenders can be easily trained in emergency, medical procedures.

I witnessed an alarming situation at the airport the other day, where there were fire tenders around. It was very interesting. A patient came in on an aeroplane, was deemed to be unfit to continue to fly and was advised to get off the aircraft, and, for the first time in 17 years I have been around doing that kind of work that this happened, she refused to get off and there was no disciplinary authority at the airport to remove her. The police said it was not their duty. The sergeant told me that he would have to contact his superior to find out what it all was. The firemen did not know what to do, the security guards did not know what to do, the airlines did not know what to do, and finally when I checked with the senior lawyer the following day, I was told that the only way that she could be taken off the plane was if the Captain refused to carry the plane any further. It was quite a remarkable thing, and there was an airline stuck at the airport for three days.

When I talk about integrating our services, it would prevent that kind of thing, and probably that particular aspect of the law needs to be looked at. I spoke to the Airport Manager the following morning and – I am sure the honourable Member for Christ Church West might agree – he advised me that the authorities acted within the law as it stands; that so long as they had pulled her ticket and she had got on to the flight, in fact she could not be legally taken off.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: And in the meantime we will be getting the spare parts for the fire tenders.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: Yes, Sir, and if we had these spare parts and perhaps more training, then the fire service might have been able to advise what to do, or might have been better equipped to go on to the plane and be able to coax the lady to get off the plane.

Hon. A. TRUSS (St. Michael Central): Mr. Chairman, I think it is important that the fire service have proper equipment, and I find myself in complete agreement with the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) on this particular occasion in his plea to the Minister to ensure that the fire service is granted some sort of high ladder, like the Electric Company. There is a large bucket on top of the ladder.

I recently experienced a fire at the building at the corner of James Street and Roebuck Street, and being present at the fire for some two hours, all I could see was smoke coming out of the building. The firemen, brave as they were and using their breathing apparatus, tried to enter the building, but could not see anything as a result of the thick smoke, as they reported later. For almost two hours there was no flame until finally after two hours the flames just engulfed the building, the roof collapsed and the entire building was lost.

It is now seen after the fact that the fire started somewhere on the first or second floor at the back of the building. The point is that if the fire tenders had the high ladder with the box, they would have been able to go from the corner of James Street or Roebuck Street high above the building and perhaps douse the fire from on top of the building to establish where the fire was, because the real problem appeared to be that they were filling the building with water from the main street, there are partitions inside the building and the partitions were actually blocking the water from getting to the source of the fire. That is the kind of equipment which is being called for by the honourable Member for St. Michael West. During the course of the fire the Electric Company arrived with a truck. They have very good equipment for fighting the fires in my opinion, because the electrician was able to get into the bucket and be taken to the very top of a 40 foot pole to disconnect the electricity from that section of the area, and the fire was contained. Meanwhile, the fire fighters were fighting the fire from the ground, and I still think that perhaps if there was better equipment, even though I must compliment the Fire Service for a job well done in containing the fire, the fire fighters would have been able to get the fire under control in less than the two and half hours it took them, and I certainly think they would have saved a majority of the building and several of the businesses and offices that were destroyed. I was with the Speaker of the House of Assembly and Senator Simmons in his office watching this fire for two and a half hours, and for almost two hours there was smoke and no fire.

Mr. CHAIRMAN: It is a good thing that the fire tenders were in good repair.

Hon. A. TRUSS: Yes, Sir. I will certainly support this Resolution. You cannot fight fires without having the right equipment, and they certainly must have the right equipment, especially in areas like the airport. I think the Fire Service, generally, as is well known in Barbados, do a very good job with the basic equipment that they have, and I make a special plea to the Minister concerned to see what can be done in terms of ensuring that some modern equipment can be purchased, so that if there is another fire in the City of Bridgetown it can be handled much more expeditiously.

Hon. L. R. TULL: Mr. Chairman, I was very pleased to hear the honourable Member for St. Michael West (Mr. B. M. Taitt) make reference to the need for a turn-table ladder. The only thing is that it is a little late. The Chief Fire Officer raised with me about a year ago the need for what is called a turn-table ladder, one of those high-rise things, as the honourable Member refers to it. I think it came after the fire at the Holiday Inn hotel, and he found that on that occasion if he had had the type of ladder, he would have been in a better position to have fought that particular fire.

At that time when it was raised with me, — he is the man who has to give me advice on these things, I do not know anything about fire fighting — it was included in the Estimates for this year 1984–85, and indeed a turn-table ladder such as he has requested, and to which reference was made by the two honourable Members, is on order in a Crown Agents package for the importation of a number of pieces of equipment for the Fire Department and the Police Department. So the turn-table ladder has, in fact, been ordered, and we expect it will be in the Island before the end of this financial year.

One honourable Member raised the point about emergency services and said that perhaps what is needed is an integration of the emergency services. I have the feeling that if there is a co-ordination of the emergency services that that should satisfy the needs of as small a community as Barbados. The examples given, however, for the need for this so-called integration seems to me to be very weak. No matter how much you integrate all the emergency services in Barbados, you will not be able to get a recalcitrant sick patient off an aeroplane at Grantley Adams airport, so I think that perhaps may be an argument against it.

We have given consideration over the past two or three years to bringing the ambulance service under the aegis of the Chief Fire Officer.

Asides.

Hon. L. R. TULL: The honourable Member for St. Michael West may not know what to do with it.

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: I said you do not know what to do.)

Hon. L. R. TULL: I have looked at it and looked at the personnel involved in the ambulance service, and I think that perhaps the solution is to be found first with the establishment, the personnel people, rather than the concept. The Chief Fire Officer has pointed out to me, and I have heard this kind of comment being made, that it is a disciplined force, and it would be a very difficult thing, in the circumstances, to pick out a number of rather indisciplined ambulance workers in the Queen Elizabeth Hospital and integrate them into a disciplined force such as the Fire Service. I think that poses a major problem. But the principle is not a bad one.
9.05 p.m.

However, I reiterate the point that integration in itself is not a panacea. If there is proper co-ordination in much the same way that emergency services are co-ordinated by CERO, in case of the type of emergency to which reference is made in this debate, that is all that is necessary; at least, that is my view.

I was off the island during the past few days and therefore I did not know of all the great things that were happening by the various services in the Public Service. It is only during the course of debate in the late stage of this evening that I heard of the sterling job done by the Fire Service, the Police Force, the Defence Force and all the other arms of Government to combat the difficulties that were experienced in the last few days in St. Peter. I am very glad to lend my voice to the congratulations of all the services, and the persons both Government and non Government, who made a contribution at this particular time of need.

The turntable is on order, and when we get the parts for the two tenders at the airport that are now currently in need of repairs, we will be up to full strength.

I beg to move that this Head do now stand part.

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

The question that Head 32 stand part was put and resolved in the affirmative without division.

On the motion of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, Mr. CHAIRMAN reported the passing of two money Resolutions in Committee and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER resumed the Chair and reported accordingly.

On the separate motions of Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE, seconded by Hon. DeL. O. BRADSHAW, the Resolutions were read a first and second time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. L. B. BRATHWAITE (St. Andrew): Mr. Deputy Speaker, this brings us to the end of Government Business, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all honourable Members for their contribution to this debate during the day's session.

The debate has been at some times warm, but this is a Parliament in a free democracy, and Members are entitled to freedom of expression.

I beg to move that this House do now adjourn until Tuesday, November 27, 1984 at 12.00 noon.

Mr. B. M. TAITT (St. Michael West): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, speaking on the motion for the adjournment, I am grateful to the honourable Member that he recognised the freedom and the democracy which exists in this Honourable Chamber all the time.

I wonder if he is in a position to indicate to us when we return on the 27th, at which time we will no doubt have.....

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS (St. Thomas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, can an honourable Member from the Opposition second the motion for the adjournment?

Mr. B. M. TAITT: It was seconded by the honourable Member over there, Sir.

(*Aside: Who seconded it?*)

(Mr. B. M. TAITT: Was it not seconded?)

Mr. B. M. TAITT: The honourable Member says it was not seconded. I will wait until he seconds it.

Rt. Hon. J. M. G. M. ADAMS: I beg to second the motion for the adjournment, Sir.

Mr. B. M. TAITT: Since the Prime Minister is exercising that freedom and democracy of which we speak, I will not address my remarks far in detail.

I wonder if the honourable Acting Leader was in a position to tell us if we might expect to see the Leader of the House back in his position when we resume on the 27th. We on this side have taken note of his absence and are wondering whether in all the circumstances his condition is one which is permanent or for a certain period, and whether we can expect to see him back in his place on the 27th. We on our side will be bringing

a new honourable Member in, and we will expect to see the House in its full capacity.

I notice the Prime Minister, who is probably better placed to give us an answer on this matter, has taken leave already, so I would not press the Acting Leader any more. I will have to depend on speculation and other information until we meet again on the 27th.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES (St. Michael South Central): Speaking on the motion for the adjournment, I must congratulate the Acting Leader of the House for the dignity with which he conducted Government's Business today, and also for the fact that he did not take the opportunity of an impending by-election to adjourn the House *sine die*. We all know when we will be coming back here, on the 27th, and therefore we are in a position now to announce to the public what will be the status of our People's Assembly meetings during this period, whether we would suspend them until after the by-election, because we know when we are coming back.

(Hon. L. R. TULL: Bring the People's Assembly up in St. George.)

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: I must say that there has been such a different atmosphere today.

Aside.

Dr. R. C. HAYNES: You know that I cannot go up there, because if I go up there, I would have big family problems. If I go to St. George, I would have to come to St. George North. I do not particularly want to go up there.

The point I am trying to make, Sir, is that the kind of professional approach and the kind of dignity which the Acting Leader of the House brought to proceedings today was exceedingly noticeable. Equally noticeable was the absence of the honourable Member for St. James North.

(*Aside:* I am going to tell him what you said about him.)

The question that the House do now stand adjourned until Tuesday, November 27, 1984 at 12.00 noon was put and resolved in the affirmative without division, and Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER adjourned the sitting accordingly.

9.15 p.m.

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BOLDEN, His Honour C. L. (Speaker) (St. Joseph)
BRADSHAW, Hon. DeL. O. (St. Michael South East)
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BRATHWAITE, His Honour R. E. (Deputy Speaker)
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FORDE, Hon. H. deB. (Christ Church West)
FRANKLIN, W. O. (St. Philip North)
GREAVES, P. M. (St. Michael North)
HAYNES, Dr. R. C. (St. Michael South Central)
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MILLER, Hon. B. A. (City of Bridgetown)
SANDIFORD, L. E. (St. Michael South)
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TAITT, B. M. (St. Michael West)
TRUSS, Hon. A. (St. Michael Central)
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WEEKES, L. A. (St. Michael West).